

FROM DAWN TO DAY

FOR CHILDREN

By S. E. L. O.

“ God said, Let there be light.”

“ He shall be as the light of the morning,
when the sun riseth.”

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THE SYCAMORE.

FROM DAWN TO DAY.

I.

THE BEAUTIFUL LESSON BOOK.

THE lesson book was a large, bright window, and all that a little boy and his sister could see from it. It was, indeed, a beautiful lesson book.

Nearest to the window was a garden ; beyond the garden were an orchard, a lane, and a great many green fields.

The children were very fond of standing at this window, and one day their mother came and stood behind them.

Now, Mary, said the mother, I want you to tell me what you see. Mary and her brother Charlie loved to talk to mother, and to listen to what she said, so Mary looked out, but she saw so many things that she had to think a moment before she answered—Mother, I see some green fields.

What makes the fields look so green ? asked

mother ; and this time Charlie answered, It is the grass.

How was the grass made ?

Oh, that I *don't* know, said Mary.

Perhaps it grows up out of the earth, said Charlie.

Yes, said mother, but how can grass and flowers be made to grow up out of the earth ?

The sun makes them grow, said Charlie.

And the rain helps too, added Mary.

But, said mother, if you took a box, and filled it with earth, and put it in some sunny place, and if the rain fell upon it whenever it was dry, do you think you would ever see flowers and grass growing up ? No, indeed, no grass would grow up from the earth by itself, neither would flowers.

The children did not know what to say, so they waited, and looked at their mother ; she spoke again, No, grass could not, of itself, grow out of the earth ; the first grass grew up many, many years ago.

When you were a little girl, mother ? said Mary.

Long before I was born, long before father was born ; before any man or woman had ever been born at all. One day, the third day after the beginning of the world, God made the grass.

But, how? asked Mary.

Then mother said, The grass grew up at the command of God. God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass. . . . And the earth brought forth grass" (Gen. i. 11, 12).

Oh, mother, how? said Mary again.

Because, said mother, God is a great and wonderful Being; so wonderful, so powerful, nothing is great or difficult to Him. He has said, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is there anything too hard for Me?" (Jer. xxxii. 27). And when we know God, it is not hard for us to understand; then we can say, "Ah, Lord God! Behold, Thou hast made the heaven and the earth by Thy great power and stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for Thee" (v. 17).

God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass," and the earth brought forth grass. It was the wonderful power of the word of God. The voice of God sounded forth from heaven. "The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty" (Ps. xxix. 4). God's voice sounded, and all the bare, brown earth was covered with beautiful, soft, green grass; and not only that, not only grass, but on that

same wonderful day, and by that same wonderful word of God, all the beautiful trees and all the herbs and little flowering plants sprang out of the earth, which before had looked so dead and cold and brown.

How pretty it must have looked, said Mary.

Yes, but no one could have seen it except for something else which God had made : there might be beautiful grass and flowers and fruit trees, and we might be standing here, as we are now, in front of a nice large window, and yet we might not see any of these pretty things.

Ch, mother, cried Charlie, how could that be ?

Perhaps, if we were blind, said Mary.

No, that is not what I mean. With our sight as good as it is now, we might not be able to see. Can you see at all times ? If you open your eyes in the middle of the night, can you see ?

No, mother, because it is all dark.

Yes ; to see we need not only sight, we need light also. God knew all about us before He made us. "The Lord is good, and doeth good." He prepared the earth so that it should be a very comfortable and pleasant home for man : so, first of all, on the first day, God made the light to shine.

But how, mother, said Charlie ; how did God make it light ?

God commanded the light to shine out of darkness (2 Cor. iv. 6). It was the same word of God. God said, "Let there be light ; and there was light" (Gen. i. 3). God made the light to shine on the first day, and He called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. Then came the second day ; the light was there, but still the earth could not be seen ; it was covered with water. But God made a great space, and He commanded some of the water to go up from the earth, and to stay in the space which He had made. That great space we call the sky, and sometimes it is called the heavens.

"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made" (Ps. xxxiii. 6).

But still the earth could not be seen ; there was a great deal of water standing round it and on it, and it was not yet fit to be covered with its beautiful dress. What was that dress, Mary, do you know ?

The grass, I think, mother.

Yes, the grass.

And how did the earth get dry ? asked Charlie.

God made all the water run together, so the earth became dry, the waters were all together, and the dry land was seen in the midst of the water. God called the waters Seas.

I have seen the sea, said Mary.

Can you remember what the sea is like ? asked mother.

I don't know, said Charlie.

Charlie was a very little boy, and it was a year since he had been to the seaside ; Mary was older, and she said, I remember, the sea looked full of water moving about, and sometimes a great high wave would come rolling along.

Yes, said mother, and you, Mary, were afraid that the big waves would come tumbling over the wall behind which we stood. You cried out more than once : Oh, it will tip over.

And did it tip over ? asked Charlie, who was very pleased to hear about Mary and the sea.

No, said mother, father took Mary up into his arms when she was frightened, and he told her that the sea could never come on and on and swallow us up, as it seemed to want to do. God sent the sea into its place on that wonderful third day, and He keeps it there. "The sea is His, and He made it ; and His hands formed

the dry land " (Ps. xcv. 5). He has set a bound that the waters may not pass over, that they turn not again to cover the earth. When the earth was dry, God covered it with grass and trees.

Was it finished then ? said Mary.

Something more was wanted to make the earth pleasant and fruitful, and fit for man to live upon. Look up, Charlie, and tell me if you see anything above the trees.

The sky, said Charlie, the beautiful blue sky.

Yes, God made the sky on the second day, as I have told you ; but on the fourth day God placed something very, very wonderful and very useful, in the sky. Do you see anything in the blue sky ?

The sun, cried both the children. We see the sun behind that great tree.

Yes, God gave the sun to rule the day. God knew that we should be tired and ill if the light were always shining, so He caused the sun to carry the light and the heat from one place to another, so it is not always light and it is not always hot. Do you always see the sun over the large oak tree ?

No; said Mary, sometimes the sun shines behind that little cottage on the hill.

And after tea, when you are going to bed, do you still see the sun behind the cottage ?

No, said Charlie, the sun has gone away then, and it gets dark.

What is the darkness called ? asked mother.

Night, replied Charlie.

Is the night always quite dark ?

No, said Charlie, I remember, nurse drew up the blind one evening, just before she put me into bed, and she let me look out of the window, and I could see a beautiful light so bright ; I saw the road and a horse under a tree in the field.

What made that beautiful light in the night ? said mother ; and Mary answered at once, It was the moon.

Yes, added mother, God made two great lights ; what is the name of the greater light ?

The Sun, cried Charlie.

Yes, the greater light to rule the day. And the lesser light ?

The Moon, cried both the children.

And what other lights did God put in the sky ?

The stars, said Mary. We have seen them shining in the sky.

Yes, said mother. "He made the stars also." But now, I must not tell you any more of the wonderful works of God to-day ; I want you to learn some verses, which will remind you of what we have said. God has told us how He made the world, so that we might know how great and how good He is, and we want to remember God's words very carefully, so listen to me. And mother repeated this verse, which is the very first in the Bible : " In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Then she told Mary to repeat it with her, while Charlie listened ; after that Charlie repeated the verse with mother, while Mary listened, then they all three said it together—" In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Last of all the children tried to repeat it themselves. This was more difficult, but when they had tried two or three times, they were able to say it together without mother speaking a word, and then they each said it alone. Then in the same manner, at another time, they learned more verses.

" God said, Let there be light : and there was light " (Gen. i. 3).

" By the word of the Lord were the heavens

made ; and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth ” (Ps. xxxiii. 6).

“ He spake, and it was done ; He commanded, and it stood fast ” (Ps. xxxiii. 9).

“ God made two great lights ; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night : He made the stars also ” (Gen. i. 16).

“ God called the dry land Earth ; and the gathering together of the waters called He Seas ” (Gen. i. 10).

II.

THE BEAUTIFUL GARDEN.

CHARLIE and Mary were quite ready when their mother called them to her the next morning: they ran and looked out of the window.

What do you want us to find? said Mary.

Can you see any living creatures?

Oh, yes, cried Charlie. I can see a horse in the field.

And I see a great many cows in another field, said Mary.

And in the lane I see a donkey, added Charlie.

I think, said mother, that you will now be able to tell me how all these creatures came to be upon the earth.

God made them by His word, said the children.

Yes; God is so wise and so kind that He made the earth ready before He made any living creatures. First of all God made—? Mother

stopped speaking, and Mary said, The light.

Yes, first light, said mother ; then God made a great space of air all round the earth ; after that God gathered the waters which were all over the earth together. And what were the waters called ?

Charlie was ready to answer this time. Seas, he said.

Yes, the waters no longer covered the earth ; they were gathered into seas, and so the earth became dry, and then God covered it with grass and trees and flowers ; after that God made the sun, the moon, and the stars. Then God made some living creatures that you have not yet told me about. Look again, Charlie. Do you see any living thing besides the cows, the horse, and the donkey ?

Well, said Charlie slowly, I see a great many little white things in that field far off, and I believe they are sheep and lambs.

I think so too, said mother, but I did not mean sheep and lambs ; they and all four-footed creatures and creeping things were made after the living things that I want you now to find. Look up high above the grass.

Then Mary looked up and exclaimed, Oh, mother, do you mean the birds ? I see a great many birds flying round the trees ; were the birds made before the horse and the sheep ?

Yes, and on the same day as the birds, the fifth day, God also made numbers of living things that we do not often see alive, for their home is the water ; the deep, deep sea, the rivers, and ponds.

Fishes, said Mary.

Yes, God made the four-footed creatures after the birds and fishes.

Then six days after God had said, " Let there be light," one part of the earth was made very beautiful with flowing rivers and all kinds of trees ; it was a garden planted by God, called the garden of Eden (Gen. ii. 8). And now all was ready for the man into whose care God was going to give the earth which He had prepared. On the sixth day God made the first man : God did not make man as He had made other creatures, by only speaking : " The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground " (v. 7).

Adam's body was formed out of the dust, but Adam did not live until God breathed into his nostrils ; then Adam lived and breathed

Adam was made by the hand of God, in the image and likeness of God. Adam thought and felt and spoke, and he was quite different from all the other creatures, for the spirit in him had come from God, and it was to live for ever and ever ; it was made to be happy with God.

God loved the man whom His own hands had formed and into whom He had breathed life ; He took him and put him into the garden, the beautiful garden which He had planted, and God told Adam that he was to keep the garden ; that means he was to take care of it, for God liked Adam to be happy, and nobody is happy with nothing to do.

But even now Adam was not quite happy. God brought all the beautiful creatures which He had made, and Adam looked at them and gave them names : the creatures obeyed Adam, they would come to him when he called them ; but among them all there was not one who had a spirit like Adam's, not one of all the creatures could understand what Adam felt or thought, and not one of the creatures could talk with Adam, so he would have been lonely and not quite happy even in that beautiful garden.

..

..

God knew all that Adam felt ; He knew what Adam needed to make him happy, and so He made Adam go fast asleep ; then, while he was asleep, God made another beautiful creature with a spirit like Adam's, a woman, and He brought her to Adam (*verses 21-23*). Now Adam was quite happy, he was full of joy ; he loved the woman and she loved him, she was a fit companion for him ; they could walk together and talk about all the beautiful things around them, and about the goodness of God who had made all.

What were the trees in the garden like ? asked Mary.

We read, said mother, that "The Lord God planted a garden. . . . and out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food," so when we look at a tree that is pleasant to the sight and beautiful, we may think of the garden, and think that a tree like that once grew there.

A tree like that one with yellow flowers ? asked Charlie, pointing to a tree near the garden gate, from which hung long clusters of beautiful golden-coloured blossoms.

Yes, that is the laburnum.

And there is a pink May tree in the lane, said Mary.

Yes, said mother ; but Adam would not only want pretty things to look at, he would want good things to eat ; so God caused some of the trees to bring forth nice ripe fruit.

God was very kind to Adam, said Mary.

Yes, and that same God is every day very good to us, said mother. "The Lord is good to all ; and His tender mercies are over all His works" (Ps. cxlv. 9). God, in His goodness, said to Adam, "Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat." God is a giving God ; God delights to give. If we do not like to give, we are not at all like God. If a little sister says to her brother, You must not have that, it is mine, that little sister is selfish, not loving to give.

