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**THE LIGHTS WHICH GOD HATH SHEWED US.**

*N. D. West.*



THE LIGHTS WHICH GOD HATH SHEWED US.

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A

THANKSGIVING DISCOURSE,

DELIVERED NOV. 28, 1861.

IN THE

West Spruce Street Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia,

BY

REV. W. P. BREED, PASTOR.

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PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

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PHILADELPHIA:  
JOHN ALEXANDER, PRINTER, 52 SOUTH FOURTH STREET,  
1861.

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## S E R M O N .

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*Ps.* 118 : 27.—“GOD IS THE LORD WHICH HATH SHEWED US LIGHT. BIND THE SACRIFICE WITH CORDS, EVEN UNTO THE HORNS OF THE ALTAR.”

ONCE more, a voice from the Executive of our commonwealth has reminded us of the relations subsisting between the Church and the State. Society has two grand departments of interest, the sacred, and the secular. Over these, God has ordained two agencies, the Church, the custodian of religious truth and instructor of men therein, and the State, for the protection of those who do well, and for the restraint and punishment of transgressors. Both are ordained of God. The apostle, no more truly than the magistrate is the “minister of God.”—(Rom. xiii : 1-4.)

The specific duties allotted to the one are, of course, quite different from those allotted to the other, and yet Church and State are twin sisters, both contributing to the same general results. Like sunshine and shower, the one is not the other, yet both concur in bringing on the harvest.

The Church is not the State, and the State is not the Church, yet they may, and one day will both comprehend precisely the same elements. Every member of the church may be a citizen, and every citizen may be a member of the church.

They may not invade each others given spheres of service, and yet they are bound to each other by ties powerful and sacred, and are constantly affecting each others interests. The Church cannot annul an iniquitous enactment of the State, but she may, through the steady operation of her hallowed instrumentalities, so reach the public mind and heart as to bring about the much needed reform. The State may not, formally annul any decree of the Church, even one consigning atheists and heretics to the flames, but she may see to it that such a law remain a dead letter on the ecclesiastical statute book.

The State protects the Church, and the Church prays for the state. The State by its penalties, terrifies from actual crime, the many would-be murderers, robbers and housebreakers, who lurk like tigers in our social jungles, and the Church by converting them to God, relieves the State of these enemies. The Church bestows upon the State the men who most truly and purely fill her various offices, and the State gives the Church access to her sailors, soldiers, invalids and prisoners, and in treaties with foreign powers, negotiates for the admission of her missionaries into the bosom of



mighty heathen empires, and of nations at the ends of the earth.

At all times and under all circumstances, while religiously refraining from interference with each others functions, the Church never tampering with the duties of the State, the State never laying unholy hands upon the altar of God, they should still sympathize with, and lend their influence in furthering the prosperity of each other. And in times of peculiar peril, when the State is threatened with disintegration and utter overthrow; when doctrines are uttered and maintained at the bayonet's point and the cannon's mouth, which are as unscriptural as they are ruinous, and whose prevalence among men would operate like the suspension of the law of gravitation in nature, dispersing all things in wildest confusion; and when further, the Church sees in this threatened dissolution the crippling, if not utter extinction of all her great agencies for benevolent operation in fields domestic and foreign, every holy instinct of her nature impels her, and every solemn obligation binds her to lift up her voice like a trumpet, and ply all her powers in rebuke of the ominous error, and in encouragement and support of the imperilled government, ordained of God for his glory and the nation's good, and under whose ægis her own resources are developed and multiplied.

And new emphasis is added to the obligation, when by the united testimony of defender and assailant, and

also of enlightened, disinterested foreigners, the smitten government is one of the mildest and most beneficent ever granted to a nation.

If the State pass a law authorizing or constraining a violation of the Sabbath day, it is one of the most patent and imperative of the duties of the church, through the press, from the pulpit and in her ecclesiastical courts, to charge her erring sister with the wrong, and call upon her, in the name of the most High, to retrace her steps! Nor may she hesitate to reiterate in the ears of her membership the voice of Sinai—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." And if an unauthorized body of men, larger or smaller, assume to free themselves and others from the obligations of citizenship, and even of solemn and oft-repeated oaths, and go so far as to set on fire the national edifice that covers the heads of thirty millions of people—five millions of them communicants in evangelical Christian churches—under these circumstances to expect the church to hold her peace in pulpit, Presbytery and General Assembly, and to shrink from defining and properly characterising treason and rebellion, and from warning her membership therefrom, is to accuse her courage, loyalty, or intelligence, or all together.

