

PEACE: IS IT YOURS?

IF NOT, WHY NOT?

THERE is a "peace" which is not worth having. Nay, there is positive danger in possessing it. It is what we may call THE PEACE OF GOD-FORGETTING INDIFFERENCE.

Absence of alarm is, in itself, no real guarantee of safety. Every fisherman's baited hook, every well-spread fowler's net supposes this.

"When the strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in *peace*," said the blessed Lord (Luke xi. 21). Nor does He leave us in doubt as to who the "strong man" is (see preceding verses). It is the devil—the master "fowler," with all

his well-hidden, unsuspected devices, who cries "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." But when the Spirit of God begins to work in the soul of one of Satan's prisoners, and conscience is thoroughly awakened, it is soon discovered that the "prince" is more than *entertainer* in his palace—he is an "armed" *keeper* at its gates; and it is then that the heart needs comfort, and help, and warning too.

For next to the peril of a false peace is the snare of

SEEKING TRUE PEACE IN A
FALSE WAY.*

You might as well spend your time in wandering through the mountains in search of water of its own natural force running uphill, as to try to find peace by methods which only turn God's order of blessing upside down. For the result in both cases would

be exactly the same—CERTAIN DISAPPOINTMENT. To explain. We will turn to four short sentences in the closing chapters of the Gospel of John, and first look at them in the order in which they are divinely recorded for us, and then at the way in which they are distorted in the minds of thousands of honest seekers after peace.

“IT IS FINISHED” (John xix. 30). The promise of God fulfilled. The cup of judgment drained. The heart of God toward man expressed.

“PEACE BE UNTO YOU” (John xx. 19). The *result* of “It is finished” made known in resurrection by Him who finished it.

“LOVEST THOU ME?” (John xxi. 15). An expected response to the love expressed. As though He had said to Peter, After all I have done

and suffered for you, all My forbearing patience with you, all My love to you, do you see anything in Me to draw out your love? If so, then

“FOLLOW THOU ME.” An easy task when the heart's affections are engaged. And this is God's order.

With what natural ease these golden sentences flow after each other! Go over them again, my reader. Let your heart freely drink into their blessedness: let your eye admire their exquisite beauty. Then as you stand upon the banks of this gently flowing river, you will assuredly pity the man who is trying hard to reverse this order, saying, I must

*Begin to follow Him,
Try to love Him, and
Hope to get peace when
It is finished.*

The false notion that exists in the mind of fallen man as to God's real attitude toward him is an effective weapon in the hand of the devil. The sinner imagines that something is necessary on his part to draw the heart of God toward him; and on this string the enemy harps many a doleful measure. Whereas the real truth is the very reverse of this, namely, that something on *God's* part was necessary in order to draw the sinner's heart to Him. Therefore we read, "the Son of Man *must* be lifted up," and "God so loved the world, that He *gave* His only begotten Son" (John iii. 16). Of His own gracious sovereign will He has approached man for his blessing. The very presence of His Son in this world was God's great "FEAR NOT" for sinful men; while His presence in glory,

now that the work of the cross has been accomplished, is God's proclamation that there is NOTHING LEFT TO FEAR for hearts that believe on Him.

The cross of Christ is the great declaration of what God's feelings are toward us. But even the cross did not *originate* the love of God. It would be an insult to the heart of God to say so. The Cross was the *means*, but not the source of our blessing. "*By the grace of God*" He "tasted death for every man" (Heb. ii. 9). "The Father sent the Son" (1 John iv. 14). "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," and "*I have given it to you upon the altar*" (Lev. xvii. 11).

So that instead of God's love being drawn out by man's goodness, it was really expressed in meeting his badness, and this when, in reality, man

had not the least power for goodness. "For when we were yet *without strength*, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*" (Rom. v. 6).

If, therefore, the sufferings and death of Jesus were not needed to draw the grace of God toward us, let us not imagine that any work of ours is necessary to do it.

But suppose, for a moment, that we could do it, that, by a well-kept resolution to lead a better life, we could dispose God's heart toward us for the future, there would still remain God's righteous reckoning for the past. For thus it is written, "*God requireth that which is past.*" (Eccles. iii. 15). And with such a requirement hanging over our heads how could we possibly have peace?

God's righteousness *must* be respected.