Adam must have been glad, said Charlie. I expect he soon began to pick the fruit.

Yes, said mother ; but, perhaps, before Adam tasted the fruit he thanked God for giving it to him, for Adam had a spirit which could feel God's goodness in giving him all this fruit to eat. The cows and lions and other animals could eat and enjoy food, but they had not

spirits which could enjoy God's goodness and thank Him. Are we like the cows when we eat, or are we like Adam, Mary?

I think, mother, that we are like Adam, because we can speak and think. I think we have a spirit like Adam's.

Yes, we have a spirit which was made to look up to God and to thank and praise Him, and so we thank God for our food before we eat it (1 Tim. iv. 4). It is very sad if anyone eats without thanking God, as if he were a creature with only the spirit of a beast, instead of the wonderful creature to whom God has given a spirit to love and thank Him and be happy with Him. But we must wait for another day to talk more about this wonderful creature and God his Creator. I want you to learn a verse about the garden and what was in it. Then mother said, "The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom He had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Gen. ii. 8, 9). And when both the children were able to say this long verse, mother repeated some pretty lines which she had learned when she

was young, and Mary and Charlie tried to learn them too :—

“ All things bright and beautiful,
 All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
 The Lord God made them all.
Each little flower that opens,
 Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colours,
 He made their shining wings.”

III.

THE WONDERFUL CREATURE AND HIS CREATOR.

MARY and Charlie were standing at the window the next morning when their mother came. I want to talk to you, she said, about something which cannot be seen from the window, so you may sit, one on each side of me ; but just look at the cows, the horse, and the donkey, and tell me if they walk as we do.

They walk on four legs, said Mary.

And we, said Charlie, have only two.

Only two, repeated mother, yet we are much better off, for we have, instead of two more legs, arms and hands, which can do many useful and wonderful things that four-footed creatures cannot do ; and then as we walk our bodies are upright, they do not bend towards the ground, and we can lift up our faces and look right up into the blue sky.

Is that where God is ? asked Mary.

God's dwelling-place is in heaven, above the bright blue sky, replied mother ; but now I must

tell you something very wonderful about God. God is everywhere.

Oh, mother, said Mary, I cannot think what that means.

God is so great, Mary, He has said, " Do not I fill heaven and earth ? " (Jer. xxiii. 24). So God is everywhere. God knows everything. God can do everything. It is too wonderful for us to understand. We believe it because God has said it. God is a Spirit. We cannot see God. We cannot see a spirit. I can see you and Charlie, and you can see me, but I cannot see your spirit and you cannot see my spirit. So we cannot see God, though God sees us.

Mother left off speaking for a little while that the children might have time to think of what she had said. Presently she took out her watch and held it in her hand. What is this, Charlie ?

Your watch, mother, answered Charlie.

Listen, said mother, and she put it to his ear. Do you hear anything ?

Yes, it says tick, tick, tick.

And what else does my watch do ? Look carefully at its face, Mary ; what do you see ?

And Mary looked carefully and said, I see strokes—one, two, three—and I see the two hands, like needles, pointing to the numbers.

And do the hands always point to those numbers where you now see them ?

No, they move on round and round, said Mary, and point to all the numbers.

But, mother, how can they move ? said Charlie.

Well, Charlie, what we see is the case of the watch, and the front part is called the face ; we see the case, just as I can see you, but we cannot see inside the case, just as I cannot see your spirit. We know what is inside by what the hands and face show ; we know that inside the case are the moving wheels of a watch, because the face shows us the hands moving round and telling us the time. I look at the face of my watch and say to you, It is time to go out, or it is time to go to bed. So it is with you. Your spirit is yourself, that living spirit which nobody can see. Your body is like a case in which you live, and I know what you feel or think by seeing your face and seeing the things that you do. If you are hurt or sad, what do you do ?

Cry, said Charlie.

If you are very happy, what do you do ?

We jump about and laugh, said Mary.

Then if father brings you home something in his pocket, what does that show ?

He is kind, said Mary.

And when he mended Charlie's cart that was broken ?

Oh, he was very clever.

And he carried me all the way home when I was tired, said Charlie.

He is very strong, said Mary.

It is in this way we learn about God, said mother. God is a Spirit " Whom no man hath seen, nor can see " (2 Tim. vi. 16). Yet God has been pleased to show us what He is like. When you hear that God made the beautiful trees and covered them with fruit for Adam, what do you learn about God ?

That He is very good, said Mary.

Yes, and God is very great. He who could make all the great mountains, all the hills, all the fields, and that great and wide sea—He surely must be very great and powerful.

What is powerful ? asked Mary.

God is able to do whatever He plans to do, answered mother. We sometimes wish to do a thing and are not able to do it ; perhaps we are not strong enough or wise enough. We are

not powerful ; we are weak and foolish, we make mistakes. God is wise and powerful. " O Lord, how manifold are Thy works ! in wisdom hast Thou made them all : the earth is full of Thy riches " (Ps. civ. 24).

Mother, what does manifold mean ?

It means of many different kinds. God's works are of many different kinds. You can tell me some of them.

God made the sun, the moon, and the stars, said Charlie.

Yes, and they were quite a different kind of work from the trees or animals.

And God formed man out of the dust of the ground, said Mary.

And, added mother, God breathed into Adam's nostrils, and man became a living soul. Our bodies are wonderfully made ! How many things we can do, and all because of the wonderful spirit which lives within.

We can run and jump, said Charlie.

And talk, said Mary.

But babies cannot talk, said Charlie.

No, said mother. A year or two ago you could say only one word ; then you learnt another word and another. One wonderful

thing about us is how much we can learn.

And if we learn we shall grow up, said Mary, and know everything, like father and mother.

Oh, mother, do make haste and teach us everything, said Charlie.

You are only a little boy, Charlie, and I can only teach you slowly as you are able to learn. Your mind, like your body, is not yet as strong as the mind or body of a man ; you could not learn everything, but some things, the best things, I can never teach you. It is God Himself who alone can teach you the best things, the things which can make you happy for ever and ever.

What is for ever and ever ? asked Charlie.

It is a time which will never, never come to an end. The time when we can sit and talk like this will come to an end ; it will be time to do something else.

We shall have to go for our walk, said Mary.

And the walk will end, said mother.

And at last the day will end and the night come, said Mary.

And, said mother, the night will end and morning will come again. But there is a day coming which will never end ; it will last for

ever and ever ; it will be always bright, and it will be a day all happiness, for God is love. This God, so good, so gracious, so strong, and so wise, loves us so much that He is continually looking at us. Though we cannot see God, He can see us ; He sees us at all times. He is always watching to keep us from harm and to give us all that He thinks good for us.

All the night ? said Charlie.

Yes, indeed, all the night. Do you know this little verse :—

The morning bright
With rosy light
Has waked me from my sleep.
Father, I own
Thy love alone
Thy little one doth keep.

And now let us try and learn some verses about the great Creator.

So mother repeated :—

“ Thou art great, and doest wondrous things : Thou art God alone ” (Ps. lxxxv. 10).

“ The darkness hideth not from Thee : but the night shineth as the day : the darkness and the light are both alike to Thee ” (Ps. cxxxix. 12).

IV.

A SAD STORY.

THE next day the children found their mother sitting in her usual place, and the two little chairs one on each side of her, so they sat down by her side.

As mother did not speak to them directly, Mary looked at her, and saw a grave and thoughtful look upon her mother's face, so she quickly asked—

Are you sad, mother ?

Not exactly, replied her mother, but I have a sorrowful story to-day to tell you.

Mother, said Charlie, I don't like a sad story ; I wish you would tell us more about Adam and Eve in the beautiful garden.

The story I have to tell, said mother, *is* about Adam and Eve : it is a sad story of what they did in that garden, where everything around them and the bright sky above them spoke of God's great goodness. We all have to hear this sad story, Charlie, but though so sad it

leads to another story which is happy and bright.

Very well then, said Mary, please begin, so that we may get on to the happy part.

First, then, do you remember what God had said to Adam about the fruit in the garden ?

God said he might eat it, said Charlie.

Yes ; God in His goodness gave Adam a great many kinds of good fruit to eat, and Adam ought to have been content and thankful. I told you when we talked about the beautiful garden that God said to Adam, “ Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat,” but I did not tell you then the whole of what God had said. As soon as the Lord God had put Adam into the garden He said to him, “ Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat : but. . . . ” It was God’s, and Adam had to learn that it was his duty to obey God ; that everything in the garden and he himself belonged to God ; that all he enjoyed was given to him by God, so that he might always think of God and trust Him. So God said, “ *But* of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Adam did not need to eat of that

one tree ; he had plenty of other fruit, and he ought to have believed God, who was so good to him, and have minded what God said. But no, Adam disobeyed God ; he ate of that fruit.

Oh, mother, cried Mary, how foolish ! Why did Adam eat it ?

It was more than foolish, Mary ; it was very, very wrong. But I will try and tell you how it all happened. A long while before God created Adam He had made some beautiful creatures to stand before Him and to do His will,—the angels. They are God's servants ; angels are very strong and very beautiful, and among these angels there was one more beautiful than all the rest (Ezek. xxviii. 12-17) ; and one day he began to think how very beautiful he was, and he grew full of pride, and did not like to obey God any longer ; he wanted to do his own will, just as if he had been God, for it is only God who has the right to do His own will. God is good and His will is good and perfect (Rom. xii. 2). Directly a creature does his own will, or wishes to do his own will, it is sin.

So this angel, whose name is Satan, became full of wickedness. And God is holy, He cannot

have any evil near Him ; so He cast Satan out of His presence, where all must be holiness and happiness. Satan was full of hatred against God, and so he hated the man whom God had made, and he wished to make him wicked and miserable like himself.

Satan is very clever ; he made himself look like a beautiful serpent, and then he came near to Eve and began to speak to her ; he pretended to be very kind, and he said, Is it true that God has not allowed you to eat *every* kind of fruit in the garden ? (Gen. iii.)

Eve answered, We may eat of all the fruits in the garden except one, and God has said, You shall not eat that ; if you do you will die.

Then Satan told a very dreadful lie, and put a very dreadful thought into Eve's mind : he told Eve that it was not true that she and Adam would die if they ate the fruit, but that God would not let them have it because He knew that it would make them so very wise that they would be like gods, instead of being mere creatures. You see, Adam and Eve were God's creatures ; they belonged to God because He had made them.

God had, in love and wisdom, made man to be

dependent and obedient. Do you understand those words ? I think Charlie can tell me what obedient means.

It means, said Charlie, to do as we are told. That is partly right, said mother ; for a child, obedience is to do as his father and mother wish ; sometimes the child has to *do* something that he is told to do. But is it always that, Mary ?

Mary thought a little while, and then said, I think, sometimes we are told *not* to do something, but I like better to do something you tell me to do than not to do some things.

But to be obedient, said mother, we must be just as ready not to do what is forbidden as to do what we are told to do. Every man, every woman, and every child ought to obey God in both these ways, because we are all God's creatures. A creature ought to be obedient ; a creature is also dependent.

That *is* a hard word, said Mary ; I cannot think what it means.

You have seen a little baby, have you not ? Oh, yes, mother, often.

Well, said mother, a baby is a very good living picture of what it is to be dependent : a

baby has nothing ; it wants a father to get things for it, and a little baby can do scarcely anything but cry ; it wants a mother to nurse it and carry it, and wash it and dress it, and to give it what it needs.

A baby does not even know what it needs, but the mother knows just what is good for it. Sometimes the baby needs food, sometimes sleep, sometimes warmth, but it cannot get anything or think of anything for itself ; it has to get everything from the love and wisdom of its parents. Now, we are all like little babies ; we have to get everything from the love and wisdom of God—that is, we are dependent.

But, mother, said Mary, you are not like a little baby, you can get everything for yourself ; you can make frocks and things for us.

And father can take care of himself, said Charlie.

Indeed no, said mother ; I and father too are both dependent upon the love and kindness and wisdom of God ; we often do not know what is best for us or what is best for our children, and we have to ask God to teach us, as we are dependent on the wisdom of God ; and then, although father and mother can do many things

which you cannot do, we are dependent on God to give us strength to do these things. If God takes away strength, even a great man like father would become as helpless as a baby ; besides this, if God did not make His sun to shine upon us, what could we do without light ? Could we make a sun for ourselves ?

