

1853
No. 10
1853

Pilate's
Report





Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Matthew 11: 28-30



AND seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain: and when he was set; his disciples came unto him. And he opened his mouth and taught them saying,

BLESSED are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

BLESSED are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

BLESSED are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

BLESSED are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

BLESSED are the pure in heart: for they shall see God,

BLESSED are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

BLESSED are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

BLESSED are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

REJOICE, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

Matthew 5: 1-12.



My Redeemer

WHEN first I heard of Jesus so marred upon the tree,
I felt no glad emotion as though He died for me!
I saw no kingly beauty, majestic, grand or brave,
I turned away despising His proffered aid to save.

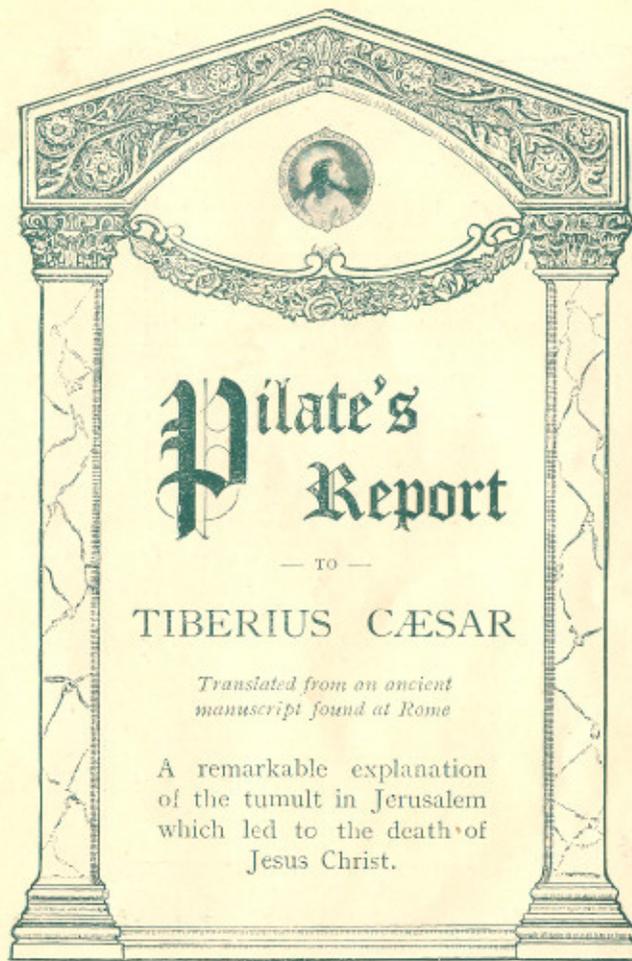
BUT when I came to know Him, His precious name grew sweet,
And like the tinted rainbow, love arched the Mercy-seat;
And when—O wondrous glory—light shone from His dear face,
All other objects faded before His matchless grace.

AND when the joyful tidings, how God's Beloved Son
Will raise the dead in Adam, bless each and every one,
What could I do but praise Him, make vault of heaven ring!
And own Him as my choicest—Redeemer, Lord and King.

ROSE of rarest odour! O Lily, white and pure!
O chiefest of ten thousand whose glory must endure!
The more I see Thy beauty, the more I know Thy grace,
The more I long, unhindered, to gaze upon Thy face!



THIS reputed true likeness of our LORD is said to have been taken from an emerald engraved by order of Pontius Pilate, who presented it to Tiberius Cæsar. In due course it came into the possession of a Sultan of Turkey, who parted with it as the redemption price to liberate his brother from captivity.



Pilate's Report

— TO —

TIBERIUS CÆSAR

*Translated from an ancient
manuscript found at Rome*

A remarkable explanation
of the tumult in Jerusalem
which led to the death of
Jesus Christ.

SURELY he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted; but he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him: he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed: he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 53



Foreword

THE public are indebted to the efforts of the Rev. W. D. Mahan, who, some seventy years ago, secured the following narrative, which is of extraordinary interest. He first heard of the manuscript through a student who had spent several years in searching for curiosities contained in the immense library at Rome. Mr. Mahan then took such measures which led to its translation into English.

