



Leaning upon the Beloved

An address by George Müller delivered on May 14th 1871

“Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?”
Song of Solomon vii.5

The one here spoken of is evidently the Bride of the Lamb, the Church of Christ. She is described as “coming up from the wilderness”. This, then, is the proper description of *ourselves*, as believers. And what abundant cause for thankfulness there is in this one fact, that we *are in the wilderness*! For if it were not so, we should still belong to this present world, which is under condemnation. If we were not *in the wilderness*, we should know nothing of redemption - of the forgiveness of our sins - we should not be united to Christ - we should have no hope of seeing Him and being like Him and with Him for ever.

It is, then, a matter of exceeding thankfulness, and on it our hearts should continually dwell, - that, by God’s grace, we *are* brought into the wilderness, - that we are no longer “dead in trespasses and sins”, no longer *of* the world, but that we have been forgiven, and are united to the living Lord Jesus, the Head of the new creation!

But this wilderness position, while it brings with it such exceeding great blessings and privileges, has, also, its *difficulties* and *trials* in connexion with this life.

The fact of Israel being brought *into the wilderness* marked them as those who had before them the hope of the land. They had been delivered from Egypt and were looking forward to Canaan which God had given them for a possession; but, they were not *yet* in the *land*. They were still *in* the wilderness, and had to experience its difficulties and trials. So with us. Because we are *in the wilderness*, we have before us the bright, blessed, and glorious prospect of the Father’s House; the full enjoyment of all those blessings which are promised to His children, the certainty of being conformed to the likeness of God’s dear Son; of seeing Jesus and being like Him. And, after all, *this* is the *chief* blessedness, - *not* that we shall wear a *crown*, and *reign* with Jesus, blessed as that will be; but, above all blessings *this* is the greatest that we shall be perfectly free from sin, absolutely and perfectly conformed to the image of Jesus in purity and holiness.

But this blessedness we have not yet in *actual possession*; by *faith* it is ours, and we have now, *by faith*, to *live* upon it; but the time is coming when all these things will be *actually enjoyed* by the very weakest, and feeblest, and least instructed of the children of God! It is *certain*! No power of darkness will be able finally to hinder this. As surely as we put our trust in the Lord Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins, so assuredly all these blessings will be ours!

It is further said “Who is this that *cometh up from* the wilderness”. Now, here is *progress*. The Church is not represented as *remaining* in the wilderness, but as “coming up from it”. This implies, that, as the days and months pass on, we do not remain *stationary*. The *appearance*, outwardly, indeed may be, that we are, on the 14th May 1871, just where we were on the 7th May 1871, - or even just where we were on the 14th May 1870, but it is not *really* so; - No! we are a week, or a year, as the case may be, nearer the *end of the wilderness*. How exceedingly precious it is to think, as the sun once more sets, or as the clock strikes one more hour, now I am a day, - an hour nearer my Heavenly home!

These are, indeed, simple truths, but it is the seeking to enter into these as *realities* that brings blessing to the soul! Verily I am *not remaining* in the wilderness, (our souls should say) but I am now again one week nearer the Father's House! Thus we should seek to stir up our own hearts, and thus we should seek to encourage the hearts of one another in God.

“*Cometh up*” - the progress is made *step by step*, - and so you and I are so many steps nearer home than when last we met; and how soon, how very soon, we may take the *last* step, and find ourselves out of the wilderness, and in that blessed *home!*.

But what in the *meantime*? The Church is here described as “*leaning on her beloved*”. She has a *Friend!* - a Friend who provide His love by laying down His life for her. None other this than the precious Lord Jesus; that blessed One who loved us from eternity; that blessed One through whose *blood* we have been made clean from our sins. The Friend “who loveth at all times”, and this Friend an almighty Friend, the Creator of the universe, and the One who was *before* all things!

We see, also, that she had not only *taken* His arm, but she *leaned* upon it. We all know that the first may be done without the second. Even a *wife may* take the arm of her husband, *not to obtain* support for herself, but if *he* is in a weakly and feeble state, she may take his arm really to help and support *him*; but *here* is an arm brought before us - always strong, powerful, almighty - an arm on which we may *always* lean, without fear of *wearying* it. And not only has this arm almighty and enduring strength, but think of the *heart* which is connected with this arm - so loving, so tender, so faithful! Oh, what a Friend!

Now, beloved in Christ, do we *lean* upon this arm? When the difficulties and trials come, when the perplexities arise in our path, do we *lean* upon this strong and loving arm? This is just the point. It is just in the measure that we are enabled so to do that we shall be able to endure.

Let me affectionately ask, “Did we lean on this arm during the week that is past, and so lean as to obtain spiritual sustainment?” And let us, now, during the week on which we have entered, seek to aim after this. These words, that we have been considering, are not a mere *phrase* without any particular meaning; but the Holy Ghost means to teach us, by this image, that, in *the midst* of our trials and difficulties, we should, day by day, *prove* the strength of the arm of Jesus; and let us remember that *He* is the one to whom has “been given the tongue of the learned that He should know how to speak the word in season to him that is weary”. Let us seek to prove more His power and love, and we shall find that it is not in vain that lean upon *that Arm!*