Oh, no, said the children.

No indeed, said mother ; we are dependent on God, who " giveth to all life, and breath, and all things " (Acts xvii. 25). A creature is only happy when he is obedient and dependent. It is very happy for us to be dependent on a God who is full of goodness.

But Eve did not think like this ; she made a terrible mistake ; she believed what Satan told her ; she looked at the fruit, and when she saw how nice it looked, she thought that it would make her happier and wiser if she ate some of it, so she took some and ate it ; then she gave some to Adam, and Adam also ate, though God had said, " Thou shalt not eat of it." Was not this dreadful disobedience ?

As soon as they had eaten this fruit something dreadful came into their hearts which had never been there before. It was sin ; they became

afraid of God, they did not trust Him, they did not love Him, and Adam no longer loved Eve as much as he had done.

Just then they heard the voice of God, that voice full of majesty. They knew they were sinful, the voice of God now no longer gave them pleasure, it filled them with fear, they did not want to see or to hear God, they did not want to be seen by God, and so they hid themselves behind the trees in the garden.

But could not God see them there ? said Mary.

Do you think God could see them ? asked mother.

Yes, I think He could, said Mary, for you told us that God sees us at all times.

Yes, God could see them, and He could by His mighty power have forced them to come out from behind the trees ; but God is very pitiful (James v. 11), and although Adam was now so sinful that God could not take pleasure in him, He wanted to talk with Adam and teach him how sinful he had been, and teach him to trust Him again. So God did not leave Adam hiding behind the trees ; He could not give up the creature He had made, and to whom He had

shown so much goodness. God called and said, "Where art thou?"

Then Adam said that he had hidden himself because he was so frightened when he heard the voice of God.

So God said, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

Oh, how frightened Adam must have been! What did he say? asked Mary.

What ought Adam to have said, Mary? What ought you to say if you are asked about some naughty things which you have done?

He ought to have said, Yes, and I am sorry, replied Mary: but she spoke in a very low tone, for she herself did not always like to say yes when she had been disobedient.

Yes, said mother, Adam ought to have said, Yes, I did disobey, I did take the fruit; but he tried to make an excuse for himself by putting the blame upon Eve; he said, "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."

Then God spoke to Eve; He said, "What is this that thou hast done?"

Eve, too, tried to excuse herself ; she said, " The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." That word beguiled means that the serpent made Eve believe that to take the fruit was a very pleasant and wise thing to do, and that the fruit would do her a great deal of good.

Poor Eve, said Mary ; I feel very sorry for her, for Satan was so very clever that I think perhaps Eve could not help believing what he told her.

Satan was very clever, a great deal more clever than Eve, Mary ; but Eve would have been safe, though she was not clever, if she had been obedient. Obedience is what keeps us safe from Satan and from all harm. Besides this, Eve had enjoyed the goodness of God her Creator, and it was therefore very sad that she could in a moment believe that God was not good and was not true, just because a creature whom she knew nothing about, tried to make her think so.

When Eve had spoken, God spoke to the serpent, and in what God said there was a part which was like a bright sunbeam of hope for man in the midst of his fear and misery. God told the serpent that a Child should be born,

called the Seed of the woman, who should bruise or crush the head of the serpent.

What a good thing, said Charlie ; then the wicked serpent would die, and Adam and Eve could be happy again in the garden.

Oh, no, Charlie, said mother ; Adam and Eve had been very naughty. They had been disobedient, they had rebelled against God.

What does that mean ? asked Mary.

It means, said mother, that they had done just the very thing that God had told them not to do, without caring whether it displeased God. Instead of being, like the little baby, dependent, they had done their own will, just as if they could live without God.

But perhaps, mother, they were sorry now, said Mary ; and they would never want to eat that fruit again.

Ah, Mary, said mother, when they took the fruit and ate it, sin came into their hearts, and even if they could have kept from ever doing anything wrong again, that would not have taken the sin away out of their hearts, and it would not have made up for having disobeyed the command of God. Besides this, do you remember what God had said to Adam when

He had said, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it"? What did God say should happen if Adam ate of that fruit?

He should die, said Mary. Oh, mother, did he die? You said God was so good, and He loved Adam and Eve; I hope He forgave them.

God is a God of truth, Mary, as well as a God of goodness; He must do just as He says He will do. Satan is a liar, but God cannot lie. Whatever God says must happen.

Oh, said Charlie; this is a dreadful story!

Yes, Charlie, it is a dreadful story, but it is not all dreadful; the part about Satan and about Adam's sin is dreadful, but the part about God is very blessed, and if we learn what this story teaches, it is the way to be very happy. We shall hear more about the happy part another day; we have talked long enough now, so you may learn two little verses about all that we have said.

Then mother said this verse, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. v. 12). And when the children could say this, she taught them the second verse, "Sin is lawlessness" (1 John iii. 4, R.V.). Charlie could

hardly say that long word, and neither he nor Mary could understand it until mother explained to them that lawlessness is self-will, trying to have our own way ; this makes people disobedient, angry, selfish, cruel, deceitful, and a great many other bad things.

Last of all, mother taught them a verse of a hymn, that they might remember the bright sunbeam of hope in the midst of this sad story.

“ Soon as the reign of sin began,
The light of mercy dawnd on man,
When God announced the blessed news,
The woman’s Seed thy head shall bruise.”

V

WHAT GOD SAID TO ADAM.

DO you remember, asked mother the next day, where Adam and Eve were when you last heard about them ?

They were hidden behind the trees, said Charlie.

But they were not really hidden, said Mary ; God saw them there.

Yes, and God talked to them, said Charlie.

And can you tell me what God said to the serpent ?

His head should be crushed, said Charlie.

Yes, said mother, his head should be crushed ; that means that the day should come when all that Satan did should be undone, and he should not have power any more, because the One who was to be born, the promised Seed, should be a great deal stronger and greater than that strong angel, Satan.

But God did not, just then, say any more about the One who was to come and conquer Satan ; God spoke to Eve and then He spoke to Adam. First God told Adam how great his

sin was ; Adam had been put into the garden to take care of it all for God, and to take care of Eve his wife, and instead of doing as God had said he had listened to Eve and had let her entice him to take the fruit ; he had eaten the fruit which belonged to God, and which God had told him he was not to eat.

Then God told Adam what his punishment was to be. God must punish sin. God hates sin, for He is holy ; the angels who stand before God say continually “Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty” (Rev. iv. 8), and if man is to be happy, he must learn to hate sin. It is for this reason that fathers and mothers must punish their children when the children are naughty. It makes mother sad if she has to put her dear child far away from her to stand in the corner ; but mother must not think about that, she must do God’s will to her child, and besides that she must teach her child that sin and sorrow go together. Satan pretends that sin leads to pleasure, but it is a lie.

When I was a little girl I had a kind friend who used to send me letters, and in one of them he wrote something like this—S.S.S. these three go together, and H.H.H., these three go together,

What did that mean, said Mary, I don't understand one bit.

It meant, said mother, Sin, Sorrow, Satan go together ; and Holiness, Happiness, Heaven, these go together.

So God had to punish Adam ; God said that the earth, instead of being covered with useful and beautiful trees and plants, should bring forth thorns and thistles. Adam would no longer be able to enjoy himself, and eat the fruit which hung from the trees in the garden of Eden, which means the garden of Pleasure, he would have to work very hard to get any food at all, and after all, however hard he worked, he would not be able to keep himself alive ; the day would come when he must die. God had said, " Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." The very moment Adam and Eve ate the fruit, death came into them. They began to die. Adam was to work and eat, but at last the day would come when his spirit would be called away by God and only his body would be left. " Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was ; and the spirit shall return unto God

who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7). When God calls away the spirit of a man, or a woman, or a child, we say, that man or that woman or that child is dead ; the spirit is gone ; the body without the spirit cannot see, cannot hear, cannot speak, cannot move, cannot think, cannot feel ; soon it grows quite cold, it is put into the earth, into a grave, and soon it turns into dust. God had formed Adam's body out of the dust, and now He said to Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Gen. iii. 19).

Oh, mother, how dreadful, said Mary ; God was very angry with Adam.

It was right that God should be angry, Mary. God is the Ruler of all men. Yet, at the same time, God is full of mercy.

Mercy ! mother, what is that ?

Mercy, said mother, means kindness to a person who deserves punishment. God delights in mercy. God was merciful to Adam and Eve. He did not make them die that moment, He let them live to learn the lessons He wanted to teach them, and to have children, for you know that God had said that the Child, the Seed of the woman, should be given. Then God knew

that Adam and Eve would now need clothing to cover them ; they had sewed fig leaves together for themselves, but that was a poor, miserable covering, it would very soon have been torn among the thorns and thistles, and it would not have kept them warm. God did not make Adam and Eve die that moment, but He made some creatures die, and took their skins and made them into coats for Adam and Eve, so they were clothed ; but Adam and Eve were now sinners, sinful creatures, and sinful creatures could not stay in God's beautiful garden. In the middle of the garden there was a tree called the Tree of Life. God said Adam must not take the fruit of *that* tree, and so live for ever, a sinner far away from God ; no, that would be terrible ; so God drove Adam and Eve out of the garden, and then He sent His angels to stand with a flaming sword at the gate of the garden, so that Adam and Eve might never get back into the garden again.

Oh, mother, said Mary, it does seem sad !

And mother answered—It is sad, Mary, but God has written this sad story that we may learn what a dreadful thing sin is ; but we learn, too, the mercy of God ; His kind care was

still over Adam and Eve when they were outside the garden. God still let His sun shine upon the earth, God still made food to grow up out of the earth, but everything was very different from what it had been. When God, at first, had finished making the earth, He saw that everything was "very good"; now all was spoiled by sin. Adam must have felt the sad change; he had never felt tired in the garden, now he must often have felt tired as he worked on the hard earth and had to pull up the thorns that would grow where he wanted to have corn and fruit. Adam and Eve had never felt pain or illness in the garden, now they would feel pain and sickness. The animals, too, did not all obey Adam as they had done; some of them began to roar and growl, and the stronger animals began to hurt the weaker animals. Can you tell me the name of a strong animal that roars, Charlie?

A lion, mother, said Charlie.

And would you like to see a lion running to you when you were alone in the lane?

Oh no, I should scream.

And I should run away, said Mary.

Yes, said mother. We are afraid of wild beasts, such as lions, bears, wolves, and tigers,

and happily wild beasts do not live in this country ; but in the garden of Eden none of the creatures were wild beasts. Adam was no more afraid when a lion came up to him than you would be if a little lamb came skipping towards you.

I would like a little lamb to run to me, said Charlie, and I wish all the animals were good and kind.

Sin changed everything, said mother ; pain came, sorrow came, death came. But you will, I am sure, be glad to hear that one day, through the Seed of the woman, all the mischief that Satan did on that day when he tempted Eve, will be undone. Sick people will be cured, lame men will be able to walk again, blind men will see, the deaf will hear ; a wolf and a lamb will stay together safe and happy, the lion will not try and eat other creatures, but will eat grass like those quiet cows which you see in the field (Isa. xi. 6, 7).

Oh, mother, I am glad to hear that, said Mary. I don't like wild beasts at all.

No, said mother, I am sure you do not like wild beasts, and you do not like pain, or sorrow or tears ; but what we have to hate is sin.

Mother, I do hate sin, said Mary ; I don't like that wicked serpent at all ; and I wish that Adam and Eve had not been disobedient to God.

Ah, Mary, when we think of sin we have to think of sin in ourselves and hate sin in ourselves. Are you always willing to do what you are told ? Do you never want to do what you are told not to do ? When we hate sin we do not try to have our own way, we do not cry or look cross when we may not have our own way. We say, this is sin ; I do not want to love sin which God hates, and which brings sorrow and pain and death and punishment. The One whom God promised could not take away the sorrow of the world unless He could take away the sin of the world, and now you shall learn a verse about this One. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i. 29).

And when the children could say that verse they learned another, "Sorrow and sighing shall flee away !" (Isa. xxxv. 10), and then part of a hymn which pleased them very much, it was as follows :—

"He shall come down like showers
Upon the new-mown grass,
And joy and hope, like flowers,
Spring up where He doth pass."