Assembled to-day once more for a thanksgiving service, after a most momentous year in the history of the world, as well as of our own beloved country, we have called your attention to a portion of that noble thanks-

giving psalm the 118th, the 27th verse of which is a kind of embodiment of the whole—"God is the Lord which hath showed us light—bind the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar."

The scene here set before us is one equally vivid, impressive and instructive. There, in the temple-courts, is the altar. Above, upon his glorious throne, is God the Lord, "the Father of lights" and the giver of every good and perfect gift. Not far off a thanksgiving party approaches with their victim, singing as they come, "God is the Lord which hath showed us light—bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar."

Beloved! we to-day are that thanksgiving party—here is the altar, yonder is God the Lord who hath showed us light, and we are met to bind our sacrifice of gratitude even unto the horns of the altar. God is the Father of lights—the light of sun and stars; the light of life; the light of reason; all the lights that shine in our homes, in the eyes of our children, and in their ruddy cheeks; the light of domestic affection; and all the lights, greater and lesser, that hang in our political sky.

Let us now proceed to enumerate and meditate upon certain of these lights which God had showed us during the past year.

And, first, we remark in general, that they are broken lights; lights mingled with shadows. This in-

deed is true of all human lights. The fireside story is the tale of human life.

“ There is no flock however watched or tended,  
 But one dead lamb is there ;  
 There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,  
 But has one vacant chair.”

So the lights that God hath showed us the past year, have fallen on us through openings in the clouds—clouds sometimes very, very dark!

As to those of a national character, how could it be otherwise, when within the year the cloud of a gigantic civil war has cast its dense, awful shadow athwart our affrighted land! During that time, hundreds of thousands of men have gone from cottage and palace, from workshop and counting-room, from fireside and communion table, to put on the soldier's mantle, and execute the soldier's bloody task; from hillsides where bleating flocks grazed, the raking artillery has thundered, and where childrens' voices rang in sport, men have fought and filled the ground with the bleeding, dying and the dead. Often during this year, there has been—

“ Hurrying to and fro,  
 And gathering tears and tremblings of distress,  
 And cheeks all pale which, but awhile ago,  
 Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;  
 And—sudden sudden partings such as press  
 The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs  
 Which ne'er might be repeated.”

Yes, and in *our* midst, widows and orphans have been multiplied, and every morning, thousands of breakfast tables, and every evening, thousands of firesides, lack their wonted cheer, because a son, a brother, or a father, is away, offering his heart to the bayonet's thrust, or the bullet's merciless invasion.

And if we drop a tear amidst our joys for our own sorrows, shall we forget the sorrows of those who have made themselves the foes of our most precious interests, by making themselves the enemies of our country? Have we no tear for desolated Virginia? Who will not join us in the lament uttered over her, in one of the pulpits of our church, more than a century ago?

“O Virginia, O my country.”—For Beloved, we are not patriots if Virginia, is not as much our country to-day, as is Pennsylvania herself,—“O, my country shall I not lament for thee! Thou art a valley of vision, favored with the light of revelation, and the gospel of Jesus; thou hast long been the region of peace and tranquility, the land of plenty, ease and liberty! What do I now hear! I see thy brazen skies, thy parched soil, thy withering fields, thy hopeless springs, thy scanty harvests! Methinks I also hear the sound of the trumpet and garments rolled in blood!” So spake the Rev. Samuel Davies at Hanover, July 20th, 1755.

And why should we not weep for the woes of Virginia, and Carolina and Missouri, although those woes have been so wantonly brought upon themselves?

Yes, the fact that a gigantic civil war now rages in our country, must sorely chasten our joy, and the lights that God has showed us are made tremulous by our tears.

