

# The Christian Messenger

A RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER.

\$333.

1. 61

\$397

NEW SERIES.  
Vol. XIX., No. 28.

Halifax, Nova Scotia, Wednesday, July 15, 1874.

WHOLE SERIES.  
Vol. XXXVIII., No. 28, 54

## Poetry.

For the Christian Messenger.

### SYMPATHY.

I would my dearest friend could know,  
How yearns my heart that we might go,  
Along life's way together,  
Cheered by one hope, seeking one goal,  
Yielding our hearts to God's control,  
Looking for endless day.

Than this no truth more sure can be,  
That hearts unfound by sympathy,  
Are held by weakest tie.

'Tis sympathy has power to bind,  
'Tis sympathy of heart and mind  
That can all fates defy.

And those who by such tie are bound,  
Know peace and joy and love profound,  
And are supremely blest.  
Beyond the grave their love extends,  
Their holy friendship never ends,  
But still receives new zest.

What happiness it is to feel,  
Our faith and loyalty and zeal,  
By those we love is shared!

That when our Lord shall come to reign,  
As kings and priests we'll meet again,  
And death no more be feared!

Flesh of my flesh, bone of my bone,  
In faith and hope I stand alone,  
Longing for sympathy.

My heart oft wanders far from thee,  
Would seek release and hither flee,  
Seeking for sympathy.

Then, as I have none else to love,  
My heart returns like Noah's dove,  
With olive branch of peace,  
Because my heart can find no rest,  
Except with thee though still unblest—  
I'll seek for no release.

E. S. C.

## Religious.

### THE COMPLETE AND FINAL TRIUMPH OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

A sermon preached before the N. S. Western Baptist Association at Lockeport, on Monday, June 22nd, 1874, and published by request of the Association.

BY REV. G. D. COX.

"Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Isaiah xlix. 24.

Our text as here rendered, is put in the form of a question. "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Some, however, prefer to consider it a declaration from Jehovah, as "The prey shall be taken from the mighty." But we shall use it as we find it, in the form of a question. And beloved brethren, we will treat our text this morning in the following manner:

First, Let us notice the question asked, and in the second place, we will seek for the answer.

I. First then, let us notice the question asked; and we will first, consider it in its literal application. This refers primarily to the Jews, God's ancient people.

God has ever had a people on earth, upon whom it has been His delight to bestow peculiar blessings. But they have been almost from the beginning, an afflicted people, a tempted people, and a persecuted people. They have been hated by all nations for His Name's sake. From the time the enemy of all righteousness, was hurled down from his angelic position, and turned out of Heaven, until the present moment, there has been a fearful battle going on between the powers of darkness, and the powers of light. The carnage and blood have been dreadful. And even those who have conquered, have waded through their own blood to the conquest.

The Israelites are here called the "prey," which signifies something plundered and ravaged, something taken by an enemy that did not previously belong to him. Sin and its long train of evils, began their course at the same time, and at the same place. They have been coeval. God's people became a prey to the enemy, when our first parents ate the forbidden fruit. They put fruit to their mouths with one hand, and at the same

time shackles on their feet with the other. They put the fruit to their mouths with one hand, and at the same time, brought grief, sorrow, and death to their hearts with the other.

"Diabolus," from the time he made his first raid on the "City of Mansoul," to the present, has been determined to afflict, and worry, those he could not destroy. He, like the carnal mind of man, "is enmity against God, is not reconciled to God, neither indeed can be." Jehovah said to him at the very beginning, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." The Israelites were plundered and ravaged, afflicted, and persecuted, by all the Gentile nations. Let the waters of the Nile speak, that floated the little casket, that contained the infant form of God's servant Moses; placed there by an affectionate mother, moved by an unseen and Divine impulse from the ruthless hand of a tyrannizing Pharaoh, who would destroy all the male children, born of Hebrew parents, lest they should multiply too fast, and become too strong for their enemies. Let the clay pits, the brick-kilns, and stubble fields of Egypt speak, and they will tell the same sad story. Go to the streams of Babylon that have murmured in the ears of Israel in bondage, sounding to them like the sad requiem o'er the dead; ask the ancient willows, by those streams, upon which the captive Israelite hung his harp, to speak, and they only echo back the sad lament of the captive Jew, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land! If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Psalm cxxxvii. 4-6.