VI.

THE PROMISED CHILD.

WHAT are you going to tell us about now, mother ? asked Mary, when the next day she sat down by her mother's side.

I wonder how much you remember of what I have told you, said mother.

I think I remember it all, said Mary, and it makes me very sad to think how naughty Adam and Eve were, and how they spoilt the earth. I should like to have seen the beautiful garden. I wish you and father had been put there, for I am sure that you would never have taken the fruit when God had told you not.

Mother did not answer at once, but she pointed to a glass of clear, fresh water, that was on the table, and said—Do you see that glass of water, Mary ? Does it look nice and clear ? Should you like to drink some of that water, if you were thirsty ?

Oh yes, I should, said Mary ; but while Mary was speaking, mother dropped a piece of hard earth, which she took from a flower pot, into

the glass, then she held it towards the children.

Oh, mother, I should not like to drink that, said Mary, and she drew back.

I do not want you to drink the muddy water at the bottom of the glass, said mother, for the piece of hard earth was beginning to get soft and the water round it looked just like the water in a muddy pool ; but can you not drink some from the top of the glass ?

Oh, mother, said Mary, it is *all* dirty ; the earth at the bottom keeps making little clouds of muddy water go up to the very top of the glass. You don't want me to drink any of that, do you ? And Mary looked inquiringly at her mother, who answered,

No, Mary, I did not think you would wish to drink any of the water after I had put the bit of earth into it ; I meant it to be a picture of Adam and all his children. Can you tell me what entered into the world by that one man, Adam ? What was the verse you learnt a few days ago ? And mother began—" By one man " . . . Then Mary and Charlie were both able to say, " By one man sin entered into the world."

Then mother said, Sin came into Adam's heart as soon as he took the forbidden fruit, but that

was not all ; by Adam sin entered into the world ; sin is in the heart of every child of Adam.

I am glad I am not Adam's child, said Charlie ; I like to be father's child, and not the child of naughty Adam.

But father *is* Adam's child, said mother ; every man, woman, and child in the whole world came from Adam ; he was the first man, and all the others came from him.

Both the children looked at their mother as if they could hardly understand what she had said, so mother waited a few minutes that they might have time to think ; then she said—Just go to the window and look out at the large tree ; what do you see nearest the grass ?

I see a great, big, thick part, said Charlie.

That is the trunk of the tree, said mother ; and what do we call those great things which stretch out on every side like long arms ?

The branches, said Mary.

Yes ; and then there are smaller parts on every branch ; we call those twigs, and every leaf is joined to the twigs by a stem. Can you count how many leaves there are, Mary ?

Oh, mother, I *couldn't* count all those, said Mary ; I can hardly see a great many of them.

Could you count the twigs ? asked mother.

No, *I* couldn't, said Charlie.

Nor even the branches, said mother ; but how many trunks has the tree got ?

Only one trunk, said Mary.

And when we look at the trunk and the branches and the twigs and the stems and the leaves, we say there is one big tree. So when we think of all the people who ever lived in the world, we say they are all one big family, Adam's family or Adam's children.

Adam was created in the image and likeness of God, but when Adam had children, they were all born in Adam's image and Adam's likeness ; they were sinners. Now look again at the glass of water.

It is very dirty now, said Charlie.

Yes, said mother ; all the water in that glass is made dirty by the lump of earth at the bottom, and in the same way, every person in Adam's family is made unclean, is defiled by sin. Can you say that word ? And the children repeated after their mother, Défiled.

Who is defiled ? asked mother.

And Mary answered, Everybody, you said, mother. But Mary hardly liked to tell and

hardly could tell what she was thinking of, but mother often guessed what her children were thinking of, and she guessed now, so she answered Mary's thought.

Yes, Mary, what I told you is the truth ; every man, woman, and child in Adam's family is defiled by sin ; but we need not think about other people, we must each learn to say for ourselves, *I am defiled by sin.* God has looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if any were different from the others, and He has said, "They are altogether become filthy". (Ps. xiv. 3). They are all unclean, just as every drop of water in that glass is defiled by the mud at the bottom ; and so it is of no use to wish that father or I or you or Charlie could be put into the garden of Eden, for we could not do any better than Adam did. God did not let Adam hope that he or any of his family could get back into the garden, or could undo what disobedience had done. What had Adam to hope for, do you know ?

I think I know, said Mary ; they were to hope for the promised Child.

Yes, the Seed of the woman ; and I am sure you would like now to hear about the birth of the promised Child.

Oh, yes, said both children. So mother began.

Many, many years had passed since Adam had been driven out of the garden, and just as that water in the glass gets more and more muddy, so people grew more and more sinful. God looked down from heaven, but He could not see in all the earth one person in whom His heart could rest and find pleasure. There were some who trusted God and hoped for the promised Child, but even among them there was not one whose heart was without sin, so God could not find His pleasure in any one of Adam's family, for God is holy ; He loves good and hates evil.

But at last, the day came for the promised One to be born into the world. He was born a little baby, and His mother's name was Mary. Well, one day, one of God's beautiful servants, an angel, was sent from heaven to tell Mary that God was going to send her this Child, the hope of the whole world ; and the angel said to Mary, " That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God " ; but His mother was to call Him by a name, a sweet name which you have often heard, His name was to be Jesus (Luke i. 26-35). Mary was

full of joy and hope after she heard the message which the angel had brought, and a little while afterwards the baby was born. No baby like this had ever before come into the world. There was nothing to be seen different from other babies, but in His heart there was no sin, and He was also greater than the greatest prince who had ever been born. If a country belongs to any man, we call that man a king, and if that king has a son born, he is called the heir ; everybody rejoices and thinks a great deal about the heir ; the heir is born in a fine house called a palace, and he has a great many servants to wait on him and take care of him. Jesus, that holy Being called the Son of God, was much greater than any heir who had ever come into the world before Him. He was heir of all things in heaven and on earth ; all things were created for His pleasure.

Think of the beautiful earth which God created ; think of man, God's wonderful creature, who had a spirit made to love God ; think of all the animals, some so strong, some so useful, some so beautiful ; think of all the birds that fly in the space which we call the air ; then think of the sun, the moon, and the stars which

shine in the sky ; think of all the holy angels who stand before God's throne in heaven ; all, everything was created for the pleasure of this one wonderful Person, the Son of God (Col. i. 16). And when He came to earth, when God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, where do you think He was born ?

Oh, mother, where ? said Mary ; I can't think of any place grander than a castle or a palace.

No, Mary, perhaps not, and if you could, no place would have been good enough for the holy Child Jesus. But when Jesus was born people were so full of their own business and their own pleasure that most of them had forgotten the promised Child, they were not expecting Him ; and so when Mary's baby was born there was no room for Him in any great house, and His mother laid Him in a manger (Luke ii. 7).

What is a manger ? asked Charlie.

It seems to me it is where the horse eats its food, said Mary, but that would not be a nice place for a baby.

Still the first place in which the holy Babe was laid was indeed a manger, continued mother. Jesus came to be among the poor and lowly

not among the rich ; there were very few on earth who thought anything about Him. But in heaven God thought everything of Him, and as soon as He was born into the world God commanded all the angels in heaven to bow down and do homage to this Babe in the manger. And God would not let this wonderful thing which had happened be unknown ; the birth of the promised Child was to be known to the rich and to the poor, to the high and to the low, to the learned and to the ignorant, to old people and to little children.

I will tell you more about how the birth of Jesus was made known another day, and now I will teach you two little verses from the Bible and a verse of a sweet hymn.

“ God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son ” (John iii. 16).

“ Jesus was born in Bethlehem ” (Matt. ii. 1).

“ Christ is merciful and mild,
He was once a little child.
He whom heavenly hosts adore
Lived on earth among the poor.”

And mother explained that the “ heavenly hosts ” meant the thousands of angels who did homage to the Babe.

VII.

GLAD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.

ARE you going to tell us more about the promised Child to-day ? said Mary, and mother answered, Yes ! The story of the promised Child will never, never end, and those who love Him never grow weary of hearing about Him. I am going, to-day, to tell you about some people who heard about Him on the very night He was born. But first, let me hear the verse you learned which tells where Jesus was born.

Then the children repeated, " Jesus was born in Bethlehem." Mother then went on—Bethlehem was the name of a little town in a very beautiful country, and a little way outside that town there is a valley.

What is a valley, mother ? said Mary.

A valley, said mother, is a place shaded by hills ; Bethlehem was in a hot country, where in some parts the grass got burnt up by the heat ; the hills round this valley shaded the fields from

the scorching sun and kept the ground moist, so the grass grew there rich and green, and it was a very good place for flocks to feed ; but among the hills which were round the green valley, hungry wolves and other fierce creatures were sometimes hidden, waiting to snatch away a lamb if there were no one near to take care of it. Sheep and lambs cannot defend themselves ; that is to say, they have no fierce claws, or cruel teeth, or strong jaws, or loud roaring voices with which to frighten away any wild beasts which come to hurt them ; so in those countries shepherds stay all night in the fields watching their flocks.

There were some shepherds in one of the fields in this valley of Bethlehem on the night when Jesus was born ; there they were, looking and listening so that no wolf, however cunning, should creep into the midst of their flock and steal one of the sheep. And while they were watching, they did see something, but, oh ! not at all what they were looking for ; something more wonderful, more beautiful than they had ever seen or thought of. The angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them ; then they heard a

new and wonderful sound, an angel's voice speaking to them. And this heavenly messenger spoke wonderful words. "Fear not," said the angel, "for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy" (Luke ii. 8-20). What were these good tidings, this good news which would bring great joy to the shepherds?

And Charlie answered, Jesus was born.

Yes, said mother; the birth of the promised Child, which hundreds and hundreds of people had been waiting for through hundreds and hundreds of years, was indeed good tidings of great joy; greater joy and greater good than the shepherds could understand. But the news was not only to bring great joy to the shepherds, it was glad tidings to all people. What did Adam and Eve feel, do you think, Mary, when God drove them out of the garden?

They felt great sorrow, I think, said Mary.

Yes; through Adam great sorrow came into the world; but now, through the birth of Jesus, great joy had come. The shepherds, I am sure, were listening to hear what this good news could be, and the angel went on to say—"Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord." This Child was a

gift sent from God, God's own Son, sent to be a Saviour, to save man from all the sin and sorrow into which he had fallen when he believed the lie which Satan had told in the garden. Satan said, as it were, God does not love you, He does not wish you to be very happy, so He keeps that fruit away from you. But now, in giving the Child, God showed His love. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him" (I John iv. 9). When the love of God comes into our hearts it turns out Satan's lie, and we trust God to make us happy instead of always trying to make ourselves happy; for trying to make ourselves happy, often leads to sin. God did not make the earth to be filled with sin and sorrow, and He did not make man to spend his time here in pain and trouble and hard work, and then lie down and die. So through the Child tidings of great joy were to come to all people.

But more wonders followed. Suddenly, as soon as this angel had spoken to the shepherds, a multitude, a very great number, of other bright and beautiful angels came to the same place,

and their voices together sounded in praise to God ; they said, " Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Three blessed and wonderful things—

Glory to God. All the dark cloud of sin which Satan had brought would be driven away, and God's glory would shine out more brightly than if there had never been any sin at all.

Peace on earth. All the sins, and tears, and pains, and sorrows, and fightings, would be taken away from the earth, and everywhere there would be peace ; that means great happiness with nothing to disturb.

Then, last of all, God would find His good pleasure in man. Do you remember how I told you that God looked down from heaven upon all the people in the world, and what did He see ?

Not one good, said Charlie.

No ; in all the earth God could not see one single man, woman, or child in whom His heart could find good pleasure. But now, in that little Babe in the manger, God saw One who was holy, One who would delight to do the will of God, who would always do those things that pleased His Father, for God was His Father ; the Babe was the Son of God. So, through this

One, Jesus, the Son of God, there would be glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good pleasure in man.

But earth was not yet freed from sin and sorrow. Something more than the *birth* of the Son of God was needed for that, and so the angels could not stay ; the angels of God are holy beings and could not live in the midst of sin and sorrow ; they were heavenly visitors, and as soon as they had finished speaking, they all went back into heaven.

The shepherds were filled with wonder and joy ; they could not stay in the field with the sheep any longer that night. Where do you think they wanted to go ?

