

Waiting and Watching.

Luke 12: 1-48.

"Handfuls of Purpose" Part 3 (Miscellaneous, chapters 15 - 30).

Let fall for eager Gleaners.

Thirty Addresses on Various Scripture Truths and Incidents

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CHAPTER 30 — WAITING AND WATCHING.

In the eleventh chapter of Luke's Gospel you find the Lord definitely rejected by the nation. They attribute to the power of the devil, that activity in Him which led Him to cast out demons. So blinded was the nation of Israel that the mighty energy of the Holy Ghost, they attribute to Satan. This declared rejection of Himself becomes the basis, I think, of the Lord's remarks to His disciples, in the twelfth chapter.

He speaks in chapter 12 as One rejected, as One who is outside this scene altogether, and He gives to us instructions of the most lovely nature, as to our walk during His absence. He indicates what the behaviour of His own should be, and how, in every possible difficulty, temptation, and opposition that we could by any means be confronted with here, we should be sustained. The object of this is that our hearts should be kept just simply waiting for Him.

Although you will observe the coming of the Lord is brought in, it is introduced in connection with the kingdom. He is coming back by-and-by, and there will be rewards to those who serve Him during His absence. But it is very beautiful to see the way in which the blessed Lord clears away the things that are difficulties in every one of our souls.

The moral principles of the chapter are very interesting. Broad, blessed principles of truth of the most far-reaching importance, you will see the Lord brings out here. There was a large company gathered round Him, and they had not felt the force of the truth. But He knew the need of "His own," and unfolded to them what their pathway should be while, in His absence, called to pass through this world.

"In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, in so much that they trod one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be

proclaimed upon the housetops" (Luke 12: 1-3). He first of all warns us against a danger to which we are all exposed. "Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." And the reason is this, "There is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known." He warns our souls against being unreal — seeming to be what we are not. We have to watch against hypocrisy. It often takes a pseudo-spiritual form, i.e., the desire to seem more spiritual than we are.

Take the case of Ananias and Sapphira, in Acts 5. You may say, it was a very solemn thing for the Lord to cut them off. Yes. But they had not given heed to the Lord's word here, or else they would not have fallen into Satan's trap. They desired to look a little more devoted than they really were. Are not our hearts subject to the same temptation? We know it. The Lord knows it also, and hence says to us, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy."

Then He adds that everything is to come out. But the light has come in now, and what an upright Christian delights in is the light of God. He does not wait for the judgment-seat of Christ to declare his motives. "We are made manifest unto God: and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences" (2 Cor. 5: 11). The springs of our actions bring out what we really are before God. A Christian should be perfectly transparent. If not, he is unlike Christ. You may read me through and through, says Paul, I have nothing to conceal, all is out now.

Then the next thing is, we are going through a scene, where there must of necessity be persecution for Christ's sake. "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings? and not one of them is forgotten before God: but even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows" (Luke 12: 4-7). It is blessed to see what the Lord says here. They had cast Him out, and what could His disciples expect but similar treatment? It has not been your lot or mine to have it, but many of His beloved saints have. And what a comfort, to the martyrs of years gone by must those words have been, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." Everything in this chapter is viewed as to its importance not in connection with the body, but with the state of the soul before God. Hence foes and fears are all pushed aside. It is not a question of bodies, or goods, but the soul in relation to God and eternity.

The fear of man is cast out by a greater fear, the fear of God. Nothing but the fear of God can cast out the fear of man. We shall stand in awe of men round about us, if the fear of God does not control us. But the Lord says, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body." In the plainest possible language He cheers us, for the fear of God works most blessedly in the heart. Then He asks: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. *Fear not* therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Observe, in the fifth verse it is, "Fear *him*," and in the seventh verse it is, "Fear *not*." There is no contradiction. Oh, no! In the fifth verse, it is the holy fear of a child, lest he should do that which would pain, or grieve the Lord. And then in the seventh verse, it is, you have the sense of the care of God. If God keep His eye upon the sparrow, how much more upon His servants, and

saints. The care of God, in its exquisite particularity, is put in a way that is very touching. "Even the very hairs of your head are all numbered." There is the blessed, the deeply blessed interest which God has in us, and His eye is upon us in all the tender affection of a Father's love. It is a great thing to cultivate the sense of this as you go through this scene. What a blessed thing it is to have this sense, I am so the object of His interest, that He has actually numbered the hairs of my head. If you had this sense, you could leave everything with God.