While the circumstances relating to the discovery of the ancient document leave no room for questioning the fact, yet as to whether it is what it purports to be, readers must use their judgment. Certain it is that the story does not contradict, but fully corroborates the accounts given us by the Apostles in the Bible. Moreover, it rings with the sincerity of truth, and throws some fresh light upon those stirring, tragic and important events of two thousand years ago.

TO VIBERIUS CÆSAR—EMPEROR.

Noble Sovereign, Greeting :

THE events of the last few days in my province have been of such a character that I thought well to report the details as they have occurred, as I should not be surprised if in the course of time they may change the destiny of our nation ; for it seems of late that the gods have ceased to be propitious. I am almost ready to say, "Cursed be the day that I succeeded Valerius Gratus in the government of Judea."

On my arrival at Jerusalem I took possession of the Judgment Hall and ordered a splendid feast to be prepared, to which I invited the tetrarch of Galilee, with the high priest and his officers. At the appointed hour no guests appeared. This was an insult offered to my dignity. A few days after, the high priest deigned to pay me a visit. His deportment was grave and deceitful. He pretended that his religion forbade him and his attendants to sit down at the table of the Romans, and to offer up libations with them. I thought it expedient to accept his excuse, but from that moment I was convinced that the conquered had declared themselves the enemies of the

conquerors. It seems to me that of all conquered cities, Jerusalem is the most difficult to govern !

So turbulent were the people that I lived in momentary dread of an insurrection. To repress it I had but a single centurion, and a handful of soldiers. I requested a reinforcement from the Governor of Syria, who informed me that he had scarcely troops sufficient to defend his own province. An insatiate thirst for conquest—to extend our empire beyond the means of defending it—I fear will be the means of overthrowing our noble government.



Jesus of Nazareth

AMONG the various rumours that came to my ears, there was one that attracted my attention in particular. A young man, it was said, had appeared in Galilee, preaching with a noble unction a new law, in the name of the gods that had sent him. At first I was apprehensive that

his design was to stir up the people against the Romans, but soon were my fears dispelled. Jesus of Nazareth spake rather as a friend of the Romans than of the Jews.

One day, in passing by the place of Siloe, where there was a great concourse of people, I observed in the midst of the group, a young man who was leaning against a tree, calmly addressing the multitude. I was told that this was Jesus. This I could easily have expected; so great was the difference between him and those who were listening to him. His golden-coloured hair and beard gave his appearance a celestial aspect. He appeared to be about thirty years of age. Never have I seen a sweeter or more serene countenance. What a contrast between him and his hearers with their black beards and tawny complexion. Unwilling to interrupt him by my presence, I continued my walk; but signified to my secretary to join the group and listen. My secretary's name is Manlius. He is the grandson of the chief of the conspirators who encamped in Etruria, waiting Catiline. Manlius was anciently an inhabitant of Judea and well acquainted with the Hebrew language. He is devoted to me and worthy of my confidence.

On entering the Judgment Hall, I found Manlius, who related to me the words Jesus had pronounced at Siloe. Never have I

heard in the Pettico, nor in the works of the philosophers, anything that can compare to the maxims of Jesus.

One of the rebellious Jews, so numerous in Jerusalem, having asked him if it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar, Jesus replied, "Render unto Cæsar the things which belong to Cæsar, and unto God the things that are God's." It was on account of the wisdom of his sayings that I granted so much liberty to the Nazarene, for it was in my power to have had him arrested and exiled to Pontus; but that would have been contrary to the justice which has always characterized the Romans. This man was neither seditious nor rebellious, and I extended to him my protection unknown, perhaps, to himself. He was at liberty to act, to speak, to assemble and address the people, to choose disciples unrestrained by any Pretorian mandate. Should it ever happen—may the gods ever avert the omen—should it ever happen, I say, that the religion of our forefathers be supplanted by the religion of Jesus, it will be to this noble toleration that Rome shall owe her premature obsequies, while I, miserable wretch, shall have been the instrument of what some would call providence, and we, destiny.

But this unlimited freedom granted Jesus provoked the Jews; not the poor, but the

rich and powerful. It is true that Jesus was severe on the latter, and this was a political reason, in my opinion, not to control the liberty of the Nazarene. "Scribes and Pharisees," he would say to them, "you are a race of vipers; you resemble painted sepulchres." At another time he would say that the mite of the widow was more precious in the sight of God than the alms of the proud rich.