Where, mother ? asked Mary.

If you and Charlie had been with those shepherds in the field, and had heard that the promised Child had been born close to the place where you were, should you have wished to go and see this lovely Babe ?

Oh, yes ! indeed I should, said Mary. And did the shepherds go to see the Babe ?

Yes, they went as fast as they could into the town of Bethlehem, and there, lying in the manger, as the angels had told them, they found

the Babe ; Mary, His mother, was beside Him, and Joseph, who was her husband.

Then the shepherds themselves became messengers to others, just as the angels had been to them ; they told everybody they could see about the first angel and the good tidings he had brought, and then how the multitude of bright shining angels had come down and spoken in praise to God about the Child.

Can you tell me the three things which the angels said ?

Mary and Charlie both tried, and mother helped them to say : Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good pleasure in man.

All the people who heard the news were filled with wonder, and Mary His mother, who remembered the words she had heard from an angel before the Babe was born, had her heart filled with new and happy thoughts. God thought very much about the Babe in the manger, and He likes us, when we hear the blessed story, not to forget it, but to think about it in our hearts, as Mary did.

The shepherds did not stay in Bethlehem, they had to go back to the same field where they had left their sheep, but they were quite like

new men ; their hearts were so happy that, as they walked along and as they watched their sheep, they were "glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

Mother, I should like to have been in Bethlehem with those shepherds, said Mary ; I should like to have seen the Babe in the manger.

God was very gracious to those shepherds, to allow them to see and hear such wonders, said mother ; and God is also very good to us. He wrote that story in His Book so that we might hear it and rejoice, and though we cannot now see that Babe and Mary, we are waiting to see Jesus, the very same One who was once the Babe in the manger. Now I will let you learn some sweet verses of a hymn, though perhaps you may not quite understand them now. And mother repeated these lines :—

“ Blest Babe, who lowly liest
In manger cradle there,
Descended from the highest,
Our sorrows all to share.

“ Oh Love, all thought surpassing
That Thou should'st with us be,
Nor yet in triumph passing
But human infancy.”

VIII.

WHAT HAPPENED IN JERUSALEM.

TO-DAY, said mother, when she had the children beside her, I want to tell you some stories about the most wonderful city in the world, and what happened there.

What is a city? asked Mary.

A city, replied mother, is a very great town. London is a city, but the city I am going to speak of is called Jerusalem.

What a long name, said Charlie; but mother said it again, Jerusalem, and Mary said it, and after Charlie had listened carefully, he too was able to say Jerusalem.

Then mother went on with her story—In this city, Jerusalem, there lived an old man whose name was Simeon; he was waiting for the consolation of Israel (Luke ii. 25), that is, he was waiting for God to perform His promise that One should come who should comfort God's people for all the sorrow and trouble that sin had brought upon them. Consolation means comfort; if you hurt yourself you run to mother,

and she takes you on her knee and kisses you, and wipes away your tears, and puts something to make the hurt better, that is a kind of comfort. God is the great Comforter. He has said, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isa. lxvi. 13), and "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"; and God will not put something to make the hurt better, He will take it quite away for ever—"There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain" (Rev. xxi. 4). The consolation that Simeon was waiting for was a Person, the One who should bring comfort in such a wonderful way that there would never be sorrow nor pain again any more. God had said that Jerusalem was to be the joy of the whole earth, and that would be through the coming of the promised One; so Simeon longed very much for Him. But Simeon was getting very old, and you know when people get very old they are nearly at the end of their life here, and the next thing is that they may expect to die. Simeon would have felt it sad to die without seeing the promised Child for whose coming he had been waiting so long, but he was to have the joy he looked for.

One day a message came to him ; this time the message was not sent by an angel, but the Holy Spirit of God made Simeon know in his heart that he should not die until he had seen the Lord's Christ. The Lord's Christ is another name for the holy Child Jesus ; it means that Jesus was the One set apart by God to do His will. God's will was to take away sin and death and sorrow, and to bring in life and joy.

Simeon must have been glad at this news, like the shepherds, said Mary.

Yes, said mother ; news of the Child was glad tidings to all who were waiting for Him ; now Simeon's long time of waiting was almost over. A little while after the message had reached him, it was put into his heart by the Spirit of God to go to the temple.

What is the temple, mother ? asked Mary.

At that time, said mother, the temple was a beautiful house built in Jerusalem, where the Jews, the people who lived in Judea, went to worship God.

So Simeon went to the temple, and just at that time Joseph and Mary came from Bethlehem and came into the temple, carrying the holy Babe, who was then about a month old.

Directly he saw them Simeon knew that this little child was the One for whom he had waited so long, and oh ! how glad his heart was when he looked upon the lovely Babe ; he took Him up in his arms and thanked God, and said, " Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation." Simeon was content to die now, for he knew that all would be well since God had sent His Son, the Saviour, Christ the Lord.

Joseph and Mary were quite astonished when they saw this old man's joy and heard what he said about the Child ; and at that instant another aged person came in, a very old woman whose name was Anna ; she too praised and thanked God when she looked upon the Babe, and she was so full of joy that, although she was so very old, she went out of the temple and went all about the city to tell the good news to all the people who were waiting for the promised Child.

No doubt all these waiting people were very glad to hear the news, and many praises and thanksgivings would go up to God. So you see, as I told you, this good and glorious news

of the birth of Jesus was made known to all kinds of people.

But in that great city, Jerusalem, there were many people who thought nothing about the promised Child ; they did not come into the temple to see Him, they did not hear what Simeon and Anna spoke about Him ; still, God meant that the news should be heard even by these rich and careless people, for it was the greatest news that ever had been since the creation of the world. The news was sent to the king himself ; Herod was the name of this king, but Herod was a very wicked man. God did not choose to send an angel, a heavenly messenger, to this wicked king ; the Holy Spirit of God could not make anything known to him, for he loved sin and hated good, and perhaps if an old man like Simeon or an old woman like Anna had gone to the king's palace to tell the news, they would have been turned away. So God sent the news to Herod and the great men of Jerusalem in quite another way (Matt. ii. 1-11).

A long, long way from Jerusalem there lived some great and learned men. They are called wise men. They had long been looking for the

birth of the promised Child, for a prophet of those parts had told of a star which was to come, a King who was to be born to the Jews. Do you remember what I told you about Jesus as the heir ?

Neither Mary nor Charlie could tell much about the heir, so mother explained again—An heir is a son of some great person, one who is to have great riches. And who was Jesus the Son of ?

The Son of God, answered Mary.

And what was Jesus heir of ?

Then Mary was able to answer—Heir of all things.

Yes, answered mother ; Jesus was to have all things, all things were created for His pleasure ; when God created the earth with all its riches, and the heavens in shining beauty, He had His own Son before Him. All was prepared for the pleasure of His Son. Jesus is the King of kings, the Prince of the kings of the earth, and so He is also the King of the Jews.

Well, the wise men in the far-off country were expecting the birth of Jesus the King of the Jews, and one night they saw a very bright and beautiful star : it was quite apart by itself, and

the wise men understood that this star was a sign that the King of the Jews so long expected had at last come into the world. There was no voice, there were no words, but the sight of the new and wonderful star made these wise men feel sure that the King of the Jews was born. And what do you think, Mary, they did then ?

Did they go and see for themselves ?

Yes, said mother; they started off and went all the long journey to Jerusalem, for they thought of course that if the King of the Jews had been born, He would be in a palace in the great city of the Jews. They, like the shepherds and Simeon and Anna, were full of gladness, and they wanted to do homage to the Child Jesus, just as the holy angels had done as soon as He came into the world. The wise men knew that though they were great men, it was a great favour for them even to be allowed to bow down before the One who looked then only like a little child in His mother's arms. So the wise men went to the great people in Jerusalem, and asked them, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews ? for we have seen His star in the east and are come to worship Him."

Oh, how surprised they were ! None of these great people had heard the glad tidings ; they were learned, and some of them had read about the promised King of the Jews, but they had not thought about Him ; they had not, like Simeon and Anna, been waiting for Him, and, sadder still, they did not want to see Him.

Oh, mother, said Mary, how could that be, when He was the promised Child ?

Well, Mary, said mother, these people were full of their own riches and their own pleasures, and they did not want to see the One to whom everything belonged, because they did not love Him ; they loved themselves, and none of us can love ourselves and love Jesus at the same time ; if we love ourselves we are very much like these people in Jerusalem who did not want to see Jesus.

Herod, the king, and all these great people in Jerusalem were troubled when they heard the wise men ask "Where is He that is born King of the Jews ?" Herod could not rest ; he sent for the learned men of Jerusalem, and told them to look into their books and see where Christ, the holy Child, was to be born. Mary or the shepherds could have answered the king's

question without the help of books, but the books were books which God had caused to be written by holy men, telling hundreds of years beforehand what would happen. We cannot know beforehand what will happen even to-morrow.

No, mother, said Mary ; and how could these men know beforehand what would happen ?

Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It was the Holy Spirit of God who made Simeon know in his heart that he was to see the Lord's Anointed, and by that same Spirit holy men, called prophets, were able to tell what was going to happen long years after. One of these prophets was named Micah, and he had written about the town of Bethlehem, and had said that although it was such a little town, yet out of it should come the One who was to reign over Jerusalem (Micah v. 2). So the learned men were able to answer the king's question, and to tell that it was in Bethlehem that the promised Child was to be born.

Then Herod sent for the wise men and told them to go away to Bethlehem. I dare say they thought that when they got there they would have to ask some of the people of Bethlehem to

show them where the Child was, but what do you think came to show them the way ?

Perhaps an angel, said Charlie.

No, said mother, this time it was not an angel. What had they seen in their own country to make them first start on the long journey ?

The wonderful star, answered Mary ; and did they see that star again ?

Yes, said mother ; they left the great city Jerusalem and started towards Bethlehem, and “ lo ! the star which they had seen in the east went before them till it came and stood over where the young Child was.” The star stood still over the very house where the young Child was. “ When they saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him ; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts : gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.” Now they had seen the Child whom they had taken so much trouble to find, they went back to their homes full of joy and gladness.

The learned men in Jerusalem had not wished, like the wise men, to see the promised Child ;

but they did see Him, for one day, many years afterwards, Jesus came again into the temple, not now a little babe carried in His mother's arms, He was now twelve years old (Luke ii. 41-52). The most learned people in Jerusalem who were called doctors, were sitting in the temple when the Child Jesus came in. He sat down among them, and I dare say all those men thought that the Child, who was a stranger in the great city, would not know anything, but they were filled with astonishment, for they found that He understood more than they did, and could answer their questions with a wisdom which was beyond the wisest of all those doctors, for it was the wisdom of God.

So now you see how many different people saw and heard of the holy Child Jesus. They were to hear more glad tidings a few years later, but I must tell you about this another day. Then the children learnt these two verses—"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins" (Matt i. 21) ; and "All kings shall fall down before Him : all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. lxxii. 11).

IX.

MORE GLAD TIDINGS.

I LIKE to hear about the promised Child, said Charlie to his mother the next morning.

Can you tell me the name of this promised Child ? asked mother.

His name was Jesus, said Charlie.

And who said that this Child was to be named Jesus ?

The angel told His mother to call Him Jesus, answered Mary.

I should like you to tell me the very words the angel said.

And Mary repeated—"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

Yes, the name Jesus means Saviour, and now I want to tell you how, when Jesus had grown to be a man, He showed Himself as a Saviour. God had told the people many things beforehand about this Saviour, and now Jesus Himself came showing by what He said and by what He did that He was the One of whom

God had spoken. Jesus went all about the country ; He went to Jerusalem, He went to large towns and little villages, “preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom” (Luke viii. 1). The angels in the field near Bethlehem had preached or told out the glad tidings of the birth of the Babe ; now that very same One went about Himself telling out the glad tidings of the kingdom, and Jesus told it out not only by what He said but by what He did. Jesus did things which no other man could do ; these things are called miracles, wonders which only God could do ; and by these wonderful miracles Jesus showed what the time of the kingdom would be like, so that men might wish for the kingdom to come, and might bow down to the King. Jesus was Himself the King of the coming kingdom. And who had sent this King, Mary ?

God had sent Him, answered Mary.

I should like, said mother, to hear you say the verse which you learned, about God sending His Son ; and both the children repeated—“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.”

