

A. B. SIMPSON



***DAYS OF HEAVEN
UPON EARTH***

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Days of Heaven Upon Earth

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THE DAYS OF HEAVEN

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The days of heaven are peaceful days,
Still as yon glassy sea;
So calm, so still in God, our days,
As the days of heaven would be.

The days of heaven are holy days,
From sin forever free;
So cleansed and kept our days, O Lord,
As the days of heaven would be.

The days of heaven are happy days.
Sorrow they never see;
So full of gladness all our days,
As the days of heaven would be.

The days of heaven are healthful days,
They feed on life's fair tree;
So feeding on Thy strength, O Christ,
Our days as heaven may be.

Walk with us, Lord, thro' all the days,

And let us walk with Thee;
Till as Thy will is done in heaven,
On earth so shall it be.

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“Redeeming the time” (Eph. v. 16).

Two little words are found in the Greek version here. They are translated “*ton kairon*” in the revised version, “Buying up for yourselves the opportunity.” The two words *ton kairon* mean, literally, the opportunity.

They do not refer to time in general, but to a special point of time, a juncture, a crisis, a moment full of possibilities and quickly passing by, which we must seize and make the best of before it has passed away.

It is intimated that there are not many such moments of opportunity, because the days are evil; like a barren desert, in which, here and there, you find a flower, pluck it while you can; like a business opportunity which comes a few times in a life-time; buy it up while you have the chance. Be spiritually alert; be not unwise, but understanding what the will of God is. "Walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, buying up for yourselves the opportunity."

Sometimes it is a moment of time to be saved; sometimes a soul to be led to Christ; sometimes it is an occasion for love; sometimes for patience: sometimes for victory over temptation and sin. Let us redeem it.

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"I will cause you to walk in My statutes" (Eze. xxxvi. 27).

The highest spiritual condition is one where life is spontaneous and flows without effort, like the deep floods of Ezekiel's river, where the struggles of the swimmer ceased, and he was borne by the current's resistless force.

So God leads us into spiritual conditions and habits which become the spontaneous impulses of our being, and we live and move in the fulness of the divine life.

But these spiritual habits are not the outcome of some transitory impulse, but are often slowly acquired and established. They begin, like every true habit, in a definite act of will, and they are confirmed by the repetition of that act until it becomes a habit. The first stages always involve effort and choice. We have to take a stand and hold it steadily, and after we have done so a certain time, it becomes second nature, and carries us by its own force.

The Holy Spirit is willing to form such habits in every direction of our Christian life, and if we will but obey Him in the first steppings of faith, we will soon become established in the attitude of obedience, and duty will be delight.

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“Watch and pray” (Matt. xxvi. 41).

We need to watch for prayers as well as for the answers to our prayers. It needs as much wisdom to pray rightly as it does faith to receive the answers to our prayers.

We met a friend the other day, who had been in years of darkness because God had failed to answer certain prayers, and the result had been a state bordering on infidelity.

A very few moments were sufficient to convince this friend that these prayers had been entirely unauthorized, and that God had never promised to answer such prayers, and they were for things which this friend should have accomplished himself, in the exercise of ordinary wisdom.

The result was deliverance from a cloud of unbelief which was almost wrecking a Christian life. There are some things about which we do not need to pray, as much as to take the light which God has already given.

Many persons are asking God to give them peculiar signs, tokens and supernatural intimations of His will. Our business is to use the light He has given, and then He will give whatever more we need.

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“Blessed is the man that walketh not” (Ps. i. 1).

Three things are notable about this man:

1. His company. “He walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.”

2. His reading and thinking. “His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night.”

3. His fruitfulness. “And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.”

The river is the Holy Ghost; the planting, the deep, abiding life in which, not occasionally, but habitually, we

absorb the Holy Spirit; and the fruit is not occasional, but continual, and appropriate to each changing season.

His life is also prosperous, and his spirit fresh, like the unfading leaf. Such a life must be happy. Indeed, happiness is a matter of spiritual conditions. Put a sunbeam in a cellar and it must be bright. Put a nightingale in the darkest midnight, and it must sing.

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“I know him that he will do the law” (Gen. xviii. 19).

God wants people that He can depend upon. He could say of Abraham, “I know him, that the Lord may bring upon Abraham all that He hath spoken.” God can be depended upon; He wants us to be just as decided, as reliable, as

stable. This is just what faith means. God is looking for men on whom He can put the weight of all His love, and power, and faithful promises. When God finds such a soul there is nothing He will not do for him. God's engines are strong enough to draw any weight we attach to them. Unfortunately the cable which we fasten to the engine is often too weak to hold the weight of our prayer, therefore God is drilling us, disciplining us, and training us to stability and certainty in the life of faith. Let us learn our lessons, and let us stand fast.