Daniel the faithful servant of God in the lion's den, and the three Hebrew worthies in the furnace, all teach us the same lesson. Again we observe, that the Israelites are here called "lawful captives," that is, "the Jews justly consigned for their sins as captives to the foe." Their captivity was just, it was lawful. As soldiers taken captive by the conquering foe, they are lawful captives; or as a man taken prisoner, who has violated the laws of the country, the law defends the officer who has taken him a prisoner, his captivity is right, is lawful, it is just that he should be punished. Sin, in any, and every form is the violation of God's righteous law. And whenever that holy law is broken, it is just and right that he who violates it, should be punished, and no one can possibly escape, who has in the least degree broken it. The Apostle says that sin is the strength of the law. 1 Cor. xv. 56. That is, "without the law, sin is not perceived or imputed." "The law makes sin the more grievous, by making God's will the clearer." Again the Apostle says that "by the law is the knowledge of sin, that he had not known sin but by the law." Rom. iii. 20; vii. 7. "Where there is no law there can be no sin." Rom. iv. 15; v. 13.

God has never left the human family without a law to govern them, no, not for an hour. No sooner was man created, than God gave him his law, and when our first parents broke that known law, they were punished. It was just to do so. They were left without excuse. They were lawful captives. And so all the way down the stream of time, whenever there were any additions to be made to the laws, or new ones given, or those given explained, elucidated, and made more clear, God left (to speak after the manner of men) no stone unturned for their accomplishment. No one I presume can read the Mosaic or Levitical laws, without observing how minutely, and explicitly they are given. And then how beautiful to observe, that a God of infinite love and mercy, should preface, or supplement these laws, with either a threat or a promise; a threat to keep them from breaking them, a promise to induce them to obey them.

When Israel obeyed these plain laws of God, they prospered, both in spiritual, and in temporal things. Their enemies were slain, or put to flight, but when they disobeyed these laws, they did not prosper in anything. They were taken captive by the foe, they were brought into bondage by the enemy. In a word, all the afflictions they suffered came upon them because of their disobedience. Obedience was their life. God's servant Moses, when about to die, and leave the people, whom he had been instrumental in bringing to the borders of the promised land, in his farewell address, said to them, "Set your hearts unto all the words which I testify among you this day, which ye shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life; and through this thing ye shall prolong your days in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it. Deu. xxxii. 47.

2. We will now in the second place, consider the question in its more spiritual application. 1st. We observe, that we have here a striking representation, of the condition, into which sin has brought the sinner. He is a "prey in the hand of the mighty." He who walked a free man in the garden, now is a slave in bondage. He who knew no guilt is now filled with guilty fears, and tries to evade the eye of justice. He who loved to walk with God, among the trees in the garden, in the cool of the day, and hold sweet communion with the Most High, now tries to escape from His presence; and the only relief he can find, is in hiding from God. He who knew no sorrow, is now filled with grief and pain. The future that before looked pleasant and delightful, now is dark and gloomy. He is now a bond-slave in the hand of the mighty tyrant. Turn which way he will, the loud clanking of the chains which bind him, drown every other sound. The voice of mercy is not heard; and although Infinite Love may charm never so sweetly, he hears it not. Nothing but banishment forever, from the peaceful presence of God, is looked for, as the terrors of the damned already fill his soul, and his feet take fast hold on death.

2. Again we notice, that we have here a representation of the fearful effects of sin on the moral nature of man. He is plundered and ravaged. He is totally depraved. The Prophet represents him as being in a moral condition, like the body, when it is wounds, and bruises, and putrefied sores, from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet, and no soundness in it. Yea even more, the Apostle represents him as being dead in trespasses and sins. The very fountain of his moral nature is corrupted. The Plague is in his heart, "within he is full of dead men's bones, rottenness, and all uncleanness." His faculties are benumbed. His affections depraved. He hates holiness, and loves sin. The Poet says,

The worst of all diseases  
Is light, compared with sin;  
On every part it seizes,  
But rages most within:

'Tis palsy, plague, and fever,  
And madness, all combined;  
And none but a believer  
The least relief can find.