And now He goes further. "Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God" (Luke 12: 8, 9). There is another thing now. It is not only that God cares for us, but that the Lord is going to confess us before the angels of God, if we confess Him here. That is the sense of His eye being upon us, and that He knows exactly what our pathway is, and, by-and-by, there will be a recognition on the Lord's part of your path and my path, as we have gone through this scene. How this cheers a saint!

He adds a third thing then. "And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven" (Luke 12: 10). That is a wonderful statement, because you see what the Lord speaks of is the testimony of the Holy Ghost through a Christian. That is, He says, I put you down there for Myself, and if a word is spoken blasphemously against you, it shall not be forgiven. Where is the Holy Ghost dwelling now? In the Assembly, and in the Christian, individually. And therefore, really, the Lord regards His people as being, and sets them up here for Himself. It is a wonderful place that the Christian occupies now, in this scene; and immense responsibility devolves on those round about us.

"And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say" (Luke 12: 11, 12). There you have the divine competency of the believer by the Holy Ghost in every possible circumstance. What could we wish more? The care of God, the recompense of Christ, and the sustaining energy of the Holy Ghost — and these for every child of God — are to furnish our souls in the time of our Lord's absence. If persecution come, you will be sustained. The apostle says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1: 29). You might get reproach. The apostles in Acts 5 "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." A Christian must expect to have the same treatment as his Master. But no matter what comes, he has the support of the Lord, and the energy of the Spirit of God to sustain him.

Of course I take it for granted that when the Lord says, "The Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say," it is the Spirit ungrieved in a Christian, because We are to be here for Christ. It is not a question here of ministry in the Assembly — although the principle be true — but of what falls from your lips and mine day by day. Our words and our life ought to impress the world round about. If they take you before magistrates, "Take ye no thought what ye shall answer, or what ye shall say, for the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." That is, in plain language, every child of God is looked at as being one through whom God speaks by His own blessed Spirit, and speaks, in such a way that the world is

conscious it is God that has spoken. This consideration makes Christianity a very serious thing. But I do not think, because the responsibility is so great, that our souls would shrink from that which the Lord gives us here.

At this point there is a break in the Lord's ministry. man appears at that moment to ask Him to settle a difficulty between him and his brother. "And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" (Luke 12: 13, 14). He had not come to be a judge. He had come as the revelation of God in perfect goodness. He is coming by-and-by, both as a judge, and as a Divider. But it was not His character in that day. He, however, uses the occasion to unfold truth of the most weighty character to His disciples. "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12: 15). Although the man who had the inheritance had no right to it, and was covetous in keeping it, yet the other was as covetous in wanting to get it. There is a great principle in this, and the Lord uses it for our sake. Elsewhere the Spirit of God bids us mortify "covetousness, which is idolatry" (Col. 3: 5). "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." His life consists really in his enjoyment of God.

This interpretation gives occasion to the parable which follows: "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: and he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?" (Luke 12: 16-20). The man thought he would yet lay things up for himself. But God would not have it, and in the midst of his projects he is called hence. What became of his soul? That is a most serious question.

"So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (ver. 21). Now there, you have the cure, I believe, for covetousness. That is, being "rich toward God." The apostle Paul amplifies this subject in writing to his son Timothy. "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (1 Tim. 6: 11). These verses show our danger, while the cure is given in the same chapter. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6: 17-19). But You say, What is the harm of riches? Suppose it kept you out of heaven? Well, I did not think of that. Very probably, few men do, but there is great danger, or our Lord would not have said, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of

God" (Mark 10: 23). It is not the money that there is harm in, but it is the "*love of money*" that is "the root of all evil."

The principle is here, and "Beware of covetousness," God's sure cure. I shall never forget a dear old servant of God speaking upon this chapter thirty-five years ago, and when he came to this verse he said: "Which of us here would not rather have a ten-pound note than a five? That touches us all. And God says, 'Thou fool.'" The man going on that line is reprov'd, because he is letting the things of this life really command, and govern him, instead of living in the sense of the Father's love and care.