Yes, continued mother, God gave His Son,

sent Him into this world that men might know God's love, and so might no longer be full of fear and sin and misery. Do you know when it was that men began to be afraid of God?

Mary thought a little while, and then she said, I think Adam began to be afraid of God as soon as he had eaten the fruit which God had told him not to eat, for it was after that that he went behind the trees to hide.

Yes, Mary, said mother, and God who loved man, and who had given man a spirit so that he might learn to love God and enjoy Him, sent His own Son to show man His compassion, His mercy, His power, and His love. This was another reason why Jesus performed so many miracles ; and now I will tell you about a few of these wonders.

First of all you shall hear about a poor blind man. Think how dreadful it must be to be blind, to see no light, to be always in the dark as if it were always night. What could you do if you were always in the dark ? Bartimeus was the name of this blind man (Mark x. 46-52), and because he was blind he could not work to get food for himself, so he used to sit, day after day, by the roadside begging.

People who are blind generally hear very well, and one day as Bartimeus was sitting by the roadside he heard the sound of many footsteps ; the sound came nearer and nearer ; what could it be ? Bartimeus could not run to see what was coming, he had to ask what it all meant. Jesus is passing by, said someone.

A wonderful new hope came into the mind of the poor blind beggar ; he had heard of Jesus, of His kindness and His power, and now Jesus was coming, passing the very place where he sat. Jesus could cure him and make him see ! Bartimeus began to cry out—Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy upon me. Jesus heard the poor blind man. He did not say, I am in a hurry, I have a great deal to do, I cannot stop to attend to a beggar. Jesus did not say, This man is a sinner, he deserves to be poor and blind. No, Jesus did not think like that ; He was full of grace, He stood still, and sent one of the people to fetch the blind man. What glad tidings reached that poor man's listening ears—“ Be of good comfort, rise, He calleth thee.”

The beggar made haste to go to Jesus. Jesus said, “ What wilt thou that I should do unto

thee ? ” The blind man said unto Him, “ Lord, that I may receive my sight.” Jesus said, “ Go thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.”

What does that mean ? asked Mary. Could the poor man see now ?

Yes, replied mother, it was as if Jesus had said, You may be happy now; you trust Me, you shall have what you want. Jesus loves to be trusted. “ Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him ” (Ps. ii. 12). What did this poor man want ?

To see, said Charlie.

Yes, and he got what he wanted immediately; that very moment he saw. What a miracle ! What joy for the man who had been the moment before, a poor blind beggar ; he could look upon the holy, loving face of Jesus, and he followed Jesus, for he had found in Him such love, such power, that he could not go away from Him.

Another day Jesus was walking in the streets of Jerusalem, when He came to a place called the sheep market, and there He saw a poor man lying, quite unable to get up ; he could not walk, he could not move from that place unless someone came to carry him. He had been ill

and helpless many many years (John v. 1). Jesus did not need to ask the man how long he had been helpless. He knew without asking. If you saw a lame man, could you know how long he had been lame ?

Oh no, mother, said Mary, how could I know ?

How did Jesus know ? said mother. I will tell you. Jesus was really God as well as Man, and you remember I told you that God sees everything, God knows everything, and can do everything ; so Jesus knew everything, and could do everything. He was able, that was His power ; and He was willing, that was His love.

Jesus looked at the poor man who lay helpless before Him, and said to him, " Wilt thou be made whole ? " The man began to tell Jesus that he had no friend to help him. Ah ! he had a Friend now, the best Friend, the One both able and willing, as he soon found out. When Jesus had heard what this poor man said, He spoke these words—" Rise, take up thy bed and walk." Jesus could do everything. By speaking He could send away that poor man's weakness. His was the voice which, when the world was created, had said, " Let there be light, and

there was light." That voice, full of power, could send away the darkness from the eyes of the blind man, and the lameness from the lame man.

As soon as Jesus had spoken the words, "Rise, take up thy bed and walk," the helpless man became strong and well; he got up directly, and picked up his bed and walked. What a miracle! So God's power was shown to all, and God's love too. Jesus not only was full of power, He was full of compassion. When He saw the poor man He thought about him, and He cured him.

Another day, when Jesus went into a house, He found a woman ill with a fever. How do you think He cured her? He touched her hand and the fever left her. She was able to get up from the bed on which she had been lying in pain and weakness, and she began at once to serve Jesus and all the other people who were in the house (Luke iv. 38, 39).

More wonderful still; even when a person had been ill, so ill that he had died, Jesus could call him back to life again. He was walking one day towards a very pleasant city called Nain (Luke vii. 11-16), a great crowd of people were going

along with Him, and just as they got to the city something very sad was seen. It was a funeral. A number of people were following a bier, that is a kind of bed, on which a dead man's body was laid. One poor woman was weeping very much ; no wonder, for the dead man was her son, her only son ; she had no other, and her husband was also dead. This poor widow had hoped that her son would comfort her and take care of her, but now he was dead, he was being carried to the grave.

When Jesus saw the widow crying, He felt very sorry for her. He did not say, This sorrow and death are what man has gained by being disobedient to God ; though you know that God had said to Adam that if he ate the fruit he should die. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." But God had not sent His Son to condemn the world, to tell people how wicked they were and how much punishment they deserved, though this was all true. Jesus had not come to condemn. Why did the angel say His name was to be Jesus ?

He should save His people from their sins, answered the children.

Yes, Jesus came not to punish sin, but to take

away sin and sorrow, which are the fruit of sin. He said to this sorrowing woman, Weep not, do not cry. All the people stood still, Jesus went forward and touched the bier and said, "Young man, I say unto thee, Arise." The voice of Jesus could wake the dead. He who had given man's spirit could call that spirit back again. The young man a moment before had seen nothing, had heard nothing, for he was dead ; but now, as soon as Jesus spoke, the dead man sat up, he began to speak, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. This was indeed a miracle, a wonder that only God could do.

And now I will tell you how Jesus showed Himself to be the Creator, the One who had power over the wind and the sea. Jesus had chosen from among the people who crowded around Him, twelve men to be with Him, to learn from Him both by what He taught and by all that He was and did ; these twelve men were His disciples. One evening Jesus was near a lake (Matt. iv. 36-41). Round the lake near which Jesus was, there were many high hills with narrow valleys between, and on the shores of this lake there were ships or boats in which some of the disciples had often gone out

upon the water to catch fish. Jesus had been all the day long teaching and healing the people who came to Him in crowds, and now, just about sunset, He got into one of the ships with His disciples, and said, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. The water looked smooth enough then, the sky was bright, the air was pleasant. Jesus went to a far part of the ship, He lay down with His head on a pillow and fell fast asleep. Often, at night, when other people were asleep, Jesus was all night on a mountain or in a very lonely place praying to God His Father ; or when, in the heat of the day, others were resting, Jesus was walking along hot roads to find and to help some poor needy sinner. Now He was away from the crowds and He could sleep.

The little ship was floating quietly and quickly over the smooth still water, when suddenly the wind came sweeping down some of the narrow valleys which were all round the lake ; it blew every moment louder and fiercer, the sky became dark with clouds, the lake which before had been so smooth became very rough with great foaming waves, which rose up so high that they looked just as if they must tip over



STORM ON LAKE OF GALILEE.

into the boat and turn it upside down. You remember, Mary, what those great waves of the sea looked like, dashing along with white tops and making you fear that they would tip over the wall behind which we were standing. This storm on the lake was much more violent than anything you saw then, and the disciples were not only *near* the water, they were in the very midst of those great angry waves which began to come pouring into the boat, and the boat grew so heavy that it seemed likely to sink. And do you think the disciples were afraid when they felt the boat tossing about and sinking down lower and lower into the water ?

Yes, mother, I am sure they must have been very frightened, said Charlie.

Yes, they looked at the waves, and they *were* frightened ; but if they had looked upon Jesus, if they had thought of Him, they would have felt sure that He would take care of them. But they were terribly frightened ; they awoke Jesus in great haste, and said, " Master, carest Thou not that we perish ? "

Jesus got up from the place where He was sleeping. He rebuked the wind ; all its roaring and rushing were ended directly. He said

to the sea, “ Peace, be still.” The sea heard the voice of its Creator, the waves all sank down, the water became smooth, there was a great calm. Then Jesus said to His disciples, “ Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith? ” Then the disciples feared exceedingly, and said one to another, “ What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him? ”

There was One with them who was a man, who looked like themselves, who could be hungry and eat as they did, who could be thirsty and drink, He could be tired and sleep, and yet how unlike every other man. He could make the wind and the sea obey His voice.

Would the wind obey you, or me, or father, if *we* told it not to blow? Would the waves of the sea listen to us and be quiet, if *we* said, “ Peace, be still ”? No, indeed, but the disciples had to learn that the wonderful Person who so graciously lived among them was the Son of God.

And now, said mother, I will let you learn one little verse, and part of a hymn about all that Jesus did.

So mother repeated these verses—

“ He went about doing good,” and

“ Behold, the Redeemer has come ;
 He came with unspeakable love,
Performing the wonderful plan
 Prepared in God’s wisdom above.

“ Compassion and power we find
 In Jesus, the sinner’s best Friend ;
The helpless, the sick and the blind,
 The outcast He stoops to attend.”

A.

WHAT MAN DID.

MOTHER, said Mary the next morning, why did not Jesus come to this place and cure the people ? I saw a man yesterday, very lame, he was walking on crutches, and you told us that when the promised Child came He would make the lame people walk and the blind people see.

And I have seen a blind beggar just like Bartimeus, said Charlie ; Jesus has not made him see. We want Jesus to come here and cure the people.

The story I have to tell you to-day, said mother, will perhaps help you to understand why the world is still full of lame, and blind, and sick people. Jesus made blind Bartimeus and many other blind people see. He raised the widow's son and many others to life, He healed numbers and numbers of sick people, so that people ran all about and began to carry about in beds those that were sick where they heard He was, and they laid the sick in the

streets and besought Him (that means begged Him) that they might touch if it were but the border of His garment, and as many as touched Him were made whole. Then when the disciples were afraid in the ship, Jesus hushed the storm ; besides this, Jesus wept with those who wept, He felt so sorry for them. And when thousands of hungry people were round Him one evening in a desert place, Jesus fed them all. I could not tell you about all the wonders that Jesus did. God Himself has not told us all that Jesus did. In Jesus man has had a wonderful living picture before him of the love of God.

Didn't they love Jesus when He was so kind ?

No, Charlie. Jesus had to say of the people, They have both seen and hated both Me and My Father ; and one day when Jesus had been teaching them and speaking kind words to them, they took up stones to throw at Him.

Oh, said Mary, what made the people hate Jesus, when He was so good ?

These wicked people liked to pretend that they were good, but they did not want to hear the truth about themselves, that they were evil ; they did not want either to hear the truth about God, that God is holy and must punish sin ;

and when Jesus came He was like a very bright light shining among them, and showing how bad their thoughts and ways were. Light was come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. When Adam and Eve had sinned, what did they do ?

They went behind the trees, said Mary.

Yes, they tried to hide, to get into a dark place behind the trees ; they knew they were naughty and they did not want to come out into the light for God to see them. And if a child, a little girl or a little boy, is doing what is wrong, that child tries to hide, does not want to be seen. Everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, so if we do or say wrong things when we think no one can see us or hear us, we are just like these people who hated Jesus, who hated the light, for Jesus was the light of the world.

Still, although the people hated Him, Jesus was going to show Himself in Jerusalem as the King of the Jews. One day He told two of His disciples to go into a village which was near, and bring a colt, that is a young ass or donkey, for Him to ride on (Luke xix. 28-40). The disciples brought the colt and threw some of their clothing

on it to make a seat for Jesus ; crowds of people came together, they surrounded Jesus and threw down their cloaks and garments on the road to make a kind of carpet for Him ; it is what is often done to show honour to a king or a great person. God had made one of His prophets a long time before, say to Jerusalem, “Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass” (Matt. xxi. 5). Jesus was meek ; if He had chosen to do so He could have forced all the people to bow down to Him, but He did nothing for Himself. He had come to do the will of God. He had come not to be ministered unto but to minister, that is, Jesus had not come to make other people do things for Him or give Him things, He had come to serve other people and to give His life. So the prophet had said, “Behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek and sitting upon an ass.” Perhaps this message came into the minds of some of the people, for the crowds of people who went before Jesus and who followed Him began to do honour to Him ; they strewed the road with their cloaks and with branches which they cut down from the trees, and they began to cry out with a loud voice, praising and blessing

God, and saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven, and glory in the highest." So all this praising multitude, with Jesus in the midst, went on along the road till they came into Jerusalem and reached the temple ; there the children too began to cry aloud and to praise God, saying, Hosanna.

