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REV. I. E. BILL,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

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## Footsteps of Angels.

BY LONGFELLOW.

When the hours of day are numbered,  
And the voices of the night  
Wake the better soul that slumbered,  
To a holy, calm delight:

Ere the evening lamps are lighted,  
And, like phantoms grim and tall,  
Shadows from the fitful firelight  
Dance upon the parlor wall:

Then the forms of the departed  
Enter at the open door,  
The beloved, the true-hearted,  
Come to visit me once more.

He, the young and strong, who cherished,  
Noble longing for the strife,  
By the road-side fell and perished,  
Weary with the march of life.

They, the holy ones and weakly,  
Who the cross of suffering bore,  
Folded their pale hands so meekly,  
Spoke with us on earth no more.

And with them the being beautiful,  
Who unto my youth was given,  
More than all things else to love me,  
And is now a saint in heaven:

With a slow and noiseless footstep,  
Comes the messenger divine,  
Takes the vacant chair beside me,  
Lays her gentle hand in mine.

And she sits and gazes at me,  
With those deep and tender eyes,  
Like the stars, so still and saint-like,  
Looking downward from the skies.

Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
Is the Spirit's voiceless prayer,  
Soft rebukes, in blessings ended,  
Breathing from her lips of air.

O, though oft depressed and lonely,  
All my fears are laid aside,  
If I but remember only  
Such as these have lived and died.

## INTRODUCTORY SERMON.

[CONTINUED.]

Next let us view him as our great high priest. You are aware my brethren, that the priest's office consisted of two parts, oblation and intercession, and Oh, what an oblation did he offer. "Not all the blood of beasts on Jewish altars slain, could give the guilty conscience peace and take away our sins," no we must have a sacrifice of nobler name and richer blood than they, neither silver nor gold could pay the price, his own most precious blood must pay the ransom, for ye were not redeemed with silver and gold, but with his own most precious blood, as of the Lamb slain in the purpose and appointment of God from the foundation of the world. When the time drew near that he was to be offered up, we see him sore amazed, and very heavy, he exclaims "my soul is exceedingly sorrowful even unto death." We follow him over the brook Kidron into the garden of Gethsemane, he falls upon the earth, while in his agony he sweats as it were great drops of blood. Oh! hear his strong cries, witness his tears and prayers—behold him led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before his shearers is dumb he opens not his mouth, he hides not his face from shame and spitting, gave his back to the smiters, the plowers make long their furrows there—his head is crowned with thorns, the soldiers put on him the purple robe, and smite him, saying "prophecy unto us who smote thee." He is unjustly condemned, and led to the loathsome Galgatha, the place of a skull—he ascends the hill of Calvary, bearing his cross—is nailed to the accursed tree—they pierce his hand and his feet.—A world's guilt is laid upon him, and for the first time in all eternity his Father frowns upon him. In agony he exclaims, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It pleased even his own father to bruise him. Oh! how bruised, his dying groans cause all nature to shudder—the rocks are rent—the graves of

many are opened and those dying cries bring life to some, who, no doubt had a share in the first resurrection—the veil of the temple is rent, and now a way is made into the holiest of all to heaven itself by his own blood, at last he bows his head, and with a loud voice cries "it is finished and gives up the ghost." My sacrifice, my God, what words are these. "It is finished," the atonement is made, the fountain is now opened in the house of David for sin and uncleanness, the blood that cleaveth from all sin is shed; the infinite propitiation is sufficient for the sins of the whole world. The law is magnified and made honorable, justice is satisfied—all the attributes and perfections of Jehovah have met at the cross and are harmonized. Mercy and truth have met together, and righteousness and peace have kissed each other. The serpent's head is now indeed bruised. On his cross he triumphed over principalities and powers, Satan and his has to fly shrieking from the great battle field; but after a little he rallies, suggests to his friends among the Sacerdotes how Jesus talked of rising again after three days, and tells them to go to Pilate and secure his body deposited in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. They go—obtain a guard of Roman soldiers—seal the stone at the mouth of the sepulchre, and set them to watch. But God the Father standing at the head of the economy of redemption, having accepted the sacrifice whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead, at the appointed time he sent his angels to remove the stone from the door of the sepulchre and sat upon it, whose countenance was like lightning and the keepers trembled, became as dead men, so that in the sound words uttered by Peter, we may say "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." After his resurrection, having for forty days from time to time showed himself and conversed with his disciples, as he was about to ascend, he appointed a meeting at the Mount of Olive, to take his farewell as regarded his bodily presence.

He now gives them the commission as recorded by Mathew, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Or as Mark writes, "Go ye into the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." Here then is the extent of your commission. All nations, every creature capable of receiving instruction, (I am sick of the Antinomian dogma that the Gospel is only to be preached to believers.) What is it you are required to preach? God commands all men every where to repent and believe the Gospel, the glad tidings, the good news of salvation through Christ. And what next? That those who are taught, that is who believe should be baptized, in the name of the sacred Three. And what is the final result? They shall be saved. Let not any of us by our practice reverse and pervert the order of sound words as the manner of some is; neither let us make more of the ordinance of baptism than it is, as some do, putting it in the place of regeneration by the holy spirit, (nor mock God by thanking him for having regenerated an unconscious infant;) neither let us not make less of the sacred ordinance as some do, calling it a mere non-essential. You see in the commission given, that the head of the church, puts it next in importance to believing his Gospel. We will not charge infinite wisdom with giving an non-essential ordinance or command. The proper subject you will perceive by taking heed to the form

of sound words, is the believing in Christ. We should observe it is not for "the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but for the answer of a good conscience," and here I would remark, an infant has no conscience either good or evil, and an unregenerate man has a bad conscience, and until his heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience he has no right to profess faith in the Trinity, in whose name we are baptized. Until he is quickened and raised to newness of life, he has no right to this ordinance, or that other ordinance which the Lord hath left his church, to show forth his death until he comes.

