

secret place of the most High, of abiding under the shadow of the Almighty, of knowing what it means, "To Be Near Unto God," and of enjoying it.

If then we have thus far been strangers to God, let us not imagine, that in time of danger, when thunder-clouds have gathered thickly overhead, and all human help has failed, we can at once find refuge in the shadow of the Almighty. This has been tried in the hour of calamity by those of a transient faith, but the effort has proved futile. It is here the other way. The secret walk with God is not found as a means of deliverance in the hour of need. They who had found it in times of prosperity and ease knew the wings under which deliverance would be sure. And when they came to be afflicted and grieved they found rest and safe shelter under the wings of God. It is not the case of a hen without chickens, which spreads her wings for whatever would hide under them. But it is her own brood, which she has hatched, and for which she will risk her life, that finds shelter and protection with her. This states the case of the shadow under the wings of the Almighty. They whom he will cover with his eternal love are his own children. These are they whom he calls and awaits. These are they that are known of Him. They who are at home under the wings of God shall in the hour of danger dwell under the shadow of the Almighty.

16

IN THE WIND OF THE DAY.

There was no violence in the displays of nature in Paradise. No other wind blew in the Garden

of Eden than the soft suction of air, which in warmer climates, occasions the morning and evening breeze. Hence there is no mention in the narrative of Paradise of a sudden rise of wind, but of a fixed, periodical one, which is called "A Wind of Day." And to Adam and Eve this wind of day announced the approach of God.

This symbolism is still understood. Amidst the luxuriant stillness of Paradise, where everything breathes calm and peace, suddenly a soft rustle is heard sounding through the foliage. Just such a sound as we hear when, as we are seated near by a woodland, some one approaches us through the thickets, pushing aside the light twigs and making the leaves tremble. At the same moment when in Paradise that rustle is heard through the foliage, a soft breeze plays on the forehead and it seems that Adam and Eve feel themselves gently touched. And with that quiet rustling and this refreshing breeze there comes a word of the Lord to their soul. And thus the representation arose that the voice of the Lord came to them walking in the garden in the wind of the day.

Thus the wind, as symbol and bearer of what is holy, has gone forth from Paradise into all of revelation. Of God it is said, Ps. 104:3, that he "Walketh upon the wings of the wind;" that he "Did fly upon the wings of the wind" (Ps. 18:10). At Pentecost when the Holy Ghost came to the church a sound was heard "from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind" (Acts 2:2). And when Nicodemus received instruction regarding regeneration, the Savior purposely applied the symbol of the wind to God the Holy Ghost. "Thou hearest the sound thereof but canst not tell

whence it cometh, and wither it goeth," and such it is with the Holy Ghost.

In Northern lands like ours, where the wind is an ordinary phenomenon, this impression is no longer felt so strongly. But in the countries where Revelation had its rise and weather conditions were more constant, which makes the rise of wind more noticeable, the sound of the wind has always as of itself spoken of higher things.

Natural philosophy had not yet made a study of atmospheric currents. As the gale arose with dark clouds in the sky, and by its rumblings made the forests to tremble, it was interpreted as coming from above. It came from on high. It came as a mysterious, inexplicable force. It was felt, but it could not be handled. It was heard, but it could not be seen. It was an enigmatic, intangible power, pushing and driving everything before it. And that power was conceived as operating directly from God upon man, without any middle link, as though in the gale God with his majesty bent himself over him. "The Lord," said Nahum (1:3), hath his way in the whirlwind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet."

The symbol of the wind indicates the opposite of that of the temple. For this speaks to us of a God who dwells in us, as in a sanctuary; who is not far off but near by; who has taken up his abode in the heart, and who from its depths rebukes, directs or comforts us. And so the temple represents the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the Covert of the heart. It represents the candor, tenderness and intimacy of fellowship. And though the temple may have a veil in it, and though at times fellowship with the indwelling

spirit may be interrupted, the renewal of love never comes from without, but always from the depth of the soul. It is always Immanuel, God with us; in Christ with all his people; in the Holy Ghost with his child.

And by the side of this is the symbol of the wind. Softly the wind of day enters Paradise. At first it is not. It arises unobserved, but always from without. It comes to man who does not at once perceive it. At first there is separation and duality. The symbol of the wind represents man as apart from God, and God as apart from man. And the approach does not go out from man in prayer, but from God in the wind of the day, by which He betakes himself to man, presses himself upon him, and at length entirely fills him. Both of these have their right of being. Christian piety must reckon with both. He alone who allows both of these simultaneously their full right lives in vital communion with the Eternal.