SATISFACTION *FOR* GOD MUST
PRECEDE OUR PEACE *WITH* GOD.

A wounded soldier in South Africa said one day to the writer, "I once made a *profession*, but I never really had 'peace at the bottom' " !

How was this? He had, poor fellow, like many others, begun at the wrong end for solid satisfaction.

In the matter of an ordinary debt, who is it that claims the right to subscribe "*settled*" on the account?

The creditor, of course.

Exactly. It would be of no value whatever for the debtor to do it. It would neither give satisfaction to his creditor nor peace to himself.

The debtor's peace is only the natural consequence of knowing that the *Creditor* is satisfied. In like manner the only true way of getting

“peace at the bottom” is to see that the whole sin question has been *settled from the top*.

One Lord's day afternoon the writer was teaching a number of children the following verse:—

“I need no other argument,
I want no other plea;
It is enough that Jesus died,
And rose again for me,”

and asked, Why is it, do you think, that I can say, “It is *enough for me* that Jesus died”?

After several unaccepted answers were given, a bright-faced little girl said, “It is enough for *you*, because it is enough for *God*.” “That is it, my dear! If *God* is satisfied with the settlement of His own claims, so am I.” The very secret of peace lies in that dear child's answer.

It is of the greatest moment to

see that *satisfaction for a forgiving God* in the presence of an accusing enemy must precede *peace with God* for a forgiven sinner in the light of an upbraiding conscience. It is of infinitely greater importance that God should be righteously able to silence the accuser than that you should.

Take an illustration. A man once stood charged with the breach of a newly-made law. The statute had only just obtained royal sanction when the said offender was discovered acting in direct opposition to its known behest, regardless of the heavy penalty he was incurring. It is true that the culprit thought he had a very good reason for his course of conduct, but that is not the point before us now. As to the weight of the condemning evidence there was

no manner of doubt. Even the offender himself gave the charge no denial.

Only one person in the whole realm seemed to be disturbed about the matter, and this not the culprit but the king. But *he* felt it, felt it deeply, and, setting his heart to deliver the offender, he laboured at his task till the going down of the sun.

Now consider the king's position for a moment. His longing heart struggles in one direction, his written law impels him in another. He has a high personal regard for the offender, but what is he going to do with the offence?

King Darius found himself in a painful position. Peace he had none. Great conqueror he might be, but when the sun went down that night

all his hope of conquering this difficulty went down with it. He must do violence either to his heart's best wishes, or to the honour of his own written law. Satisfy both he cannot.

The eyes of the nation are upon him. The accusers are doggedly determined. What can he do? Each side is weighed with due deliberation, till unbending justice carries the day. Daniel must go to the den!

Now we read that the accusers brought their charge twice before the king (see Daniel vi.). By way of illustration let us suppose that, between their first appearing and their second, and all unknown to the accusers themselves, Daniel had actually been cast into the den, that the lions' mouths had been stopped, and that he had been taken out again by the very king who put him in.

Next morning the accusers appear for the second time to press for the execution of the penalty. Let us, for a moment, suppose the interview.

Did you not (addressing the king) subscribe your name to this law of temporary prohibition?

The king assents.

You are well aware that Daniel the Hebrew has broken it, and thereby incurred the penalty plainly set forth in the same.

The king further assents.

Are you not, therefore, going to satisfy the claims of your law by casting the offender into the lion's den?

Most assuredly I am not.

But will not Your Majesty, by such a miscarriage of justice, brand your name and throne and dynasty with lasting disgrace?

Just the opposite. Instead of there being any miscarriage of justice, it is my very righteousness that now forbids his going to the den. My law has been honoured, my throne left stainless, and my heart's desire gratified into the bargain. Daniel has already been cast into the den of lions, and after satisfying the utmost claims of a broken law has been taken out again.

I am, therefore, as *righteous* in refusing to hear the charge against him to-day as I was righteous in putting him into the den yesterday ! My First President is free—*righteously free* ! and every breath of accusation must henceforth be hushed for ever.

Now to apply. That which happened to Daniel personally has taken place for the believer substitutionally. He, too, has a

PEACE THAT DEFIES THE ACCUSER.

It is of the utmost importance to be clear on this point—that is, to see distinctly how the truth of the resurrection of Him “who was delivered for our offences” stands in relation to our peace.