But, said Mary, why did they sing Hosanna ? What did it mean ?

It meant that they saw Jesus to be the One sent to rule over them, and that they expected good from Him. It was God's will that His Son should be honoured in this way, and it was sweet to the ears of Jesus to hear the children's voices singing thus in praise to Him, for Jesus loved the children. He had taken them up in His arms and blessed them. He had said, "Suffer little children to come unto Me." But the sweet sound of praise made the chief priests and scribes very angry.

Angry, said Mary, how could they be angry ?

You remember, Mary, that I told you how the great and learned people in Jerusalem were sorry and troubled when they heard of the birth of Jesus ; these great people were called chief

priests and scribes ; they wanted to rule and be great themselves. They were not like the wise men who saw the star, they did not find delight in bowing down to the One who was greater, far greater and far wiser than themselves, so they were very angry when they heard this cry of Hosanna, and they wanted Jesus to be angry with the singing children. But Jesus told them that the children were the very ones whose voices He loved to hear, for it had been written —“ Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise.”

The chief priests and scribes would not listen to what Jesus said ; they grew more and more angry. Jesus told them a story about a rich man who had a vineyard, and who gave this vineyard into the care of husbandmen, that is, men who were to take care of the vines and have fruit ready for the master ; but when the master sent his servants for the fruit these wicked husbandmen beat some of the servants and killed others. At last the master said, I must send my own son, my well-beloved ; they will surely honour him and obey him. But no ! when these wicked husbandmen saw the son himself, what do you think they said ? They

knew who he was, and they said, This is the heir, come, let us kill him, so that we may keep all that belongs to him for ourselves (Luke xx. 9-14).

Oh, mother, how dreadful, said Mary. Why did Jesus tell the people this dreadful story ?

Jesus told it to show the chief priests and scribes that they were just like the wicked husbandmen. They saw Jesus, they knew He was the heir, and they hated Him and wanted to kill Him, so that they might keep all for themselves.

To kill Jesus, mother ! But they could not do that, could they ? said Mary.

Men could not have killed Jesus unless God had allowed them to do it, said mother. No man could take away the life of Jesus. He laid it down of Himself (John x. 18). Jesus did not fight against these wicked men ; they grew more angry every day, and at last one night they sent a number of soldiers to a garden where they knew that Jesus was. These soldiers took Jesus and bound Him, and led Him away to a place where all kinds of wicked people were tried.

What does that mean ? asked Mary.

When people are tried it means that they are

told why they have been made prisoners, and then the judges ask questions of the prisoner and of other people, so as to find out the truth, whether the prisoner is a wicked man who ought to be punished, or a good man who ought to be set free.

And Jesus was a very good man, said Charlie.

Yes, indeed, Jesus was the only really good man who ever lived ; in Him there was no sin, He had done nothing wrong. He had gone about doing good. Still, the judges were so wicked that they condemned Jesus, that means they said that He deserved punishment. But God would have the truth made known about His Son, who was born of Mary. One of the judges afterwards had to say, "I find in Him no fault at all" (John xviii. 38). A thief, who was crucified with Jesus, said, "We indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amiss" (Luke xxiii. 41) ; and the captain, who watched Jesus on the cross, had to say, "Certainly this was a righteous man" (Luke xxiii. 47).

It was the holy life of Jesus which made men hate Him ; the heart of man is so wicked that he hates a person who is better than

himself. What I have to tell you is almost too dreadful to speak of, but these people dared to strike Jesus, the blessed holy Saviour, on the face ; the soldiers platted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they dressed Him in a grand purple robe such as kings wear, and bowed down before Him, mocking Him and saying, “ Hail, King of the Jews ” (Matt. xxvii. 29).

Was not Jesus angry with them ? asked Charlie.

No, all this cruel, dreadful treatment did not make Jesus angry. Jesus had been angry when His disciples tried to drive away the children who were coming to Him, but He was not angry when He was ill-treated Himself. Jesus was so unlike us. How soon children get angry if other children treat them unkindly. Even all the cruel treatment I have told you of was not enough to satisfy the wicked heart of man. The chief priests were full of envy and jealousy, that is a very wicked feeling which comes from Satan, and it makes the person who feels jealous act in cruelty like the devil ; so nothing would satisfy the chief priests but to put Jesus to death. They cried out, “ Crucify Him, crucify Him,” and all the multitude joined in the dreadful cry.

What is "Crucify Him" ? asked the children.

It means that they led Jesus away to a place outside the city, called Calvary, and there they fastened Him with nails to a cross of wood. Over His head they put His name, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." And what do you think Jesus said as soon as they had nailed Him to the cross ? He spoke to His Father and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke xxiii. 34). This was indeed wonderful grace.

What is grace ? said Mary.

It is a feeling of pity and love and kindness towards those who are unloving and unkind.

But at that moment even this blessed grace did not stop the people in their cruel ways. Jesus had said to them, "This is your hour and the power of darkness" (Luke xxii. 53). It meant that it was a time when man was left to his own will to do all that Satan's power drove him to. When Jesus was lifted up on the cross some stood looking on without any sorrow or pity, some sat down near the cross and amused themselves, and others mocked Him as they passed by ; the soldiers said, "If Thou be the King of the Jews, save Thyself" ; the priests said, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save."

But could not Jesus save Himself ? said Mary.

Yes, Jesus could have come down from the cross in a moment, but He had not come to save Himself. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. Just as a sheep stays quietly and lets her masters do what they like with her, so Jesus let men on that day do what they liked with Him. The hatred and rebellion which Satan had put into the heart of man in the garden of Eden was shown out then, when Jesus was “ by wicked hands crucified and slain ” ; and at the same time the love of God to man was shown, for “ God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all.”

You shall now learn two of the verses I have told you.

So mother taught the children as before to repeat these verses—God “ spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all ” (Rom. viii. 32) ; and “ He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened He not His mouth ” (Acts viii. 32).

XI.

WHAT CHRIST DID.

WHEN Mary came to sit down by her mother's side the next day, she had a very grave face. What are you thinking about, Mary ? said her mother.

" Oh, mother, I feel as if I wished that Jesus had saved Himself, and then He could have cured more people, and made everybody happy.

But, Mary, said mother, it was love which prevented Jesus from saving Himself ; love to God His Father, and love to man.

Just think what man was : he was the creature whom God had made for His own pleasure, the creature to whom God had sent, and still sends, all kinds of good things—sunshine, food, clothing,—and that creature had disobeyed God, had not trusted God, had trusted Satan, and followed Satan, had turned to his own way ; and, at last, when God had sent His own Son, His well beloved, what did men do to Him, Mary ?

Hated Him, and nailed Him to a cross.

And what are people who could do that ?

Very wicked, I think, said Mary.

Yes, said mother ; sinners, terrible sinners ; and just as all the kind things which Jesus did were a picture of God's heart, so all the cruel things men did were a picture of man's heart. Two pictures : In God, all good ; in man, all evil. Do you remember what God said must happen to Adam when he had sinned ?

He must die, said Mary.

Yes ; "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" ; when sin came in, death must follow ; God could not let sinners live always upon His beautiful earth, and God could not take sinners to be with Him in heaven. What could God do ? God is love ; He could not bear to let every man die and be for ever away from Him. If a child were so naughty as to run away from its father and get lost, the father could not be happy to do without his child, he would go to look for the child, and bring it back ; so God could not be happy to do without man. The Son of man, that is Jesus, came to seek and to save that which was lost. God sent His Son to look for man, and

bring man back to Himself. To do this Jesus had to bear the anger of God against sin, and all the punishment which man deserved ; which we deserved, Mary, for when we think about sinners it is about ourselves we have to think, and not about other people. It was for us, for you and me, that Jesus had to suffer and die. So you see, we cannot wish that Jesus had saved Himself, and come down from the cross.

Mother, said Mary, I feel very sorry. Jesus must have felt a great deal of pain when the cruel soldiers beat Him, and nailed Him to the cross.

Yes, indeed, said mother, all that was dreadful pain ; and yet the pain which Jesus suffered in His soul was far, far worse than any pain which His body felt ; we can never know nor understand what Jesus suffered, we can only thank Him, and praise Him for it.

Mother, said Mary, what do you mean by the pain which Jesus suffered in His soul ?

You remember how I told you that one night the chief priests sent many soldiers into a garden where Jesus was, to take Him ; this garden was called the garden of Gethsemane,

and there on that night before the soldiers came, Jesus wept very much, and felt such dreadful sorrow that His sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground (Luke xxii. 39-46).

Oh, mother, what made Jesus so sorry ?

When you have been naughty, Mary, have you only been sorry about the punishment you received, or have you not been sorry to think of the pain you have given father and mother ? You have cried then, have you not ?

Yes, said Mary, and I have been very sorry to see you unhappy.

Now you know, Mary, that Jesus was not like you ; He never sinned, sin was not in Him. The moment He was born a child into the world, God said, Good pleasure in man ; as soon as He grew up God said, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased ; and a little while before Christ suffered, God said again, This is My beloved Son. When Jesus suffered for sins, it was for the sins of others : " Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God " (I Pet. iii. 18). But when Jesus was in that garden He could see all the multitude of sins

which men had done, all the terrible wickedness which had stained and spoiled God's earth, and He felt great sorrow that God should have been so displeased in return for His goodness to man ; and also in much kindness Jesus felt great sorrow for man that he should have deserved the judgment of God instead of all the happiness which God had intended for him, and that in his folly and wickedness man should hate and cast out the Saviour whom God had sent. Then Jesus knew that He had come to do the will of God, and that if any among men were to be forgiven and brought back to God, He must suffer all that they deserved. For God must keep His word, sin must be punished. So Jesus would not save Himself. When the soldiers came, one of the disciples drew a sword to fight against those who were taking his beloved Master. Jesus said to this disciple, whose name was Peter, " Put up again thy sword into his place. . . . Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels ? " (Matt xxvi. 52, 53.) Jesus did not need a friend to help Him or to fight for Him, nor would He use His power to save Himself.

He let man nail Him to that cross where He was to die for our sins.

While the people were looking and saying wicked things about the Holy One who hung upon that cross, suddenly at noon, just when the sun should have been brightest, it left off shining, everything became dark ; the wicked people could not then look upon the Son of God : He was hidden in that awful darkness, and then He suffered all the anger of God, which must have fallen upon us if Christ had not borne it for us. God sent down His anger upon His beloved Son, so that He might send to us, not anger, but love. No one but the Son of God could have borne the anger of God ; if people will not trust in Jesus the anger of God will fall upon them, and it will crush them down into misery for ever and ever.

Some of the people were frightened and sorry when they saw the darkness ; it lasted a long time, three whole hours, and then the voice of Jesus was again heard from the cross, speaking to His Father. He said—“Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ” (Luke xxiii. 46), and so He died.

After Jesus was dead, a soldier who came to

the cross to look at Him ran a spear into His side, and blood and water flowed out ; it was “ the precious blood of Christ ” by which we are redeemed, that is, by which we are brought back from sin and Satan to God. Here was at last the Seed of the woman, the Son of Mary, though the Son of God, bruising Satan’s head as God had said.

Was Satan dead, then ? asked Mary.

No ; God did not say that Satan should die ; death was what came upon man. Satan was glad when he saw the wicked people take Jesus and nail Him to the cross, and when Jesus died perhaps Satan thought that *he* had got the victory ; but it really was Jesus who got the victory over Satan and over death.

Jesus was laid in a tomb by a man who loved Him, but on the third day after He had been put into the tomb He rose up from among the dead. He became alive again. Now men and angels, all, could see that He was the Son of God. No one who was only a man could rise up from among the dead. The disciples and all the people who loved Jesus were very sad when they saw Him die ; and after they had seen Him laid in the grave, they spent some very sorrow-

ful days and nights. They were some of them rather like you, Mary ; they hoped that Jesus would have stayed on earth and taken away their sickness and sorrow and made them happy ; they had to learn that He must as the Lamb of God take away the sin of the world, if He were to be the Sun of righteousness to take away the suffering of the world.