A Memorable Interview

NEW complaints were daily made at the Judgment Hall against the insolence of the Jews. I was even informed that some misfortune would befall him—that it would not be the first time that Jerusalem had stoned those who called themselves prophets—and if the Pretorium refused justice, an appeal would be made to Cæsar.

However, my conduct was approved by the Senate, and I was promised a reinforce-

ment after the termination of the Parthian war. Being too weak to suppress a sedition, I resolved upon adopting a measure that promised to establish the tranquility of the city, without subjecting the Pretorium to humiliating concessions.

I wrote to Jesus requesting an interview with him at the Judgment Hall, and he came. You know that in my veins flows the Spanish, mixed with Roman blood, as incapable of fear as it is of puerile emotion. When the Nazarene made his appearance I was walking in my court, and my feet seemed fastened with an iron hand to the marble pavement, and I trembled in every limb as a guilty culprit, though he was calm—the Nazarene—calm as innocence. When he came up to me, he stopped, and by a signal seemed to say to me, "I am here." For some time I contemplated with admiration and awe this extraordinary type of man—a type of man unknown to our numerous painters, who have given form and figure to all the gods and heroes.

"Jesus," said I to him at last—and my tongue faltered—"Jesus of Nazareth, I have granted you for the last three years ample freedom of speech, nor do I regret it. Your words are those of a sage. I know not whether you have read Socrates or Plato,

but this I know, that there is in your discourses a majestic simplicity that elevates you far above those philosophers. The Emperor is informed of it, and I, his humble representative in this community, am glad of having allowed you that liberty, of which you are so worthy.

"However, I must not conceal from you the fact that your discourses have raised up against you powerful and inveterate enemies. Neither is this surprising. Socrates had his enemies, and he fell a victim to their hatred. Yours are doubly incensed against you on account of your sayings, and against me on account of the liberty extended towards you. They even accuse me of being indirectly leagued with you, for the purpose of depriving the Hebrews of the little civil power which Rome has left them. My request—I do not say my order—is, that you be more circumspect in the future, and more tender in arousing the pride of your enemies, lest they raise against you the stupid populace, and compel me to employ the instruments of justice."

The Nazarene calmly replied :

"Prince of the earth, your words proceed not from true wisdom. Say to the torrent, Stop in the midst of the mountain home because it will uproot the trees of the valley.

The torrent will answer you, that it must obey the laws of the Creator. God alone knows whither flows the torrent. Verily, I say unto you, before the Rose of Sharon blossoms, the blood of the Just shall be spilt." "Your blood shall not be spilt," replied I with emotion, "You are more precious, in my estimation, on account of your wisdom, than all the turbulent and proud Pharisees, who abuse the freedom granted them by the Romans, conspire against Cæsar, and construe our bounty into fear. Insolent wretches, they are not aware that the wolf of the timber sometimes clothes himself with the skin of the sheep. I will protect you against them. My Palace of Justice is open to you as an asylum."

Jesus gently shook his head, and said, with a grace and a divine smile, "When the day shall have come, there will be no asylum for the Son of Man, neither in the earth, nor under the earth. The asylum of the Just is there!" pointing to the heavens. "That which is written in the books of the prophets must be accomplished."

"Young man," answered I, mildly, "you oblige me to convert my request into an order. The safety of the province, which has been confided to my care, requires it. You must observe more moderation in your

discourses. Do not infringe. My orders you know. May happiness attend you. Farewell."

"Prince of the earth," replied Jesus, "I came not to bring war into the world, but peace, love and charity. I was born the same day on which Augustus Cæsar gave peace to the Roman world. Persecution proceeds not from me. I expect it from others, and will meet it in obedience to the will of my Father, who has shown me the way. Restrain, therefore, your worldly prudence. It is not in your power to arrest the victim at the foot of the altar of expiation."

So saying, he disappeared like a bright shadow behind the curtains of the palace.