But let us not make our case worse than it is, lest we tempt God to allow it to become what we report it to be. Allow me therefore to caution you against an unscrutinizing admission of wholesale declarations to the effect that war, even civil war, is the worst calamity that can come upon a nation. General anarchy is many times more fearful. And let us challenge the proof when we hear it affirmed, or intimated that war, even civil war is either necessarily demoralizing, or that it is the most expensive of either blood or treasure of all national evils. Far from it. The money and blood now expended in reinstating our blessed government over our undivided country, may, and by the blessing of God will prove the most economical outlay a nation ever made; for it will give a stable government to generations of ever-multiplying millions; and to agriculture, commerce and the arts, a peaceful empire, in which for centuries to accumulate their treasures. And if war is ever justifiable, it is a contradiction to say that it is necessarily demoralizing. And that defensive war is justifiable, we have only to appeal to the common sense and common instincts of mankind. Only the merest handful of men ever thought of denying it. And that a state of war is not necessarily a state of demoralization to

either the nation or the soldiery, we may appeal first, to the Old Testament history.

Joshua led some hundreds of thousands of men to the conquest of Canaan. They fought most terrific battles. They performed the most wholesale military executions. Were they therefore and thereby demoralized? So far from this, it is generally agreed that among the generations of Israel, that which entered and conquered Canaan under Joshua, excelled in purity and in fidelity to God. “And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the Elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord which he did for Israel.”

Neal, in his history of the Puritans, gives us some interesting testimony upon the moral condition of our mother-land, during the civil wars in the middle of the seventeenth century:—

“There was an uncommon spirit of devotion,” he writes, “in the Parliament quarters. The Lord’s day was observed with remarkable strictness, the churches being crowded with numerous and attentive hearers, three or four times a day. There was no travelling on the road, or walking in the fields, except in cases of absolute necessity. Religious exercises were set up in private families, and were so universal that you might go through the city of London on the evening of the Lord’s day, without seeing an idle person, or hearing anything but the voice of prayer and praise.”

A daily prayer-meeting of one hour—there is nothing new under the sun—was established in London, suggested by the fact that requests for prayer sent to the pulpit were so numerous, that there was not time so much as to read them.

With regard to the army itself, we quote from Macauley: “But that which chiefly distinguished the army of Cromwell from other armies, was the austere morality and the fear of God, which pervaded all ranks. It is acknowledged by the most zealous royalists, that in that singular camp no oath was heard, no drunkenness nor gambling seen, and that during the long dominion of the soldiery, the property of the peaceable citizen and the honor of women, were held sacred.”

Let us then do our duty as Christians to that noble soldiery, that have interposed their bodies between rebellion and our country's heart, and we need not fear the return upon us, at the war's close, of hordes of demoralized men.

In enumerating the lights God has showed our nation the past year, we name first of all: *The sparing to us our National Government and our National Capital.*

Patients sometimes sink very low. The cheek becomes paler and paler, the eye dimmer and dimmer, the pulse feebler and feebler. The sufferer, feeling himself in the inexorable grasp of the Dread King, shivering



under his icy breath, bids farewell to sun, moon and stars, farewell to earth and friends, and resigns himself to his fate. And yet after all, to the surprise of himself, his physician and his friends, he rises again and goes forth from that sick chamber, a healthier man than he had been for many a long year before!

During the past year our National Government has been down in the dark valley of the shadow of death. We felt through our own frames the tremors of its coming dissolution. A nightmare of distressing apprehension was upon us. Our last thought at night, our first thought in the morning, was of our country. In our dreams, we saw our Seat of Government in the hands of insurrectionary chiefs, and over the great dome of our capitol, the loathed standard of rebellion waving. In our imaginations we saw State loosening from State, and then itself dissolving into fragments; our nation gone; our history become a mysterious illusion; our hopes faded forever! In our distress, we fasted and prayed—prayed alone in the closet, and as we walked the streets—prayed together in the pulpit and in the prayer-meeting.

And a merciful God pitied our distress, and lent a kindly ear to our petition, and to-day we rejoice with joy unspeakable in the possession of our Government, still,—we say it with reverence,—“fair as the moon, bright as the sun and terrible as an army with ban-

ners;" and that Government, blessed be the Father of Lights, still at its own old home at Washington!

Beloved—God is the Lord which has given us this light—"bind the sacrifice with cords, even with horns to the altar!"

*Secondly.*—*God has showed us light during this year, in the fact that the actual ravages of war have been confined exclusively to those States, in which armed men have thrust at the heart of our government.* In all the loyal States, not a wheat-stalk has been trodden down by the soldier's foot, not a family has been driven by fright or violence from its home, not a square foot of soil has been moistened with blood.