*GOD'S SEAL OF SATISFACTION IS OUR
CHALLENGE TO THE ENEMY.*

A man is condemned for some breach of the law, and the penalty seven full weeks.

When will he be free?

When his full term of seven weeks has expired, and the Crown authorities have taken him out of gaol.

But wait. The Sovereign has allowed a friend to go to prison in his place.

When will the culprit now be free?

When his friend has been taken

out. The moment the substitute is out the offender is free!

Now, though it is certain that the Lord Jesus had no offences of His own to answer for, the believer can say, He made Himself responsible for the penalty due to me. To use our figure, He went down into the "den," down to the place of executed judgment, yea, down to the very bottom—Praise His name—down to death itself. The "Good Shepherd," by dying for His sheep, has effectually stopped the "lion's" mouth for ever. Oh, the wonders of redeeming love!

"'Tis finished, on the cross He cried, and
I my title see;
I was the guilty sinner, but Jesus died for
me."

But He is risen. "The *God of peace* has brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Great Shepherd of

the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. xiii. 20). "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. iv. 25).

Who can say that the culprit is free so long as his substitute still remains in prison? Who can claim that his debt is cancelled till a full payment has been accepted by the Creditor? Therefore the apostle says, "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain: ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. xv. 17). But if God has raised out of death the One who went there *for* our offences, we are certainly delivered *from* our offences. "*Therefore,*" says the apostle, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1).

God Himself can now challenge

the enemy to bring a single charge against those whom He has justified through the blood (see Rom. viii. 33, 34), and His people can vanquish the foe with the same weapons : " Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect ? " says the chief of sinners.

I can, says Satan.

Then it is with God's act you must quarrel, says the believer, for God is my Justifier. "*It is God that justifieth.*"

But you can't deny, says Satan, that you have sinned, and " the wages of sin is death."

"*It is Christ that died,*" answers the believer.

Yes ; but you have sinned against light, sinned spite of an upbraiding conscience, sinned more grievously than anyone on earth ever imagined.

True ; but I have not sinned more

than *God* knew when He gave His only begotten Son to die for me, and He it is that tells me that I am justified by the blood, "justified from all things" (Acts xiii. 39).

Ah! says the accuser, changing his ground, but it is against God you have sinned. How do you know that He is satisfied with the death of Jesus for your sins?

Once more the silencing answer has been recorded: "*It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again.*" I believe on Him who brought again from the dead Him who was delivered for my offences (Rom. iv. 24, 25). If He is out of death I am free, and more, the very God who raised Him is, by that very act, my Justifier.

But once more the defeated enemy returns to the assault. You know well enough, he says, that though

you may have believed in His death and resurrection you are still without strength in the hour of temptation.

All too true, but "my Redeemer *liveth*," and I can count upon His support. He lives to serve me still, even as it is written: "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, *who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*" Yes, our Saviour ever lives, and His love never flags. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?"

But what if the believer should fall into sin? What then? "If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John ii. 2). Indeed, He has engaged to conduct safely to glory all that the Father has given Him (John vi. 37-39; Heb. ii. 13). He who once *righteously* answered for our

sins before God still lives engaged to maintain our communion with the Father—"Jesus Christ the *righteous*."

WE HAVE PEACE WITH HIM WHO
KNOWS THE WORST.

Nothing, perhaps, is more important to see than what has just been stated, namely, that it was in the fullest knowledge of the *whole* of our guilty history that God's kindness and love appeared (Titus iii. 4). But will not this lead to carelessness of walk? The very opposite. It is this which begets real confidence in the heart, and produces true holiness in the life of a believer. To emphasize this we will suppose another case.

A housemaid is busy with her daily work in her master's dining-room. While dusting the mantelpiece she is not aware that her duster has

caught upon a costly vase, and in drawing it sharply away she drags the vase down to the hearthstone, shattered to atoms ! She knows well enough what her master will feel about this, for, besides being a choice work of art, it has been handed down as an heirloom in the family for generations past.

How bitterly she upbraids herself for her carelessness, and is just saying to herself, How can I possibly face my master about it, when the drawing-room bell summons her into his presence. With a heavy heart and great trembling she answers the call.

“ We wish to tell you,” says her master, as soon as she enters, “ that your mistress and I have just been speaking together about you, and that we have decided to give you a week’s holiday.”