The difference between God and us is so great in every way that of ourselves we can never think of God otherwise than as a Being who is highly exalted above us. He has established his throne in heaven and we in adoration kneel on the earth as his footstool. This relation is expressed in the symbol of the wind. From the clouds above the wind strikes down upon us and at times we feel the cutting effects of it in the very marrow of our bones.

There is also a free communion between God and his child which annihilates all distance; which abrogates every separation, which presses after intimate union, and that relation is expressed in the symbol of the temple. Our heart is a temple

of the Spirit. God himself dwells in the innermost recess of the soul. The temple stands for the overwhelming wealth of all-embracing love; the gale remains the symbol of the Majesty of God. And only when both of these operate purely, each within its own domain, there is the most exalted worship of God's majesty, together with the most blessed enjoyment of his eternal Love.

Thus the pendulum of the inner life of the soul moves ever to and fro. When we have given ourselves for a time too lightly and too easily to the sweetness of mysticism, and in meditative communion with God are in danger of losing our deep reverence for his majesty, we must needs tear ourselves away from this hazy mood in order that we may the better recognize again the holy supremacy of the Lord Jehovah in comparison with the littleness and insignificance of our own finite self. And when on the other hand we have been for a time greatly affected by the Majesty of God, so that we know full well that the High and Holy One is enthroned in glory, but feel ourselves deserted of God at heart, so that the soul is menaced with the loss of a closer touch upon God, then likewise with an effort of the will the frozen heart must be brought under the softening influences of the eternal compassions, so that communion with the eternal may be renewed and enjoyed again.

But great is the gain when this motion to and fro is not too forcible, and when the intimacy of the "Our Father" and the reverence of the "Which art in Heaven" follow each other rhythmically in the daily experiences of the inner life. A purely

meditative life with too much tenderness in it will not do. He who gives himself to this weakens and enervates his spiritual nature, becomes unfit for his Divine calling in the world, and loses even the exhilarating freshness of his piety. With a healthful state of heart this change is steady and regular. There is the constant and earnest application to our work, with God above us, from whom comes our strength, and in whom stands our help. And then there is the search after God in prayer, the meditation on his Word, and the inner tenderness which is produced by the motions of holy love. Our God is a God both far off and near at hand.

Thus the wind of the day has more than a natural significance. Every day of life forms a whole by itself. And in all the daily happenings there is a plan and guidance of God. And so there goes a wind of day through every day of life. First there are hours when nothing speaks to the heart. When everything loses itself in ordinary occupations and it seems that this day has no message for us. And then in the simplest event sometimes there is something striking that rouses the attention, that makes one think and one's thoughts to multiply; something that a child calls out to us, or a friend whispers in the ear; something that suggests itself from within or something that we hear, something that was reported to us or that happened at home or in the office; in brief, anything that brought color and outline into the dullness of existence and proved itself for that particular day, "the wind of the day" in which God's voice was heard.

So the Lord goes out every day seeking after

us. So the voice of God follows us after through all of life, to woo us, to interest us, and to win us for Himself. Lost, therefore, is each day in which the voice of God passes by us in the wind of the day, but leaves us unmoved and indifferent. While blessed in turn is each day in which in "the wind of the day" God comes so near to the soul that the approach turns into communion, in the intimacy and tenderness of which with fresh draughts we enjoy again the unfailing love of God.

17

"THOU SETTEST A PRINT UPON THE
ROOTS OF MY FEET."

We are always repelled in Psalm 39 by the hard words which David there addresses to God: Look away from me, that I may brighten up. For can we imagine a more unnatural prayer than this?

Man and God constitute the greatest antithesis. And all true religion, springing from our creation after the image of God, aims solely and alone to put man into closest communion with God, or where this communion is broken, to restore it. And here the Psalmist, who still counts as the Singer who has interpreted piety most profoundly, prays and cries, not for the approach of God, but that God will look away from his soul, that He will leave him alone, give him rest, and so refresh the last hours of his life before dying: "Hear my prayer, O Lord, hold not thy peace at my tears, look away from me, that I may brighten up, before I go hence, and be no more." (R. V. Marg. read.)

In Psalm 42 he said: "As the heart panteth