Say we this in exultation over the miseries of our fellows in the other States? God forbid! It broke our hearts when they rebelled, and our hearts have bled for them as we have read of their sufferings. But surely there is a righteous justice in this infliction of the chief miseries of this war upon those who have so wantonly, so causelessly, so cruelly drawn the nation into it.

*Thirdly.*—*God the Lord hath showed us light, in the disclosure to us of the existence among our people of a profound and universal spirit of patriotism.*

So admirably adjusted was our political machinery, so almost self-acting, that we had come to think little more about it than we do of the ordinary operations of nature. It had come imperceptibly to be regarded somewhat like the old family clock on the stairs; the

solemn tick answering to any questions that now and then stole into the mind, as to how long that clock would run, or when the faithful pendulum would cease to swing—

“ Forever—never!  
Never—forever!”

But by-and-by the suspicion was awakened, that faithless men had been tampering with the old timepiece. The impression gained ground and sank deeper. At length the conviction flashed like lightning through the land, that that pendulum, seized by rebellious men, was about to cease its swinging—that the heart of the nation under pressure of misled, disloyal citizens, was about to cease its beatings, and twenty millions arose with a wail and a shout, and ejaculated—“ No! we are not ready to see our nation die!”

And such a breaking up of the fountains of the great deep of patriotism as followed, this world had never seen! It gushed forth from the heart of young man and maiden, old men and children. We heard of one old mother in Israel, who begged with her dying words that her corpse might be wrapped in the flag of her country. Purses were emptied, and hands set to work in a labor of as ardent a love as ever moved a patriot to action. In it, every family, every rank, every age coveted a share. Jeweled fingers, that had been familiar thus far only with the piano-keys, the strings of the guitar, now made acquaintance with the thimble and

the knitting-needle. Even children were proud to contribute their mite; even the very poor made heavy sacrifices that our soldiers who went forth to hold the shield over the nation's breast, might be furnished with clothing and with Bibles! And it is on the bosom of this flood of patriotism, that the national ark is riding out the perils of the hour.

And the very fact that our government had found its way so deeply into the heart of the nation, demonstrates that it was worthy to be thus loved—worthy to be defended with all of life and treasure that we have to give. Bind then the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar!

*Further—God hath showed us light, in the development of a power in our government, as gigantic as it was unsuspected.*

It is not, we verily believe, a mere “American boast,” that there is not that other government under the sun that could have withstood for one week, the shock which was visited upon our own. If the Chartist uprising in England in '48, drove her noble Queen in terror from Buckingham palace to the Isle of Wight, an uprising like ours would have overturned the British throne.

Much less do we believe that any other government, in similar circumstances, with the folds of that huge anaconda about its neck and body and limbs, could have achieved anything like the hereulean results, which in

the past nine months have rolled from the hands of ours, could have put such armies, so equipped into the field, and launched such fleets upon the sea.

Our keen-sighted foes of the old world, whoever and wherever they may be, are more thoroughly alive than ever to the truth, that between the Atlantic and Pacific there resides a youthful giant, which must soon be effectually crippled, or ere long tremblingly obeyed. And we will not doubt that God has confided this power to our nation for our good, and the good of the race, and for his glory.

*Again, God hath showed us light in relieving our minds from distressing apprehensions with regard to our poor.* When the hum of the factory began to cease, when every newspaper told us of twenty hands discharged here, and fifty there, and hundreds on the right hand and on the left, our hearts quaked with fears of overwhelming calamities to the poor. The terrible suggestions of those whose wishes took the form of prophecy, our imaginations too readily transformed into stern, terrific realities; and already we saw the upturned faces of pale, starving multitudes, and our streets the scene of violence and riotous outbreaks.

But what a light hath God showed us! From all that we can learn by inquiry and from personal observation, we feel justified in saying that there is quite as little, if not actually less, of suffering among the poorer classes at this hour, than there has been at this

time of year these last five years. And it is among the astonishing compensations we enjoy in the midst of our ills, that just where we looked for sorrow we find joy, and where we dreaded starvation we see bread in comparative abundance.

*Once more, God hath showed us light in our orchards, cornfields and granaries.* O, had the fields proved as faithless as man; had this year been one of famine, as well as of war; had the crops proved even deficient to any considerable extent, what untold ills had been our lot!