Having given his disciples their commission he lifts up his hands and while blessing them, he is carried up into heaven, a cloud receiving him out of their sight. See him ascending, leading captivity captive, and receiving gifts for men, yea even for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them. Here he performs the second part of the priests office, within the veil at his Fathers right hand where he ever lives, to make intercession for us. Now having such a high priest over the house of God, one touched with the feelings of our infirmities who has been in all points tempted like unto us, sin only excepted—one who has still the bowels of a man and the heart of God, "let us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." If time would permit we should be happy in showing from the different parts of the holy Scriptures where he is represented as a great king. Behold saith God in the 2nd Psalm, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion," the 45th and 72d and several other of the Psalms, are taken up in describing him as king, and speaking of the glory and extent of his kingdom. The Prophets dwell on the Messiah as king. Daniel had enlarged views of him and of his kingdom. The spirit made a special vision to Nebuchadnezzar, of a great image in the form of a man—its head of gold, its arms and breast of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet partly iron and clay, Daniel to whom the vision was revealed, interprets it to the king, Nebuchadnezzar as the head of gold, being the representative of the Assyrian monarch. The Medo Persian its breast, two arms to denote the Medes and Persians. The Greek monarchy under Alexander, under the figure of brass, and the Roman which was the last universal monarchy under the figure of iron and clay. He then tells us that the God of heaven should set up a kingdom, represented as the stone cut out of the mountain, should smite the image, that it should be broken in pieces and scattered to the four winds of heaven, and that this stone should roll on until it filled the whole earth. Christ when he made his entry into our world, was hailed as King, the wise men from the east led by that mysterious star, came to Jerusalem, saying 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. Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem, and when he had enquired of the priests where Messiah should be born, is directed to Bethlehem; with what joy when the same star stood over the place where Christ was, did they behold it, with what reverence and joy did they worship him, presenting their gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh. Hear him witnessing before Pilate that good confession, when Pilate asked him if he were a king, thou sayest it, for this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world. His kingdom is indeed diverse from all other kingdoms—other kingdoms have their foundations laid in the blood of the conquered, but Christ's kingdom is laid in the blood of the conqueror—other kingdoms are in splendor in meats and drinks, Christ's kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. The stone is rolling on, the kingdom is progressing, and the period is

drawing nigh, when the kingdoms under the whole heavens shall be given unto him. Earth and the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and his Christ. For what are we assembled here to day, but to carry out the prayer he taught us, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," that we by our prayers, our mutual councils, our property, our talents, and by all that we have and are, may extend the Redeemer's reign at home and abroad. We live my brethren in eventful times, God is turning and overturning until he whose right it is shall reign.

The twelve hundred and sixty years of the man of sin must soon expire. Antichrist will ere long be destroyed by the breath of his mouth and by the brightness of his coming. They who are old and grey headed may not live to see it, but if we hold fast the form of sound words in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus, we shall rejoice with the angels of God, who rejoice when but one sinner is converted to God, and how much more when as it were a nation is born in a day. Let us, endeavour my brethren to do our part in the great work, when the one Lord shall be obeyed, the one faith believed, and the one baptisms submitted to. Let us labor that our churches should be as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, that our churches be living epistles of the Lord Jesus, known and read of all men, and you my ministering brethren, what should you be? If the church should be the salt of the earth and light of the world, surely we should be the salt and the light of the church. There are other great and leading truths that we should like to dwell upon, such as the sovereignty of God in the choice of his people. That he has not left it to mere human contingency—to the uncertainty of fluctuating man, steeped as he is in depravity and guilt. Christ has not shed his blood on an uncertainty, he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. Though man may be said to be mighty in his opposition to God and holiness, yet the Holy Spirit is almighty to subdue and sanctify. Nor is the free agency of man effected by holding the doctrines of grace in their proper place, man is not a mere machine. In the day of God's power he is made willing, to say, in the beautiful language of one of Mr. Wesley's hymns, "Nay, but I yield, I yield, I can hold out no more, I sink by dying love compelled, and own thee conqueror." We must not for a moment loose sight of man's accountability, follow him through all his subterfuges, and charge his guilt home upon his conscience, as being voluntary and wilful—direct him to apply immediately to him, who is appointed a Prince and a Saviour, to give redemption and remission of sin, you have many errors to meet, so preach the word as to give the infidel, the profane and sensualist—the mere man of the world, who is bartering his soul for sordid dust, the formalist and self-righteous, the Antinomian, (and there are few more hopeless characters than he,) their portion of meat in one season. We might speak of the security and perseverance of the saints, show that the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his, that the covenant is in all things well ordered and sure, for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor power, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. But I must hasten to a close. That there are many who nominally profess to hold the form of sound words, and some we fear who preach them too, who take refuge it may be behind an orthodox creed, and in a Christian church, who have neither faith in them, nor love for them. It is not that our intellects receive the truth as a mere theory, it is not enough that