Tumult in the City

TO Herod, who then reigned in Galilee, the enemies of Jesus addressed themselves to wreak their vengeance on the Nazarene. Had Herod consulted his own

inclination, he would have ordered Jesus immediately to be put to death; but though proud of his royal dignity, yet he was afraid of committing an act that might diminish his influence with the Senate. Herod called on me one day at the Pretorium, and on rising to take leave, after some insignificant conversation, he asked my opinion concerning the Nazarene. I replied that Jesus appeared to be one of those great philosophers that great nations sometimes produce, that his doctrines were by no means sacrilegious, and that the intention of Rome was, to leave him to that freedom of speech which was justified by his actions. Herod smiled maliciously, and saluting me with an ironical respect, he departed.

The great feast of the Jews was approaching, and the intention of their religious rulers was to avail themselves of the popular exultation which always manifests itself at the solemnities of a Passover. The city was overflowing with a tumultuous populace clamouring for the death of the Nazarene. My emissaries informed me that the treasure of the temple had been employed in bribing the people. The danger was pressing. A Roman centurion had been insulted. I wrote to the prefect of Syria for a hundred foot soldiers, and as many cavalry. He declined. I saw myself alone, with a handful of veterans, in the midst of a rebellious

city, too weak to suppress a disorder, and having no other choice left but to tolerate it. The seditious rabble had seized Jesus, and although they felt that they had nothing to fear from the Pretorium, believing with their leaders that I winked at their sedition, continued vociferating. "Crucify him! crucify him!"

Three powerful parties had combined together at that time against Jesus. First, the Herodians, and the Sadducees, whose seditious conduct seems to have proceeded from double motives: they hated the Nazarene, and were impatient of the Roman yoke. They could never forgive me for having entered their holy city with banners that bore the image of the Roman Emperor, and although in this instance I had ignorantly committed the fatal error, yet the sacrilege did not appear less heinous in their eyes. Another grievance also rankled in their bosoms: I had proposed to employ a part of the treasure of the Temple in erecting edifices of public utility, which proposal was scowled at.

The Pharisees, too, were avowed enemies of Jesus, and they cared not for our government. They bore with bitterness the severe reprimands which the Nazarene, for three years, had been throwing out against them

wherever he went. Too weak and pusillanimous to act by themselves, they had eagerly embraced the quarrels of the Herodians and the Sadducees. Besides these three parties, I had to contend against the reckless and profligate populace, always ready to join a sedition, and to profit by the disorder and confusion resulting therefrom.

Jesus was dragged before the High Priest and condemned to death. It was then that Caiaphas, the High Priest, performed a derisory act of submission. He sent his prisoner to me to pronounce his condemnation. I answered him that as Jesus was a Galilean, the affair came under Herod's jurisdiction; and I ordered him to be sent thither. That wily tetrarch professed his humility, and protesting his deference to me, the Lieutenant of Cæsar, recommitted the fate of the man to my hands. Soon my palace assumed the aspect of a besieged citadel. Every moment increased the number of seditionists. Jerusalem was inundated with crowds from the mountains of Nazareth. All Judea appeared to be pouring into the devoted city.

I had taken a wife—a maiden from among the Gauls—who pretended to see into futurity; she, weeping and throwing herself at my feet, said to me, "Beware, and touch not that man, for he is holy. Last night I

saw him in a vision. He was walking on the waters. He was flying on the wings of the winds. He spoke to the tempest and to the fishes of the lake—all were obedient to him. Behold! the torrent of Mount Kedron flows with blood! The statues of Cæsar are filled with the filth of Gemonide! The columns of the Interium have given away, and the sun is veiled in mourning, like a vestal of the tomb! O Pilate! evil awaits thee, if thou wilt not listen to the entreaties of thy wife. Dread the curse of a Roman Senate, dread the powers of Cæsar."



The Consummation

BY this time the marble stairs groaned under the weight of the multitude. The Nazarene was brought back to me. I proceeded to the Hall of Justice, followed by my guard, and asked the people

in a severe tone what they demanded. "The death of the Nazarene," was their reply. "For what crime?" "He has blasphemed. He has prophesied the ruin of the temple. He calls himself the Son of God, the Messiah, the King of the Jews." "Roman Justice," said I, "punishes not such offences with death." "Crucify him, crucify him!" belched forth the relentless rabble. The vociferation of the infuriated mob shook the palace to its foundations. There was but one that appeared to be calm, in the midst of the vast multitude. It was the Nazarene.