3. Again we observe, that we have here a representation of the helpless condition of the sinner. When the captive bound in chains, can, unaided, burst those chains, and make his escape; so will the sinner, who is a "prey" in the hand of the "mighty" unaided by the power of God, burst off the shackles with which sin has bound him, and set himself at liberty. It is more possible for the man who is sick with a loathsome disease, to find his own medicine, and effect his own cure; than for the soul sick with, and corrupted by sin to effect its own cure. Yea more, when the dead who have lain long in their graves a mass of corruption, can of them-

selves, come forth from their graves; so will the soul, dead in trespasses and in sins, without Divine help raise itself to life and union with God again. The Prophet asks, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots, then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil. Jer. xiii. 23. And the blessed Saviour said, "No man can come to me, except the Father who sent me, draw him." Johnvi. 44.

4. Again we observe, that every sinner is a "lawful captive." His captivity is just. His punishment is righteous. It is the fruit of his own doings. It is the result of his own wicked life. He cannot find fault with any, or complain of injustice. And if he repent not, and at last goes down to the dark world of woe—and there he must go if he remains impenitent—after he has been there suffering the righteous judgement of God for a thousand years, he will fail to find a cause for complaint. Has not God given us his law? have we not broken knowingly and persistently that law? Has not Christ died for us and made a way for our escape? Has not the Holy Spirit come into the world, and reproved of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement? Has not the voice of mercy been heard calling through His Word, through His servants, through His Providence, and by all the means of grace? and have we not disregarded them all? Have we not had "line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little and there a little?" What does the judge who sits in our own breasts say to day? Suppose we were now standing before the bar of God, and each one of us is called to stand out separately, and answer for himself and herself; what excuse have we to give for not being prepared? Are we not to-day without excuse? If we are found there without a robe of Christ's imputed righteousness to cover us, we will be "speechless," Jehovah will "lay judgment to the line, and righteousness to the plummet, and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place." And God will say, "Because I have called and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel and would none of my reproof; I also will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh." And if our guilt will be in proportion to our knowledge of the law we have broken; and we believe it will—If our condemnation will be in proportion to the light we have had; and we believe it will—If there degrees of punishment in the dark world of woe; and we believe there are;—I ask most solemnly, what will our guilt, our condemnation, our punishment be? It will be said to us, "it is more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for thee." It will be better for us to have been born in the wilds of Africa, or in the jungles of India, than in this favoured land. Oh, if there is one sinner within the sound of my voice to-day, I beseech you in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God.

II. And now beloved brethren, we come to consider the second part of our subject, namely, To seek for the answer to the question. Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered? And for this answer in the affirmative we have but one source to which we may look. In vain may we ask human reason or philosophy, in vain may we look to the combined wisdom and power of men and angels. We look to God alone, who is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Deliverer of His people. He says Yes, "Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible be delivered; for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."

1. We observe under this head, that God has purposed from before all time to accomplish this. And says, "His purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. There is no such thing

as "after thought" with God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. When man fell from that high and holy position in which he was created, it did not take Jehovah (so to speak) by surprise. When the Saviour made his first advent into the world, it was not heralded before the throne of God, but on the plains of Bethlehem. "He was delivered up by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God." His purposes of love, are older than the everlasting hills. They existed in the mind of Jehovah, before the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." A Saviour was provided long before man fell. He says, "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight; rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Prov. viii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31.

