

The King's Garden

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HEART'S-EASE

You all know this pretty little flower, do you not? Very likely you have gathered in the fields the tiny Heart's-Ease, or wild Pansy, with its smiling face; and of course you all know well its larger and more beautiful sister, the garden Pansy.

Do you know what this name means? It is from the French, *pesee*, meaning thoughtful. And this is a good name to put with the other while we think over together some Thoughts that give Heart's-Ease, ease or rest of heart.

We found out that each little seed contains a thought of God. His Word is the seed through which He puts His thoughts into the garden of our hearts. We have already talked of three of these wonderful seeds, and the beautiful plants that come from them; and it is in the fourth that we find the seed of Heart's-Ease or Rest.

"Remember the rest [sabbath] day, to keep it holy? Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, . . . for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day, wherefore the Lord blessed the rest [sabbath] day, and hallowed it"

EVERLASTING REST

Do you know what it is to be so very tired that you long to rest? You would never have known what this feeling of weariness is if sin had not come into the world, bringing "death, and all our woe." For when God made man He "caused him to rest" in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve had plenty of work to do, and yet they had rest all the time that they were doing it, and so they were never tired. Was not this a happy state to be in?

The word Sabbath means rest, and so to keep the Sabbath of the Lord is to keep God's rest. And this every one may do, for God has given it to all. He made the Sabbath, which is His rest, for man, and He tells every one to keep it.

But God "fainteth not, neither is weary." So to really have the rest of the Lord is to be like He tells us those will be who wait on Him: "They shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." In giving us the Sabbath, the King is putting into His

Garden the seed of His own everlasting rest, so that the flower of perfect Heart's-Ease may grow there.

EVERLASTING STRENGTH

Now let us see what it is that causes God to rest, and then we shall understand better how we may keep His rest.

Do you know that it is strength that gives rest? When one gets weary it is because he has "gone beyond his strength," as we say. You know you can run and play and work for a while without feeling tired, especially if you do not keep it up too long at a time. Your strength is renewed—that means that you get a fresh supply of it,—and so you feel at rest and at ease, even while you are working or playing. But when you keep on too long, and your strength is all used up, how tired and heavy you feel, and how tender and sore your muscles are!

Then you have to wait awhile, until you get rested—that is, until you get a fresh supply of strength in your body. But the true rest that the Lord gives is to keep us from ever feeling tired in mind or body, and it will, if you keep it, bring us back to the happy state of Adam and Eve in Eden, so that we shall never need to stop and rest, because we shall be resting all the time.

"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" just as soon as it is used up, and it is because of this that "they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

Now do you see why it is that God never faints or grows weary? It is because "in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." It is because of His everlasting strength that He has everlasting rest, and is able to give it; and the way that He gives us His rest, is by giving us His strength.

God tells us to look at all the things that He has made, in which we may see "His eternal power,"—His everlasting strength,—and then we shall understand that "the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary."

So when God puts the seed of His rest into His Garden, He is putting there His own everlasting strength, for this alone can give true rest. He does not tell us to keep our own sabbath, or rest, but "the rest of the Lord thy God." But the only way that we can have and keep God's rest, is to have God's strength, and so He says that we may be "strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power." Then we shall enter into His glorious rest.

To teach us to know His power so that we may rest in Him, God has given us

THE SABBATH AS HIS MEMORIAL

to keep in our minds the wonderful works of the Creator. "In six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day," because His works were finished.

The "Song for the Sabbath Day," (Psalm 92) shows that the Sabbath day is for us to remember and praise the great Creator, and think upon His mighty works.

"O Lord, how great are Thy works,
And Thy thoughts are very deep."

In all the works of God we see His great, deep, almighty thoughts unfolding all about us. We may read His thoughts, see into His mind, and learn to know Him and rest in Him.

One cannot rest on anything that is weak or unsound. Could you rest on a chair, or on your bed, if you were all the time afraid that it might give way and let you down?

Sometimes we see a little boy or girl trying to carry a younger brother or sister not much smaller than themselves. But although they bravely do their best, the little one in their arms does not look very happy or peaceful. It is afraid all the time of being let fall; it is not resting. But let the father come along and gather it in his strong, loving arms, and see the look of peace and trust that comes into the little one's face. It is resting in its father's arms, because it knows that he is strong.

So before we can rest in God, we must know that He is strong. Because of this He tells us: "Lift up your eyes on high, and see who hath created these [the sun, moon, and stars], that bringeth out their host by number. He calleth them all by name; by the greatness of His might and for that He is strong in power, not one faileth."

We are to look up and see the glorious sun, the silver moon, and the bright stars,—some of which are suns many times larger than our sun,—we are to think of Him whose great power made them all, and who still, by the greatness of His might, holds them up in the heavens and keeps them all from falling.

Then we shall know something of the strength by which He gathers the lambs with His arm, and carries them in His bosom. Can you not, dear little ones, who are His little lambs, rest safely and sweetly in the bosom of Him who holds up the world, and the sun, moon, and stars? Can you not drop all your burdens, and let Him carry them and you also? for He says, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

"THE AMEN"

In the beginning, God said of everything that He wished to have in the earth, "Let it be so," and "it was so." But sin, we have found, causes all these beautiful things to vanish away, and would have changed the earth into a desolate waste, but for one thing. What is that?

It is the Cross of Jesus Christ; for this is the power by which God again creates all things new. It is through the Cross that He gives out new life to all things. It is this alone which renews the strength of the whole creation of God. And so Jesus says that He is "the Amen," and that all the promises of God in Him "are yea and amen."

You know what this word means, for you say it and hear it very often. "So be it," or "Let it be so." It means, It shall be so because God has said so.

So to all that God said in the beginning when He made the world and all things in it, the Cross of Christ is saying, "Amen, it shall be so." It was because of this that God rested on that first Sabbath day of time, although He knew how all His beautiful and perfect work would be marred by sin, He knew the power of the Cross of Jesus Christ to bring all things back to the beauty and perfection of the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve first rested there, "and God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good." He knew the power of the Cross to make sinful people new creatures, pure and sinless as Adam and Eve first came from His hand.

So, do you see, dear children, that it is only through the Cross of Jesus Christ, through the gift of His life for you, that this beautiful flower of Heart's-Ease can still bloom in the King's Garden? And as He sees it there, in the hearts of all who truly keep His Sabbath, His rest, it is a sweet reminder of His beloved Son, who gave His life to save His creatures from perishing—"a sweet savour of Christ."

As the King walks in His Garden on the Sabbath, as of old He walked in Eden, He still rests and is refreshed, as He sees the new creation rising through the Cross of Jesus Christ. For the Sabbath is the token, the pledge, to Him as well as to us, of the complete restoration of that fair world, that most beautiful Garden, in which the King first rested. He says, "Hallow My Sabbaths, for they shall be a sign between Me and you."

So when you have "the flower called Heart's-Ease in your bosom," you have there the King's pledge of love that you shall be made perfect, and shall have a home with Him for ever in that beautiful new earth, when He shall make "her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the Garden of the Lord." Then never more will you faint or grow weary, but you will have the perfect rest that God gave to Adam when He first caused him to rest in Eden.

Then, dear children, let the sweet faces of the little pansies ever bring to your mind thoughts of the great power and love of Him who has poured out His own life to redeem you, and has given you "rest by His sorrow, and life by His death."