Now, beloved friends, it is beautiful to see the way in which the Lord cures the covetous disposition of our hearts. Here is the cure, being rich toward God. The soul is set down before God. What is it to be rich toward God? I do not think it is a question of much giving. I think the widow in the twenty-first chapter of Luke, was rich toward God. She cast in two mites which make a farthing. One often hears the expression, "Here is my mite." Is that exactly half you possess? She cast in both her mites, and I do not doubt that is why the Lord takes notice of it. The temptation was to give one, and keep one to herself But she was rich toward God, and into His treasury, and for His work, cast in her all, and that of her penury, we are told. She was a widow, and she had nothing left.

I think if it had been us, we would have said, We will give the Lord one, and keep the other to ourselves. If I had come to my last two shillings, and I gave the Lord one, and kept the other one for myself, I fear that I should think I had done very well. Ah, beloved, look at this, she cast in both. She was indeed rich toward God. It is not the question of the amount, because the Lord never measures by what I have given, but by what I have left after I have given. I think she is an illustration of one rich toward God. On the other hand, you might have nothing to give, and yet be rich toward God. You cling to Him, you live for Him, and in relation to Him. That is really what it is. God rules and governs the soul absolutely. Anyway, this is the only cure for covetousness, of which our Lord and Master bids us beware.

Then the Lord passes on, and touches on a matter of much wider application than riches, viz., poverty. "The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is today in the field, and tomorrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after; and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things" (Luke 12: 23-30).

There you get a class, I believe very much larger than the company that the rich man was in. In this world there are a great many more oppressed by poverty, than riches. How am I going to make ends meet? is often in the heart if not expressed by the lip. Care, like a canker, eats out the very life of many a dear child of God. If such be your present condition, the Lord's words,

"Take no thought," and "Your Father knoweth," may well comfort your heart. The Lord really says here, Do not think of tomorrow.

In this connection there is a charming word in the end of the sixth chapter of Matthew. Did you ever notice it? "Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Matt. 6: 34). How oftentimes, beloved friends, have we troubled and worried ourselves about what was going to be on the morrow, and, when it came, we found how beautifully the Lord stepped in. We found that His care, and His love, had anticipated all our need, and more than met it. "Your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." Oh, they are lovely words. To me, these three words, "*Your Father knoweth*," are exquisite. Ah, beloved, to get them deeply engraved in the soul! To remember that your Father knows, is to put the heart at peace. Further, we might never have to face tomorrow, because, before tomorrow comes, the Lord may have come, and we may have gone home to our Father's house on high.

I do not doubt that when Israel drew near to the Red Sea, and to the Jordan, they wondered how they were to get through, but, when they came to the spot, there was no water to go through. It was dry land. And in principle, it is the same with our souls. We are so prone to leave God out. But the Lord here says, You leave everything out but your Father's care, and then your heart will be free. And then He adds, "But rather seek ye his kingdom; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12: 31). The Father's care, the Father's kingdom, and the Father's good pleasure all go together. You set your heart on the things that are His, and upon the interests that concern Him.

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12: 32), is the next cheering statement, and, beloved, if He has *good pleasure* in giving you *the kingdom*, do you think He would *grudge you a loaf of bread*? Look at the kingdom, all that is connected with the glory of Christ, that scene where the Father's love is known, and where everything will speak of Christ. Why, He says, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. It is all that is connected with the heavenly place that Christ now has, and which He shares with His people. Well may Paul say, "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8: 32).

I think the Lord has a charming mode of winning our hearts. The way the Lord takes of removing snares and difficulties is wonderful. Here we find hypocrisy swept out, the fear of man swept out, covetousness swept out, and care swept out. If you can show me a heart with all unreality, all fear of man, and all covetousness turned out, the sense of being rich toward God controlling it, and all the care connected with the things of this life gone too, I will show you a heart that is now free to be occupied with the Lord without distraction.