After many fruitless attempts to protect him from this fury of his merciless persecutors, I adopted a measure which, at the moment, appeared to me to be the only one that could save his life. I ordered him to be scourged, but in vain. It was his life that those wretches thirsted for! Then calling for an ewer, I washed my hands in the presence of the multitude, thereby signifying to them my disapproval of the deed.

Often in our civil commotions have I witnessed the furious animosity of the multitude, but nothing could be compared to what I witnessed in the present instance. It might have been truly said that on this occasion all the phantoms of the infernal regions had assembled at Jerusalem. The

crowd appeared not to walk: they were borne along, whirling and rolling like living waves, from the portals of the Pretorium, even unto Mount Zion, with howlings, screams, shrieks and vociferations, such as were never heard in the seditions of the Panonia, or in the tumult of the forum.

By degrees the day darkened like a winter's twilight, such as was witnessed at the death of the great Julius Cæsar, which was likewise toward the Ides of March.

I, the continued governor of a rebellious province, was leaning against a column of my palace contemplating through the dreary gloom these fiends of torture dragging to execution the innocent Nazarene. All around me was deserted. Jerusalem had vomited forth her in-dwellers through the funeral gate that leads to the Gemonica. An air of desolation and sadness enveloped me. My guards had joined the cavalry, and the centurion, to display a shadow of power, was endeavouring to keep order. I was left alone, and my breaking heart admonished me that what was passing at that moment appertained rather to the history of the gods than to that of a man. A loud clamour was heard proceeding from Golgotha, which, borne on the winds, seemed to announce an agony such as had never been heard by mortal ears. Dark clouds

lowered over the pinnacle of the Temple, and, settling over the city, covered it as with a veil. So dreadful were the signs that were seen both in the heavens and on the earth, that Dionysius, the Areopagite, is reported to have exclaimed, "Either the author of nature is suffering, or the universe is falling apart."

Towards the first hour of the night I threw my mantle around me and went down into the city towards the gates of Golgotha. The sacrifice was consummated. The crowd was returning home, still agitated, it is true, but gloomy, taciturn and desperate. What they had witnessed had stricken them with terror and remorse. I also saw my little Roman cohort pass by mournfully, the standard-bearer having veiled his eagle in token of grief, and I overheard some of the soldiers murmuring strange words which I did not understand. Sometimes groups of men and women would halt, then looking back toward Mount Calvary would remain motionless, in expectation of witnessing some new prodigy.

I returned to the Pretorium, sad and pensive. On ascending the stairs—the steps of which were still stained with the blood of the Nazarene—I perceived an old man in a suppliant posture, and behind him several women in tears. He threw himself at my

feet and wept bitterly. It is painful to see an old man weep. "Father," said I to him, mildly, "who are you, and what is your request?"

"I am Joseph of Arimathea," replied he, and am come to beg of you, upon my knees, the permission to bury Jesus of Nazareth."

"Your prayer is granted," said I to him, and at the same time ordered Manlius to take soldiers with him to superintend the interment, lest it should be interfered with.

A few days after the sepulchre was found empty. His disciples published all over the country that Jesus had risen from the dead, as he had foretold.

A last duty remained to be performed, and that was to communicate to the Emperor these deplorable events. I did so on the night that followed the fatal catastrophe, and had just finished the communication when day began to dawn. At that moment the sound of clarions, playing the air of Diana, struck my ear. Casting my eye towards the Cæsarean gate, I beheld a troop of soldiers and heard at a distance other trumpets sounding Cæsar's march. It was the reinforcement that had been promised me—two thousand chosen troops who, to hasten their arrival, had marched all night. "It has been decreed by the

fates," cried I, wringing my hands, "that the great iniquity should be accomplished, that for the purpose of averting the deed of *yesterday*, troops should arrive *to-day*. Cruel destiny, how thou sportest with the affairs of mortals!" It was but too true, what the Nazarene exclaimed while writhing on the cross: "All is consummated."





The Resurrection

IN the third day two of the disciples were walking to Emmaus, a village seven or eight miles from Jerusalem, and were conversing about all these recent events; and, in the midst of their conversation and discussion, Jesus Himself came and joined them, though they were prevented from recognising Him.