2. Again we observe, that for this purpose, God created the worlds, and all things, that in them are. "For whom, says the Apostle, are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory." The Angels in heaven, were created by Jehovah for this purpose, and are sent to labour for its accomplishment. They are engaged in a work that they do not fully comprehend. They heralded that on earth, they did not understand in heaven; they sang on earth of that, they could not comprehend. The Apostle says, "which things they desire to look into." "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." This earth was created to be the battle field, where the powers of darkness, and the powers of light, should contend and settle the question, shall God or Satan reign? shall truth or error triumph? shall the "prey" remain in the hands of "the mighty," or shall they be delivered? Here, Satan goes to and fro, seeking whom he may devour. And here Jesus the great Deliverer, was born, here he lived, here He died, here He rose, here He conquered. How far, or to what extent, all created things, both animate and inanimate, may conduce to the accomplishment of God's gracious purpose, the salvation of his "elect people," and the complete and final triumph of his Church, is difficult for us to tell. May not the "unwritten word," the firmament on high, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the fields, the blue deep, the mountains, the clouds, the fowls of the air, the winds that blow, the fishes of the sea, the mineral treasures in the earth, the multitude of little insects that fill one breath of air, and the host of living things in one drop of water, too small to be seen by the unassisted eye; be used to accomplish this? The sea has been made a path, over which the messenger of "glad tidings," conveyed by the ship constructed of the trees from the forest, the iron and copper from the earth, driven by the gentle winds of heaven; has borne to the "prey" in the hands of "the mighty," the news of salvation. Electricity, that carries the word over the wires, with the velocity of lightning, water converted into steam, that drives the car and the ship over the track, and the trackless deep; bringing at once the civilized and uncivilized, the Christian, and the unchristianized nations, close together, and leaving us almost in a moment at their very doors, with the "word of life," the use of these all declare "the prey shall be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered."

1. We observe under this head, that God has purposed from before all time to accomplish this. And says, "His purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. There is no such thing

as "after thought" with God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world," Acts xv. 18. When man fell from that high and holy position in which he was created, it did not take Jehovah (so to speak) by surprise. When the Saviour made his first advent into the world, it was not heralded before the throne of God, but on the plains of Bethlehem. "He was delivered up by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God." His purposes of love, are older than the everlasting hills. They existed in the mind of Jehovah, before the "morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." A Saviour was provided long before man fell. He says, "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old, I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains abounding with water, before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth; while as yet He had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world. Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him; and I was daily His delight; rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." Prov. viii. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 30, 31.

2. Again we observe, that for this purpose, God created the worlds, and all things, that in them are. "For whom, says the Apostle, are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory." The Angels in heaven, were created by Jehovah for this purpose, and are sent to labour for its accomplishment. They are engaged in a work that they do not fully comprehend. They heralded that on earth, they did not understand in heaven; they sang on earth of that, they could not comprehend. The Apostle says, "which things they desire to look into." "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." This earth was created to be the battle field, where the powers of darkness, and the powers of light, should contend and settle the question, shall God or Satan reign? shall truth or error triumph? shall the "prey" remain in the hands of "the mighty," or shall they be delivered? Here, Satan goes to and fro, seeking whom he may devour. And here Jesus the great Deliverer, was born, here he lived, here He died, here He rose, here He conquered. How far, or to what extent, all created things, both animate and inanimate, may conduce to the accomplishment of God's gracious purpose, the salvation of his "elect people," and the complete and final triumph of his Church, is difficult for us to tell. May not the "unwritten word," the firmament on high, the sun, the moon, the stars, the trees, the fields, the blue deep, the mountains, the clouds, the fowls of the air, the winds that blow, the fishes of the sea, the mineral treasures in the earth, the multitude of little insects that fill one breath of air, and the host of living things in one drop of water, too small to be seen by the unassisted eye; be used to accomplish this? The sea has been made a path, over which the messenger of "glad tidings," conveyed by the ship constructed of the trees from the forest, the iron and copper from the earth, driven by the gentle winds of heaven; has borne to the "prey" in the hands of "the mighty," the news of salvation. Electricity, that carries the word over the wires, with the velocity of lightning, water converted into steam, that drives the car and the ship over the track, and the trackless deep; bringing at once the civilized and uncivilized, the Christian, and the unchristianized nations, close together, and leaving us almost in a moment at their very doors, with the "word of life," the use of these all declare "the prey shall be taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive delivered."

1. We observe under this head, that God has purposed from before all time to accomplish this. And says, "His purpose shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure. There is no such thing