"Thank you, sir; but are you not forgetting that I have already had my holiday this year?"

"We do not forget this, but it is our wish to give you a special week." Then, holding out his hand he says, "Please take this sovereign. It will help you, perhaps, the better to enjoy your holiday."

"Oh, sir," she says, bursting into tears, "I could not take either the sovereign or the holiday, for I am sure you will offer me neither when you know what I have done. I have, in my carelessness, broken the beautiful vase that was standing on the mantelpiece in the dining-room."

"I know it," he says. "Indeed, I happened to be passing the window at the time and saw you do it; but, though we both greatly feel the loss, we have long had a desire to show

you some special mark of our appreciation, and consider that this is a very good time to do it."

Does the reader think that this new and unexpected experience of her master's kindness would make her more careless about her work for the future? No, no; the very opposite.

And so with those who know the grace of God in Christ. Not only has He forgiven all they have done, but in doing this He knows all they will yet do, and moreover has bestowed the gift of the Holy Ghost for the present enjoyment of His love (Luke xxiv. 49; Rom. v. 5).

With such a God acquaint thyself, my reader, and be at peace (Job xxii. 21).

Having now dwelt a little on the atoning work which secures a right-

eous peace for the believer—"peace with honour," to use with reverence a human term—peace for man and glory for God, and having seen how the very God of peace has declared His satisfaction by raising the Peacemaker from the dead, we must now consider how the blessing is brought to us, namely, by

THE GOSPEL OF PEACE.

"Preaching peace by Jesus Christ" (Acts x. 36).

We have sought to expose the enemy's device of setting honest souls to seek for true peace in a false way, to "make their peace with God," as it is called. Now we have to notice one artifice more.

Multitudes, no doubt, have been, and are still, kept in sorrowful uncertainty through taking up a wrong

attitude in connection with the sacrifice and death of Christ. They confound between that which was offered to God for *His* acceptance, and that which is brought to them for *theirs*.

If you were to try and unlock the front door of your house by the key that only fitted the back door lock, you might lose much valuable time in the attempt. The key itself might be all that could be desired, but that fact would not enable you to open the wrong door with it. The fault would be in yourself, not in the key.

Perhaps a couple of examples of a wrongly-applied "key" might be a help to some perplexed reader.

First we will take the two little words,

"To God,"

and with them two others

"To you."

Now, the way Scripture uses the first of these is very distinct from the way it uses the second. What is offered "*to God*" is very clearly distinguished from what is offered "*to you*," and you can no more use them interchangeably than the manager of the Bank of England could use the key of your kitchen door to open one of his thief-proof safes. Put the right key into the right door, and in less time than it takes to write the sentence the thing is done.

Now first note this. When Christ offered Himself as a Sacrifice for sin, it was not *to you* that the offering was made, no more than, in the type, the offering was made to the man who had sinned. Hebrews ix. 14 says distinctly that, "through the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot *to God*." None of you "can by

any means redeem his brother, nor give *to God* a ransom for him" (Ps. xlix. 7). Now, the offering not being made to you, the acceptance of it does not devolve upon you either. Wherefore, then, all the trouble you have given yourself as to whether or not *you* have rightly accepted His work? If the offering is made to God the acceptance or rejection of it rests with God also.

Your acceptance of it would avail you nothing if *God* had not done so. It would be no more, as we have seen, than the debtor writing "settled" on his creditor's account.

But if He has accepted it (and blessed be God He has: the Sacrifice was of His own providing) you may be sure it is because He has found infinite satisfaction in it.

But now come to your side, for

something is presented to you also. As surely as there was something worthy of God's acceptance, there is something worthy of yours. "*To you* is the word of this salvation sent."

It "is a faithful saying, and *worthy of all acceptance*" (1 Tim. i. 15), and it is your wisdom to accept it.

No worthiness on your side is expected. You have simply to condemn yourself for what you have done, and thankfully receive the news of what He has done; or, in other words, to "*repent and believe the Gospel.*"

But let us now turn to another example of what we have called a wrongly-applied "key." We refer to two sets of four words. One is—

"*According to your faith;*"
the other—

"*According to Thy Word.*"

With a sense of their need two blind men came to Jesus and sought His mercy (Matt. ix. 27-30).