God has His best things for the few
Who dare to stand the test;
God has his second choice for those
Who will not have His best.

Give me, O Lord, Thy highest choice,
Let others take the rest.
Their good things have no charm for me,
For I have got Thy best.

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“The body is not one member, but many” (I. Cor. xii. 14).

We have a friend who has a phonograph for his correspondence. It consists of two parts. One is a simple and wonderful apparatus, whose sensitive cylinders receive the tones and then give them out again, word for word, through the hearing tube. The other part is a common little box that stands under the table, and does nothing but supply the power through connecting wires.

Now, the little box might insist upon being the phonograph, and doing the talking; but if it should, it would not only waste its own life but destroy the life of its partner.

Its sole business is to supply power to the phonograph, while the latter is to do the talking. So some of us are called to be voices to speak for God to our fellow-men, others are forces to sustain them, by our holy sympathy and silent prayer. (Some of us are little dynamos under the table, while others are phonographs that speak aloud the messages of heaven.)

Let each of us be true to our God-given ministry, and when the day comes our work will be weighed and the rewards distributed.

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“Now unto Him that is able to keep you from stumbling”
(Jude 24).

This is a most precious promise. The revised translation is both accurate and suggestive. It is not merely from falling that He wants to keep us, but from even the slightest stumbling.

We are told of Abraham that he staggered not at the promise. God wants us to walk so steadily that there will not even be a quiver in the line of His regiments as they face the foe. It is the little stumblings of life that most discourage and hinder us, and most of these stumblings are over trifles. Satan would much rather knock us down with a feather than with an Armstrong gun. It is much more to his honor and keen delight to defeat a child of God by some flimsy trifle than by some great temptation.

Beloved, let us watch, in these days, against the orange peels that trip us on our pathway, the little foxes that destroy the vines, and the dead flies that mar, sometimes, a whole vessel of precious ointment. “Trifles make perfection,” and as we get farther on, in our Christian life, God will hold

us much more closely to obedience in things that seem insignificant.

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“It is I, be not afraid” (Mark vi. 50).

Someone tells of a little child with some big story of sorrow upon its little heart, flying to its mother's arms for comfort, and intending to tell her the story of its trouble; but as that mother presses it to her bosom and pours out her love, it soon becomes so occupied with her and the sweetness of her affection that it forgets to tell its story, and in a little while even the memory of the trouble is forgotten. It has just been loved away, and she has taken its place in the heart of the little one.

This is the way God comforts us Himself. “It is I, be not afraid,” is His reassuring word. The circumstances are not altered, but He Himself comes in their place, and satisfies every need of our being, and we forget all things in His sweet presence, as He becomes our all in all.

I am breathing out my sorrow
On Thy kind and loving breast;
Breathing in Thy joy and comfort,
Breathing in Thy peace and rest.

I am breathing out my longings
In Thy listening, loving ear;
I am breathing in Thy answer,
Stilling every doubt and fear.

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“Not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (Matt. xxvi. 39).

“To will and do of His good pleasure” (Phil. ii. 13).

There are two attitudes in which our will should be given to God.

First. We should have the surrendered will. This is where we must all begin, by yielding up to God our natural will, and having Him possess it.

But next, He wants us to have the victorious will. As soon as He receives our will in honest surrender, He wants to put His will into it and make it stronger than ever for Him. It is henceforth no longer our will, but His will. And having yielded to His choice and placed itself under His direction, He wants to put into it all the strength and intensity of His own great will and make us positive, forceful, victorious and unmovable, even as Himself. “Not My will, but Thine be done.” That is the first step. “Father, I will that they whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me.” That is the second attitude. Both are divine; both are right; both are necessary to our right living and successful working for God.

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“Charity doth not behave itself unseemly” (I. Cor. xiii. 5).

In the dress of a Hindu woman, her graceful robe is fastened upon her person entirely by means of a single knot. The long strip of cloth is wound around her person so as to fall in graceful folds like a made garment, and the end is fastened by a little knot, and the whole thing hangs by that single fastening. If that were loosed the robe would fall. And so in the spiritual life, our habits of grace are likened unto garments; and it is also true that the garment of love, which is the beautiful adorning of the child of God, is entirely fastened by little *nots*.

If you will read with care the thirteenth chapter of I. Corinthians, you will find that most of the qualities of love are purely negative. “Love envieth not, love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave herself rudely, seeketh not her own, is not provoked, thinketh no evil.” Here are “*nots*” enough to hold on our spiritual wardrobe. Here are reasons enough to explain the failure of so many, and the reason why they walk naked, or with rent garments, and others see their shame. Let us look after the *nots*.