

"Among the Flowers"

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This is a very pleasant place to be, is it not? We all love to see the flowers, and to be right in their midst, where we can delight in their beauty and sweet scent.

But we must not end with enjoying them merely, for they are all beautiful pages in God's great lesson book.

"And every hedgerow blossom that doth grow,
And every little brown bird that doth sing,
Hath something greater than itself, and bears
A living word to every living thing."

You would not learn your lessons very well, would you, if you spent all your time admiring the book that they were written in, however attractive it might be? The lessons printed in the book are the principal thing, and the pictures that ornament it are only to help you in learning them.

And so it is in God's book. Jesus is the Great Teacher, and He has beautiful ways of teaching His beautiful lessons. "Who teacheth like Him?"

We are now right in the midst of "blossom time." The hawthorn, laburnum, and lilac are giving place to the honeysuckle and wild roses, and then all declare His "living Word to every living thing." In the gardens are the roses, the pinks and many other blossoms, among which

"A little monitor presents her page
Of choice instruction, with her snowy bells,
The Lilly of the Vale."

What is the message of the flowers? What do the roses and the lilies say? Here is one message that the Lord Jesus has written in them, which you may hear if you listen to their teaching: "I am the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the valley."

Where then does the rose's sweetness and the lily's delicate beauty come from? Like everything else that is good and beautiful it comes from the one Source, the true Rose and Lily, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Not only the water and the light, that we were talking of last week, but all fulness comes from Him. The beauty of the flowers is a little unfolding of His hidden loveliness, and in their fragrance He is perfuming the air with His sweet breath.

So every lesson that the flower teaches must be of Him, in whom they, like ourselves, live and have their being.

There is something very wonderful about God's lesson book, and that is, that we all, from the very aged down to the tiny child may learn our lessons from the same page. This is because it is "a living word to every living thing."

In the little flower God speaks to the infant attracted by its bright colours, but the same blossom carries a message to those of all ages who have "ears to hear." And as we grow, the lesson grows, and we still keep learning, never ending, never reaching the place where we can say that the lesson is learned and the page can be turned; for the thoughts of God unfolding in the flowers can never be fathomed.

Here is something for you to think of, that before we can understand one thing perfectly, even the simplest of the works of God, we must know everything. So if we could thoroughly understand one little lower, there would be nothing more for us to learn at all.

The more we know of one thing, the better we can understand everything. Some such thoughts as these must have been in the mind of the poet Tennyson, when he said to the little flower that he held in his hand:

"Flower in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is."

That is, he would know everything. But this perfect knowledge belongs to God only, so there will always be something for us to learn about the least of God's works, if we live through the ages of eternity.

What a wonderful message, then, what a depth of meaning, is in the simplest wayside flowers. And since there is no end to what we may learn from them, the sooner we begin the better, for the more we shall be able to learn.

So if you have not already begun to read in God's book of nature, begin at once; but be sure that you begin right, with Jesus, who is the "Beginning and the Ending" of the whole creation of God.