The Lord inquires, "Believe ye that I am able to do this? They say unto Him, Yea, Lord." Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith be it unto you."

Ah, says some soul, that just suggests my difficulty. I know the work has been done, but my faith is so weak that I cannot lay hold of the blessing as I should like.

Just turn, then, to the verse quoted, and notice two things. First, *who* it is that says "According to your faith," and then on what ground He says it.

First, it was Jesus who said it to the blind men.

Then as to the ground.

1. They wished for the blessing.

2. They believed that He was *able* to give it to them (v. 29).

But they did not say, "According to *our* faith be it done unto us."

Probably they never thought about their faith, and certainly did not speak about it. What engrossed them was just this—we have a need, and He is able to meet it. Or, if they had expressed their conviction after the model of the Lord's own words, it would have been this: "*According to Thy ability* be it done unto us."

And was this enough to secure the longed-for boon? Yes. On this ground it was that the Lord said, "According to your faith be it unto you."

But, says some reader, if I am not to look at my faith and assure my heart thereby, where is my assurance to come from?

It springs from what *He* is, and hence the importance of seeing that there is another "according" to consider, one that looks in another direction, not at your *faith*, but His *faithfulness*.

The response of the most blessed among women to the heavenly message delivered to her by Gabriel is really the language of all who are divinely assured, "According to *Thy word* be it unto me" (Luke i. 38). How simple! how beautiful! Faith never makes *itself* an object. It looks up to the Lord and says, "I want no better guarantee of certain blessing than that which 'Thy Word' gives me." And looking into the face of every gainsayer it can boldly say, "Hath He said, and shall He not do it? hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" (Num. xxiii. 19).

Now, reader, for a plain question: Have *you* "peace with God"? and if *not*, in view of what God is, what Christ has done, and what the Spirit has testified, we ask, WHY NOT?

But there is yet another aspect of peace to consider.

THE PEACE OF GOD.

(PEACE OF HEART AND MIND.)

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. iv. 6, 7).

We must not confound the "peace" mentioned in this passage with the "peace" we have already been considering (Rom. v. 1). It is a great loss to do so, though often done.

But perhaps the reader may say, Is this not a mere distinction without a difference? Surely "peace" is "peace," whichever way you look at it.

You are mistaken there. That which *disturbs* the peace is not always the same, and therefore peace has not always the same character.

When "peace *with* God" is spoken of, *sin* is the disturbing thing, and *conscience* the thing disturbed; but when the "peace *of* God" is spoken of, *earthly care* is the disturbing thing, and *heart* and *mind* the things disturbed.

Again, "peace with God" is something *we* have—"we have peace with God"; while the "peace of God" is the peace *He* has, only, wonderful to say, He gives us to enter into it with Him.

There is therefore a vast difference between the two. Peace with God is the result of a transaction that took place only once, which can never be repeated. The peace of God must be sought as often as I have a disturbing care. By way of illustration let us suppose a case. A certain medical man attends the prisoners in the county gaol. A man in whom he has a special interest is brought there for some offence. There was an alternative penalty of a fine, but the man was too poor to pay it.

The doctor finds, moreover, that there is another matter that is troubling the prisoner. He is suffering from some internal growth.

The doctor, out of his own pocket, pays the demanded penalty, and procures the prisoner's release. But does this deliverance from the grip of the

law release him from his bodily malady, or remove his mental anxiety about it? No. But the kind doctor now says, If you will come to my surgery I will give you something to relieve your present suffering, and later on, perhaps, I may be able to remove the malignant growth altogether; but, till then, whenever it specially troubles you, come to me, and I will again relieve you.

Now, this man's release from a deserved penalty and his relief from a bodily ailment are not more distinct in their character than is our getting "*peace with God*" distinct from our enjoying the "*peace of God*." Yet how many, to their own loss, confound between them!

The blessed God is not unmindful of the fact that sin is not the only thing that disturbs His people. He

knows that their path to glory leads through a world of care.

In view of this, there are three things He can do for them.

1. He can remove them beyond the reach of trial, that is, He can take them home.

2. He can remove the trial from them, but still leave them here.

3. He can allow the trial to remain, but calm their hearts in the midst of it.

Stephen experienced the third before he was taken into the first (Acts vii. 59, 60).