But there was a joyful surprise for the sorrowing disciples. Two women who loved Jesus hurried early on the morning of the third day to the tomb where they had seen Him laid, and there they saw, not Jesus but an angel. The angel said to them, "Fear not ye ; for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here ; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matt. xxviii. 5, 6). The Lord had risen from the dead. Death, that is to be among the dead, was the place for sinful man, it was not the place for the Son of God. Death was what we deserved ; Jesus bore death for us, and although those who trust in Jesus may die, He, the Lord of life and glory, will bring them out of death.

The women were rejoiced when they heard the wonderful news that Jesus was alive again ;

they could hardly believe such news ; they went quickly away from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell His disciples ; but as they went, behold Jesus met them. It was great joy for the women who loved Him, and it was still greater joy to Jesus to show Himself to those whom He had left full of sorrow when He died.

Later on, in that same day, two of the disciples were walking towards their home, when Jesus went and walked with them. They did not know Him at first, for they knew that He had died on the cross, and although they had heard the news that He was risen, they did not believe it ; so they were full of sorrow. If we do not believe the good news which God sends us, we are sure to be full of sorrow.

Jesus was not angry with these poor sorrowful disciples ; He talked with them in a wonderful way, and presently they knew that it was Jesus ; no doubt they were then full of joy, just as they had been full of sorrow, but at that moment He vanished out of their sight.

What does that mean ? said Mary

Jesus was truly alive again, a real man, but He had not risen from the dead to live again

among men on the earth as before. He came to those who loved Him as a heavenly visitor, that they might see Him, and might know that He was really alive. After Jesus had vanished away, that is after He had suddenly gone from their sight, they hurried back to Jerusalem that same evening, and found a great number of those who loved Jesus gathered together in one place. Directly the two came in, the others said to them, The Lord is risen indeed ; and then the two began to tell them how Jesus had walked with them, and talked with them, and how at last they had known that it was their own blessed Saviour who had been dead and who was alive again ; and while they were telling each other this wonderful news, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, " Peace unto you."

Instead of being very glad, all these people were terrified. Although they knew He was risen, they could not believe that the One who stood before them was really the Jesus who had walked about with them, who had taught them, who had eaten and drunk with them. Jesus was full of love to them, He did not like to see them frightened. He said, " Why are ye

troubled? . . . Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself (Luke xxiv. 38, 39).

Ah! in those feet that had walked so many miles to help the needy; and in those hands, which had touched the sick to heal them, which had lifted up the dead, and given them back to their friends, those hands which had been laid upon the little children to bless them—in those kind hands and feet the disciples could see the marks of the nails, with which Jesus had been nailed to the cross; they half believed that they had their own beloved Teacher back with them again, and yet it seemed too good to be true; they wondered, they did not know what to think, so to make them feel quite sure that He was a real living man, Jesus said, Have you anything here to eat? And they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and of an honeycomb. Jesus took them and ate them. Then the disciples were full of joy; and Jesus talked with them, and made them understand how needful it was that He should die and rise again. If sinners were to be brought back to God to love Him and be happy, and if this world were ever to be bright and full of joy, Christ must suffer and die.

Children cannot understand much, but God can teach even children that He so loved man that He sent His Son, and that Christ so loved us that He died for us. And now you shall learn these verses : " Christ died for our sins." " He was buried." " He rose again the third day." " Since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead " (1 Cor. xv. 3-5, 21).

XII.

THE BRIGHT HOPE.

TO-DAY, said mother, I want to tell you about where Jesus is now, and of the bright hope which is before us. You know Adam had a bright ray of hope given to him after he had sinned in the garden. God said that the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Can you tell me how the serpent's head was bruised?

Mary answered, I think it was when Jesus died.

Yes, Jesus when He died got the victory over sin and death, and He rose again triumphant, that is, He was Conqueror over Satan and all that he had done. All the happiness and greatness which God in His love had planned for man could now *be*, when Jesus rose from the dead. Jesus risen is our hope, just as the Seed of the woman was a hope to Adam.

The disciples were full of hope when they saw Jesus alive again from the dead, and they saw

Him many times ; but Jesus was not going to stay with them. Forty days after He had risen, He led His disciples away from Jerusalem to a little town called Bethany ; there He talked to them, and lifted up His hands and blessed them. And while He was blessing them He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. A cloud received Him out of their sight. The disciples watched Him go. It was a wonderful sight ; and then they stood looking up after Him, but they could not see Him any more. They hardly knew what to do or to think, until they saw two men in white standing by them ; these were messengers from heaven, who said to the disciples, " This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven " (Acts i. 9-11). This is the bright hope before us ; we shall see Jesus, the One who died for us and rose again. He will come again. It was a bright hope for the disciples, and they returned to Jerusalem with great joy.

Jesus was gone away ; the disciples could not see His blessed face, they could not hear His words of love and wisdom, they had not Jesus with them to say when they were in danger, Be

not afraid, or to hush the storms of wind which might rise against them ; they were left in the midst of the people who had hated and killed Him, and they themselves had not half understood or kept in mind the many things which Jesus had said and done while He lived among them ; but these blessed words and ways of Jesus, and all that He suffered, were not to be forgotten. God would have them written down, so that we might read them and learn the precious story of grace and love which fills all who believe with joy and hope. So after Jesus had ascended up to heaven a very wonderful messenger was sent to the disciples.

Was it another angel ? asked Mary.

No, Mary ; this messenger was a Person still more wonderful than an angel ; it was the Holy Spirit of God, a gift sent by Christ from the Father (John xiv. 15-17). Ten days after Jesus had gone back to heaven the disciples in Jerusalem were brought together into one place. Jesus had promised that when He left them He would send the Holy Spirit to be with them, and while they were sitting waiting, on this day, they suddenly heard a sound like a rushing mighty wind, and the Spirit of God, the Holy

Ghost, came down to be among them and in them, and that Holy Spirit ever remains with those who love Jesus (Acts ii. 1-4).

The Spirit of God brought back to the minds of the disciples all that Jesus had said to them while on earth, and made them full of power and joy ; they began to preach to the people ; they told them that Jesus, whom they had so wickedly put to death, had been raised up from among the dead, and that He was now exalted to the right hand of God. Jesus was now Lord and Christ. He was now up there, a Man in the glory of God, sending a message of forgiveness to the very people who had nailed Him to the cross.

But, mother, said Mary, I thought you said that we should see Jesus ; and now He has been into the world and gone away again.

Do you remember, Mary, what made Simeon go to the temple in Jerusalem ?

The Holy Spirit of God put it into his heart.

And what did Simeon see when he got to the temple ? I think Charlie can tell me that.

He saw the Babe carried in, said Charlie.

Yes, he saw Jesus, the promised Child, God's salvation, for whom he had been waiting so long.

Now the Holy Spirit of God speaks to us, and says, If you want to see Jesus, look up ; He is in the glory of God ; if you look up, you will not see punishment, and God waiting to tell you about your sins ; you will see Jesus who died for you, and God telling of forgiveness in His name. And Jesus will come again, not then as a weak babe, He will come in power and great glory. He came first to put away sin ; He will come again to put away sorrow. Then all the sorrow that came to men and the earth by Adam's disobedience will be taken away. It is the day I told you of some time ago, when Christ will undo all the mischief that Satan did. It is called the "morning without clouds" (2 Sam. xxiii. 4). When we get up in the morning and see a sky without clouds, what do we see shining there, sending warmth and brightness everywhere ?

The sun, said Mary.

Yes, said mother ; and Christ is called "The Sun of righteousness" (Mal. iv. 2), because when He comes, His brightness will be seen just as the brightness of the sun is seen, but the glory of the Lord will be far brighter than the shining of the sun. All will know then that this

earth is God's earth, and that God alone has the right to have His own way on this earth, which He has made, and His own way with man whom He created. What do you think God's own way or will is ? It is to make the earth full of beauty and gladness, and so to fill the hearts of all people with His love that the lie of the devil will be undone ; no one will believe that lie any more. Sin will be taken away, and people will delight in and obey Christ, the Son of God. He will indeed reign then, not only as King of the Jews, He will reign over the whole world—King of kings and Lord of lords.

Jerusalem will then be the joy of the whole earth, and its streets will be full of boys and girls playing (Zech. viii. 5). Now, the Holy Spirit of God says to us, Look up to where Christ is in glory. Those who look up to the Lord in heaven cannot love this world which hated Him and cast Him out ; they cannot find their joy here, they keep on expecting Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ knows who has looked up to Him, and one day every one who loves Him will hear His voice, that voice of majesty and power, which once said, Let there be light ; that voice of grace which said, Father, forgive them ;

that voice of life which said to the helpless and the dead, Arise ; that voice will say to all His own, Arise. Those who are dead, and who have lain hundreds of years in the grave, will hear that voice, and will arise ; that voice will be to us not only a voice of power but a voice of love ; love and power will be like two strong wings to lift us from this earth. Every one who hears that voice will be changed in a moment. We shall not be like poor, sinful, dying Adam any more ; no more in bodies of dust ready to turn to dust again. "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We shall be like Christ, the Lord of life and glory. Not the smallest child who has ever looked up to Christ in faith and love will be forgotten. Christ could not forget one of those whom He loved and for whom He gave Himself. God the Father looks at them as His own beloved children, who are to be for ever near Him with His Son. Just as Adam was so happy when he got Eve to enjoy God's garden of pleasure with him, so Christ will be filled with joy when He has us near Him and like Him.

Will that be better than the garden of Eden ?

The garden of Eden was, no doubt, perfectly beautiful, said mother ; but all was so soon spoiled by sin ; sin will never be allowed to spoil the coming garden of pleasure, it will be heaven itself. We shall ever be in our new home, the Father's house.

Mother, said Mary, what will the new home be like ? Will it be much, much happier than this ? I like this home so much.

What makes this a happy home, Mary ? said mother. Is it the food you eat ? No ; when you are no longer hungry or thirsty you are glad to leave off eating or drinking. Is it the clothes you wear ? No ; when the weather is hot you are glad to put off some of the clothes. Is it your comfortable bed ? No ; you sleep there through the night, but you would not like always to lie in it ; when morning comes you are glad to leave it. What is it then that you never want to get rid of ?

Mary looked at her mother, but she did not quite know what to answer, so mother went on : It is love. Do you ever say, I have had enough love ; I don't want to love father and mother any more, and I don't want them to love me any more ?

Oh, no, no, mother, said Mary ; I always want to love you and dear father, and for you to love me.

Well, Mary, love is what will make the new home so happy ; the love of God, the Father's love, Christ's love. Every earthly love will have to end some day ; you cannot have father's love or mother's love for ever and ever, but God's love will never end.

Then will come what we speak of as eternity, which means for ever and ever. There will be a new heaven and a new earth, and God will dwell with men (Rev. xxi. 1-3). Into all this Satan can never come, for he will have been sent away into the dreadful place prepared for him, and with him will be all those who serve Satan and believe him, who will not trust God or look up to Jesus, the Son of God ; they will have to share Satan's misery for ever and ever.

Everything is ready. Christ is waiting to come back. He says, "Surely I come quickly." The same Jesus who down here said, Suffer the little children to come unto Me, now calls from heaven. In that place where He is, is fullness of joy ; at God's right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

God has made this earth so fair,
Filled with bounties rich and rare,
And these tokens of His care
 Tell us God is good.

Forest, field, and fruitful hill,
Torrent wild and gentle rill,
Stormy wind that does His will,
 Witness God is good.

Summer, winter, cold, and heat,
Night so restful, day so sweet,
Showers, sunshine, all repeat,
 Truly God is good.

God is good—He gave His Son,
Sparèd not His only One ;
Jesus all His will has done,
 Witnessed—God is love.

Jesus all the sorrow bore,
He is now Salvation's door,
Sin and death shall soon be o'er,
 For our God is love.

Christ, as Sun of righteousness,
Soon will rise this earth to bless ;
All shall then with joy confess,
 God, our God, is love.

Lord, Thy cross must tell its tale,
Glory shall o'er all prevail,
We Thy day with joy shall hail,
 Telling God is love.

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