This is what the Lord wishes, and that point gained, He can now say: "Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12: 33, 34). Everything in this scene is marked by waxing old, or becoming corrupted, or stolen. A treasure in the heavens is the only abiding one. I know men often say, Where my heart is, that is where my treasure is. Well, in a certain sense it is the truth,

but, even then the treasure is really valueless, for it is only for time. Sometimes you find people who have let their hearts go after earthly treasures. What do you find presently? The treasure is gone, and the heart is left desolate. They have not had a treasure in the heavens. Do I hear you saying, I am trying to make Jesus my treasure? You will fail if you try. Do not try to make the Lord your treasure. Did you ever discover that the Lord Jesus has now a very peculiar and priceless treasure on the earth? And who is the treasure? Am I His treasure? Paul could say, "The Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2: 20). The Church, of course, which He has loved with a love deeper, and stronger, than death itself, is His treasure. But if I do not get hold of this wonderful fact individually, I shall not hold it collectively. "Who loved *me*, and gave himself for *me*," is a priceless treasure for the soul to apprehend. If you enjoy that, you will have the sense, I am His treasure down here, and the next thing will be that He will become your treasure where He is.

When that state of heart is effected, He says, "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Luke 12: 35, 36). Everything is to be ready now for His coming. He says, I am coming back, and I want you to be waiting for Me, in true simple affection. We are bid to gird our loins in the thirty-fifth verse. And in the thirty-seventh verse, He says, by-and-by He will gird His. I must not let my affections wander. My loins are to be girt about with truth. I must get my affections ruled, governed, and controlled by the truth of God, because a person who has his loins ungirded, is not fit for service. In the first chapter of Revelation, the garment of the Lord was down to His feet. That gives the idea of priestly discrimination. It was not tucked up in service. Here it is service.

We have to be waiting and watching, with our lights burning. And what is the light burning? It does not mean a great deal of preaching. The girded loins betoken the affections right with Christ, and then the lights burning show that you are watching for His return. You are sitting up all night. If you go to sleep, the lamp wick gets long, and if not trimmed, the light gets very dim. It is not a light for the world. But does the Lord see that you are watching? Oh, you say, I hold the Lord's coming. So do I. But I have to ask my heart whether the Lord's coming holds me. Because you see it is very easy for the light to get dim.

In the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew it says, of the ten virgins, that "they all slumbered and slept." And mark, five of them had oil in their vessels. I might go to sleep with the Holy Ghost in my heart. And that is why the apostle says: "Let us not sleep as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night" (1 Thess. 5: 6). Night-watching is a little bit wearisome. It needs watchfulness, and carefulness, and our souls really being exercised before God. Those round about us should know that we are a people who, by unmistakable signs, are, practically speaking, done with the earth. We are to be "*like* unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding: that, when he cometh, and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately" (Luke 12: 36). It is a very simple figure. Let me ask you, Would you like Him to come now? Am I watching? Am I really on the tiptoe of expectation, looking for His coming? If not, I am not morally right. I would not like to deceive myself.

"Blessed are those servants, whom the Lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth

and serve them. And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find them so, blessed are those servants. And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12: 37-40). Now you come to responsibility. I believe waiting shows affection. But now you come to, "Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he comes shall find watching." And you find it three times in this scripture. In Luke 12: 37, and in Luke 12: 38, and again in Luke 12: 43. There is a blessing in *waiting*, there is a blessing connected with *watching*, and there is also a blessing connected with serving. Now what are we about? Are we really devoting ourselves to the blessed Lord in His service? Are we set to please Him. We cannot please everybody. It is a great mistake to try to do that. If you can only please the Lord, be satisfied It is not a question of pleasing anybody else.

Now mark, the servants here are *watching*, in connection with their service, and the Lord says, "Verily, I say unto you, that he shall *gird himself*, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them." That is *rest*. We have been serving Him, and what He proposes is, I am going to give you rest. I shall make you sit down, and I shall serve you. What is that? I think it is this. He has served us already down here, but He has gone as a blessed Man into glory, and He will never cease to be Man. He is the Man who has served us even unto death, and then in glory He will make us to sit down as guests in His Father's house. Thither He will bring us, and there His love will ever minister blessing to us. Love delights to serve, so He will make us to sit down to meat, and He will serve us. How precious indeed will it be to take blessings then, blessings made infinitely more precious, because ministered to us by His own hand, in the outflow of love that never varies, and never ends. Happy people! Happy to be His servants! Happy to know Him!

