

"He giveth his beloved sleep."

Psalm 127: 2. *Brief notes of an address at a burial service.*

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MAY/JUNE 1966

It is always good for our affections to be engaged with what God is doing. The dark clouds which death occasions take on a silver-lining as we trace the movements of *His* hand.

"*He giveth His beloved sleep.*" It is what *He* does that occupies our thoughts at such times as the present. What God does is ever good and right; faith would recognize that this is something which proceeds from Himself, and His hand never errs. *He gives.* As His people our earliest impressions of the blessed God were related to His giving. Throughout our lives we have experienced the continuance of this blessed characteristic of our God — how much he has given us! Behind His gifts is the great love of His heart, and if we have recognized this love in His care for us throughout our pathways shall we not also trace His love to our sister in this present act? He gives because He loves, and in love He has tenderly given her sleep.

"*He giveth His beloved sleep.*" How precious is the link of affection between God and His saints — His beloved! Adoringly we listen to His voice speaking to the Son in Manhood — "This is My Beloved" (Matthew 3: 17). Infinitely precious indeed is that blessed One to the heart of the Father. We view with gladness the unique place which is His in divine affections, and as He becomes the Object of *our* hearts we hear Him saying — "The Father Himself loveth you, because ye have loved me" (John 16: 27). Our sister loved her Saviour, and she herself was loved of God. She, with us, knew her place as "accepted in the Beloved" (Ephesians 1: 6). The sorrow of death is lifted, and the gloom of the grave lighted up, as we realize that the *way of love* is in evidence — "*He giveth His beloved sleep.*" In the Epistles of Peter, James, John and Jude, all of whom refer to days of darkness and difficulty, the saints are referred to as "beloved" some 21 times. No power can break this precious link; death itself does but take us into the presence of One who loves us with an eternal love.

"*He giveth His beloved sleep.*" Sleep is not finality, when we sleep we have another day in view. Ah! beloved, there is a wonderful day in prospect for those "which sleep in Jesus." Saints of God from earliest times have had, in some measure, the light of that day. Job says — "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and . . . though . . . worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold" (Job 19: 25-27). David says — "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17: 15). In the New Testament Paul refers to the day of glory ahead, and amongst many references to that wonderful day, we hear him saying — "Them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him" (1 Thessalonians 4: 14). John says — "When He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John 3: 2).

This is our portion, beloved brethren, to enjoy the glory and power of life beyond the reach of death, to share in the eternal praise of God's own day, and to enjoy the presence of Christ Himself — to be "ever with the Lord."

To gaze upon Thyself

So faithful known,

Long proved in secret help

With Thee alone:
To see that love, content
On us flow forth,
For ever Thy delight,
Clothed with Thy worth.