But how has it fared with the toils of husbandry? How has God, in his providence measured out the treasures of sunshine and shower, upon meadow and hill-side? What a story is told in the fact, that in addition a large last year's surplus, God has given us a crop, including all the grains, and also the yield of potatoes, of fourteen hundred millions of bushels, several times as much as our nation can consume in a single year!

But there is another ray in this beam of light. For twenty years Northern Enterprise has been employed in uniting our remotest West with our Atlantic borders, by means of great thoroughfares of railway and lake navigation, little dreaming—how was it possible even to dream?—that a gigantic rebellion would precipitate all the vast commerce of the Mississippi upon those thoroughfares? And now these treasures of the west

find easy access to the storehouses and markets of the east.

But there are other rays still in this light-beam. The day has gone by when America can find security from foreign interference in her own insignificance. The lightning smites the tall tree, and God has cast out the heathen, and planted a tree here, against which angry thunderbolts have been long in preparation from beyond the seas. In the nature of things it could not be otherwise. Influences that go hence to European shores have been for many years elevating the masses, and working a corresponding depression of those towering, buttressed, ivy-grown aristocracies. There is nothing that dies willingly, and least of all things, the human sceptre-holder. And hence—what should no more surprise us, than that the master should object to change places with the servant—they for whom Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton speaks, honestly declare that—“The dissolution of the American Union, would be in itself considered beneficial to the world. America was becoming too strong—so strong as to menace Europe. Separation not into two, but into three or four commonwealths, would relieve the world of a fear.”

What then was to hinder such an interference on the part of foreign powers, as might seriously protract the struggle in which we are engaged, if not actually plunge us into irretrievable ruin?

But God hath showed us light in this dark quarter.

From some source, at least one hundred and forty millions of bushels of grain, some nine thousand cargoes, must find their way to the shores of France and England the present year, and of this, a very large proportion must come from our storehouses. Is there not a kindly providential light in the fact, that, for the first time in the history of the world, there should concur such an enormous overplus on our part, with a corresponding deficiency on the part of western Europe? Thus God has put the nations, whose interference we most dreaded, under most solemn bonds to keep the peace with us, and at the same time has opened streams of foreign gold into our coffers, to enable us to carry on the work of reinstating our noble constitution over all our land.

Bind then, Beloved, the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar!

But *our country* is not the only precious name in our vocabularies. Another, sweeter than we can tell is *Home*. The family is an institution more ancient than civil government, and the latter derives no little of its immeasurable importance from its relations to the former. The family is the scene alike of our sweetest and bitterest hours, and whenever we are called, on thanksgiving day, to enumerate the lights God hath showed us, we instinctively cast our eyes along the path the family has been led.

And when we group before our minds the families



connected with a congregation, and make inquiry after their experiences for a year, how varied is the reply!

Here is a family, representing others fewer or more numerous, on whom since last we met as we now meet, the sun has risen and set three hundred and sixty-five times, at each rising imprinting a kiss of blessing, and at each diurnal adieu, departing with a smile! No cheek has lost its hue, no eye its lustre, no tongue its voice, and this morning an unbroken band, it joined in the orisons around the family altar! O how gently, how sweetly those hours came and departed! O the unnumbered blessings to these our homes of the year that has just gone by! In what balances can we weigh them—by what arithmetic can we compute their value!

O ye families, that have come up to these courts this morning, through three hundred and sixty-five days and nights of blessing—come with us while we bind our sacrifice of thanksgiving with cords, even unto the horns of the altar!

2. Here is a family representing another group of households, which during the year has sent fathers, brothers and sons to this camp, and to that battle-field, and who yet rejoice in the safety and health of all. The number that represent these families in our country's service in this trying hour, is not very small. In husbands, sons and brothers, we have been present in the earlier actions near Harper's Ferry, in the sad affair near Leesburg, at Port Royal, and at the mouth of the Missis-

sippi. At Ball's Bluffs, one of those young men disappeared among the missing; one, two, three, four weeks rolled over his parents in the keen anguish of suspense—ignorant whether he fell on the field by a sudden or a lingering death, whether he was drowned, or whether he was taken prisoner. At length however, the precious letter came—"Dear Father, I am alive and well." And we believe that after all the exposures by land and sea, in camp, march and battle, not one drop of blood has been drawn from the veins of those dear to you as your own lives!

