

Good Words for Every Day of the Year,
Good Words, 1860. Editor, Norman MacLeod, DD.
Edinburgh: Alexander Strahan and Co. London: Sampson Low, Son, and Co.

October 29.

“They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever. As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth, even for ever.” -- Ps. cxxv. 1, 2.

A glance at a map or good picture of Jerusalem will show the beauty and force of this illustration; it will show the girdle of heights which encompass the chosen city, and will explain to us how it stands, not in a valley surrounded by mountains, but upon a hill, surrounded indeed, but separated from its mountains defences by a circle of deep ravines, so that it may be called with truth, “a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid.” And thus are the people who trust in the Lord set apart, and set upon a hill, so that they cannot be hid, and yet surrounded by the Lord Himself as their defence and shelter, their wall of fire and glory in the midst of them! How safe they are! How tenderly are they cared for! Jerusalem still stands surrounded by her mountains, to show how the Lord is round about His people; but the heaps of ruins which speak of her fall, and of God’s awful judgments, are a solemn voice of warning to those who forsake the God of their salvation, and cease to trust in Him who alone can sustain them.

“And who art thou that mournest me,
Replies the ruin gray,
‘And fear’st not rather that thyself
Mayst prove a castaway?’

“I am a dry and withered branch,
My place is given to thee;
But woe to every barren graft
Of the wild olive-tree!”

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October 30.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." -- 2 Cor. iv. 17.

Let us place our sorrows and suffering, pains and fears, into this balance; weigh them against the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," and then say whether we would exchange our portion as Christian sufferers for the best portion the world can give its children? But we can weigh them aright only when we are enabled "to look, not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." It is the thought of *eternity* that enables us to take a just view of present and future things. Our sufferings may so oppress us that we may refuse to look beyond them; yet this is the true way to get *above* them, and when we do so by the exercise of a lively faith, we shall perceive how exceeding great is that weight of glory compared with which even the heaviest afflictions are light. Lord, strengthen our faith, and animate our hope, that we may look beyond things temporal to the unseen glories of the things which are eternal.

"What faith rejoices to behold,
We long and pant to see,
We would be absent from the flesh,
And present, Lord, with Thee!"

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October 31.

"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." --Heb. x. 16, 17.

How wonderful is the covenant under which Thou has placed me, O my God! How marvellous is the revelation of Thy character in such a covenant! Here it is all grace -- free, rich, abounding grace! Thy holy law, which man could never keep, Thou Thyself wilt plant in his heart and write in his mind, and those sins and iniquities which caused Thee to hide Thy face from him, Thou wilt remember no more! It is when such a word as this is spoken to the mourning penitent sinner that he learns to hate his sin; he cries, Thou wilt remember my sins no more, but can I forget them, or cease to hate them, O my Father? Can I forget that they were blotted out by the shed blood of Thine own dear Son? Can I cease to admire Thy love displayed in this better covenant, or fail to entreat Thee to write it continually on my heart?

"With you a covenant I will make,
That ever shall endure;
The hope that gladdened David's heart,
My mercy hath made sure."