Peter experienced the third as he lay that night in prison chained between two soldiers (Acts xii.). Humanly speaking, a violent death was before him. James had already suffered, and in Herod's mind Peter was to follow. Yet there he lay in

calm repose. His circumstances as dark as they well could be, his heart and mind evidently at perfect rest. Then followed his experience of the second. Chains and keepers are permitted to hold him no longer. An angel sets him free.

One example more. The blessed Lord Himself is storm-tossed on the lake. The cry of His terrified followers arouses Him from sleep, and He rises from the pillow to still the storm. Now, if the Lord is personally no longer with us here to calm our fears by stilling our storms, He sits above the storms to accomplish what is still more wonderful, to calm our disquieted hearts. So we read it is "through Christ Jesus" that the peace of God keeps our hearts and minds (Phil. iv. 7).

Peter's case is a lovely example of

this. Once, with threatened death outside the boat and discomfort inside, the terrified servant, with the others, had called for help while his Master was in the posture of repose. But now, with threatened death outside and prison discomfort inside, he has found at last his Master's pillow, and there he soundly sleeps till the deliverer awakes him. What a moral triumph!

Now, if the possession of this peace, "the peace of God," is fraught with such blessed consequences, nothing could be more important for the comfort of the Christian than to see clearly.

HOW WE GET IT.

In order to have "peace with God," as we have seen, I must believe the Gospel which tells me that a full settlement has been made in righteous-

ness between God and His Son on my account on the cross, and that a declaration of satisfaction has been issued in the tidings of His resurrection. In this work I had no share whatever, neither in Calvary's settlement nor in God's seal of satisfaction in it. But when it is a question of the "peace of God" the matter is altogether on a different footing. I must now go to God on my own account, go to Him in prayer. I must, as it arises, consciously deposit my care in His hand, and confidently leave it there.

The only child of a godly couple, we will suppose, is seriously ill.

The doctor is fetched, but he holds out only a very slender hope of the boy's recovery. The parents are in an agony of mind about it. While the father is away fetching the medicine

the distressed mother steals quietly to her own room and kneels down. A desperate storm of trouble is raging within her bosom.

As she draws near to God, many a past mercy, even in connection with this very child, comes into her mind, and she feels what poor mean thanks she has given Him for all His goodness in the past. But now in broken sentences she truly thanks Him.

Then the big burden of her heart is laid before Him. She prays with earnest supplication for her boy. The blessed High Priest above is sympathising with her and graciously supporting her, and at last she is able to surrender her will to God, and put her boy unreservedly in His hands.

Then she hastens back to her boy.

Any improvement? Not the slightest that she can discover.

The husband returns, and as soon as he meets his wife he exclaims, "The boy is better, then!"

"Better! Whatever made you think such a thing? I can't see that he is a bit better!"

"Oh, it was your face I was looking at. I made certain he was better the moment I saw you."

"Ah," she replies, "but if the dear boy is no better, *I* am!—*much* better! Words could not describe the peace that fills me now. Without a personal experience of it no one could enter into it—'it passeth all understanding.'"

Now, it was not the burden of sin that weighed upon her *conscience*, but one big care that pressed upon her *heart*; and taking it to God, He caused

the peace in which He Himself dwells to fill her heart and mind.

God's peace our stronghold. There is another word in the verse calling for special notice—it is the word “*keep*”—“the peace of God . . . shall *keep* your hearts and minds.” “Keep” is a word used in olden times to describe the strongest part of a castle. The “keep” was usually the most difficult part of a fortress to take, and accordingly was the last to fall. In times of conflict that which, to the owner, was counted most precious was placed there, for before the enemy could disturb those treasures he must break through the walls of the “keep.”

Now, when God promises that His own peace shall *keep* our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus it is as though He had said, Just bring

your burdened heart to Me; leave your disturbing matters entirely in My hand, and the peace in which I Myself dwell, My *own* peace, shall be like the "keep" of a castle to your heart and mind; so that that which is not able to break through the walls of your "keep" shall not be able to disturb you.

Well may faith say of such, "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man: Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues" (Ps. xxxi. 20).

If you would see an Old Testament illustration of a saint at peace in God's "keep" turn to Psalm iii.

Perhaps no trouble touches a man so deeply as family trouble, because it touches him in his tenderest affections. It was so with David in this Psalm.