"What is the subject," He asked them, "on which you are talking so earnestly, as you walk?"

And they stood still, looking full of sorrow. Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered,

"Are you a stranger lodging alone in Jerusalem, that you have known nothing of the things that have lately happened in the city?"

"What things?" He asked.

"The things about Jesus the Nazarene," they said, "who was a Prophet powerful in work and word before God and all the people; and how our High Priests and Rulers delivered Him up to be sentenced to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was about to ransom Israel. Yes, and moreover it was the day before yesterday that these things happened. And, besides, some of the women of our company have amazed us. They went to the tomb at daybreak, and, finding that His body was not there, they came and declared to us that they had also seen a vision of angels who said that He was alive. Thereupon some of our party went to the tomb and found things just as the women had said; but Jesus Himself they did not see."

"O dull-witted men," He replied, "with minds so slow to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Was there not a necessity for the Christ thus to suffer, and then enter into His glory?"

And, beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them the passages in Scripture which refer to Himself.

When they had come near the village to which they were going, He appeared to be going further, but they pressed Him to remain with them.

"Because," said they, "it is getting towards evening, and the day is nearly over."

So He went in to stay with them. But as soon as He had sat down with them, and had taken the bread and had blessed and broken it, and was handing it to them, their eyes were opened and they recognised Him. But He vanished from them.

"Were not our hearts," they said to one another, "burning within us while He talked to us on the way and explained the Scriptures to us?"

So they rose and without an hour's delay returned to Jerusalem, and found the Eleven and the rest met together, who said to them,

"Yes, it is true: the Master has come back to life. He has been seen by Simon."

Then they related what had happened on the way, and how He had been recognised by them in the breaking of the bread.

While they were thus talking, He Himself stood in their midst and said,

"Peace be to you!"

Luke 14: 13-36.

Weymouth's Translation.





JESUS shall reign where'er the sun
Does his successive journeys run ;
His kingdom spread from shore to shore,
Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

FROM north to south mankind will meet,
To pay their homage at His feet,
While all the world shall own the Lord,
And savage tribes attend His word.

TO Him shall endless prayer be made,
And endless praises crown His head,
His name like sweet perfume shall rise
With every morning sacrifice.

PEOPLE and realms of every tongue
Shall praise His name with sweetest
song,
And loud their voices shall proclaim
Honour and blessings on His name.



JESUS, the very thought of Thee
Brings comfort, peace and rest ;
O ! how I long Thy face to see,
And be for ever blest.

NO voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
The Saviour of mankind.

HOPE of every contrite heart,
O joy of all the meek,
To those who ask, how kind Thou art
How good to those who seek !

BUT what to those who find ? Ah ! this,
Nor tongue nor pen can show ;
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but His loved ones know.

JESUS, our only joy be Thou,
As Thou our prize wilt be ;
In Thee be all our glory now,
And through eternity.



PROPHECIES about to be Fulfilled



WEeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. *Psalm 30:5.*

☪ The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. *Isaiah 11:9.*

☪ As truly as I live, the whole earth shall be filled with the glory of Jehovah. *Numbers 14:21.*

☪ The desert shall rejoice and blossom as a rose. *Isaiah 35:1.*

☪ Jesus Christ gave himself a RANSOM FOR ALL, to be testified in due time. *1 Tim. 2:3-6.*

☪ The RANSOMED of the LORD shall return and obtain joy and gladness. *Isaiah 35:10.*

☪ All the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. *Isaiah 52:10.*

☪ The eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. *Isaiah 35:5.*

☪ In that day shall the deaf hear the Words of the Book. *Isaiah 29:18.*

☪ The inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. *Isaiah 26:9.*

☪ They shall learn war no more. *Isaiah 2:4.*

☪ I will take away the stony heart and give you a heart of flesh. *Ezekiel 36:26.*

☪ The LORD preserveth all them that love him, but all the wicked shall he destroy. *Psa. 145:20.*

☪ Times of RESTITUTION as spoken by the prophets. *Acts 3:18-23.*

☪ Thy will be done in earth as in heaven. *Matth. 6:10.*