Then comes the injunction, "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of Man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12: 40). Peter then wants to know the extent of application of the parable, and gets his desire. "And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath" (Luke 12: 42-44). Who is now the faithful and wise steward? is a question I have to ask myself. Am I a faithful servant? Am I a wise steward? It is not a question of success. The Lord never bids me be successful. No. The point is, am I wise, and am I faithful? To be really successful I must be faithful, and wise. Many servants have stopped short of the truth, because they feared that they might spoil their success. The Lord has said, also to us: "After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (Matt. 25: 19-21). Carefully observe, it is "Well done, *good* and *faithful* servant," not "*successful* servant." I should like to find that man, the Lord says. Oh, do not look round about to see who the man is. The point for you and me, is — and the Lord exercise our hearts regarding it — Am I that man?

I should like to be found doing just the thing He would like me to be doing. Should I like to be found doing this thing or that, when the Lord comes? No! Then I am done with it. Our privilege is to be giving others "their portion of meat in due season," and "blessed is that servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall *find so doing*."

Well now, beloved, I am sure that our souls will be in a very happy state, if His Word gets its right place in our heart and conscience. God forbid we should get into the state next described: "But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken" (ver. 45). That is a very sad thing. We must not delay His coming. If the servant gives up the thought of the Lord's coming, as the Church universally has done, he begins to beat the menservants and maidens — as Rome has done — and to eat and drink, and to be drunken, as mere Protestantism has done, i.e., got into the world. To fall out with God's people, is as bad as being drunken. The Lord keep us bright, and simply *waiting* for Himself, with our hearts fresh and happy in His love, and our lives devoted to His service while ever *watching* for His return. And then the next thing will be that we shall find ourselves at home with Him, in everlasting joy and rest.

To wait and watch for Him is what we are called to. The two words do not carry quite the same thought, and I cannot better explain the difference than by giving an illustration, which suggested itself to me, when speaking to a company of Firth of Forth fishermen, awhile ago.

The fleet has all gone to the fishing ground, when a furious and long-continued westerly hurricane bursts on them. Rapidly getting in their nets, they have to fly before it. Each day it lasts takes them farther and farther from home, where now great anxiety prevails as to their safety. At length the gale spends itself, and the wind veering to the south-east, the boats, having all weathered the storm, make for home.

On their way they manage to get a telegram flung ashore and transmitted: — "All safe! Coming home," and the good news spreads like wildfire through the village, bringing joy to many a troubled bosom.

Up the Firth of Forth they now come, at a spanking pace, having a fair wind and a flowing tide. The old skipper of the leading craft has a telescope, and as he comes within sight of the pier-head he uses it. After a good long look, he says to his crew, "The hale village is out on the pier, *watchin'* for us, my hearties," which gladdens every man aboard.

As the smack draws rapidly near, the telescope is again used, and this time the skipper is heard to say, half under his breath, "God bless her! the dear auld soul," while a tear rolls down his weather-beaten cheek.

"Who do you see?" says Jim, the mate, who has charge of the tiller.

"I see my auld womun stan'in' at the vera pier-end, wi' naethin' but her mutch on her heid, *watchin'* for her auld man," and another tear or two fall on the deck.

"Div ye see my missus tae?"

"Na, Jim, I canna see her; maybe she's there, but she's no visible."

By this time the staunch lug-sail boat had neared the harbour, and loving salutations pass between the old couple, culminating in a warm embrace as the skipper steps ashore.

No special greeting has awaited poor Jim, who, rather dejected, trudges up to the back of the village, where lies his home. Peeping in at the window, he sees his wife sitting at the fire, deep in a book.

Jim opens the door. She hears the latch, and looking up, says, "O Jim, my dear, I'm real glad to see you back; I was *waiting* for you."

"Very like, but the auld skipper's missus was *watchin'* for him at the pier-heid."

Is there no difference between waiting, and watching, for Jesus?

God give you and me to be true *watchers* for the return of His Son. Amen.

We wait for Thee — Thou wilt arise

Whilst hope her watch is keeping

Forgotten then in glad surprise

Shall be our years of weeping:

Our hearts beat high, the dawn is nigh

That ends our pilgrim story

In Thine eternal glory!