Beloved—It is God the Lord which hath showed you this light—"Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar."

3. Some of you during the past year, have encountered extreme financial embarrassments, and have experienced days darker, and nights of more intense anxiety than you had ever feared. Fortunes have melted away like frost before the sun. Many a noble ship has been blown ashore in the gale; men of as pure, exalted integrity, as ever blessed society, have had their hearts wrung with the anguish, of which only lofty spirits are capable, through inability to meet financial engagements. And yet after all, who will say to-day that in the darkest hour light was not given? And is there one among you all to-day, who in view of the aggregate mercies of the year, does not cordially join in

our song—"God the Lord hath showed us light—bind the sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the altar."

4. But what shall we say of another class of families in our midst, whose homes during the past year have been overshadowed with the clouds of bereavement—into and out of whose doors the undertaker, and the funeral company have gone? Is there not something like mockery, bitter mockery, in calling to thanksgiving festivities our brothers and sisters according to the flesh, who have so lately been called to deposit their dearest earthly treasures in the cold, dark grave?

We have, in imagination, stood upon a high bluff, jutting out into the sea; the rain and hail, O how piteously they came down! The tempest, O how it raged! The clouds, how dense and dark! And the sea how wild its watery tumult! And out on that tormented ocean we saw a vessel—sails gone, masts gone, covered with ice, and every surge we thought must be its last! And there stood a man at the wheel, resolute, undaunted! And through all, there he stood, and by God's blessing he conquered the storm, wind and wave, and brought that disabled vessel victorious into port!

And we have stood, *not* in imagination, upon a bluff that juttet into the sea of human sorrow! And O how pitilessly the storm fell! For a time the anguish was too keen for consolation, and we could only look on, while our heart bled for the sufferers! And yet have we seen the strong man and the feeble woman, stand

all through such a storm of sorrow, with a brow radiant with light from the burning throne, calm, trustful, submissive, and on every feature, in every line of the countenance, he who ran might read—"Not my will, but thine O Lord be done!" And those sons and daughters of sorrow, have come out of that conflict more than conquerors through him that hath loved us! They have gone forth purified, sanctified, emboldened from that baptism of distress.

And Beloved, we verily believe, that of all who hold thanksgiving service with us here to-day, there is no soul that responds with more profound cordiality to the call—"Come! bind the sacrifice with cords even to the horns of the altar," than these very children of sorrow! For next to the gift of Jesus, in saving faith Heaven, in all the affluence of her treasures, has not another more precious than that of gracious submission under bereavement.

*Finally*—Some of you, we are persuaded, can say with an overflowing heart, "God hath shown us the light of many a spiritual joy, since last we met."

Some here, whom the last thanksgiving sun saw "in the gall of bitterness and bonds of iniquity," to-day carry the jewels of Christian faith and love in their hearts, and wear upon their brow Hope's morning star. (Rev. ii: 28.) Some moment of the past year has been signalized by that victory, more memorable than any ever won by the soldiery of the nations, in which an

immortal soul has broken from the fetters of sin, and rushed into the glorious liberty of the children of God. And to all eternity the day, the hour, the moment of this transition from death to life, will glow in your memories with a lustre, that nothing can eclipse! Bind thou then, O new-born soul, bind thou the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of the altar!

And some of you Beloved, have during the year received revelations, enjoyed faith-visions of the Lamb; have been favored with seasons of pure, elevated devotion; have enjoyed a conscious girding with spiritual strength, that have wrought your spirits into new and decided conformity with your Lord; and now you not only sing—

“ One sweetly solemn thought  
Comes to me o’er and o’er,  
I’m nearer home to-day  
Than I ever have been before.”

But you can also say, “ I have this year been enabled more than during any other year of my life thus far, to ‘ put on the Lord Jesus Christ.’ ” Now with more unction and spiritual fervor than ever you can say—

“ Here Lord I give myself away,  
’Tis all that I can do !”

And of all the glad company that this day encompass our thanksgiving altar, who have better reason

than such to exclaim—"God the Lord hath showed us light—bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar!"

And what sacrifice to-day becomes us, and the altar around which we gather—what but a new and solemn offering, here in the presence of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, of body, soul, spirit, time, talents, and fortune, all to "Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father—to whom be for ever and ever, amen and amen!"









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