

Wrath's Quiet Curfew: An Expository Note on Eph. iv. 26.

THERE is something even quaint in the perverseness of the notion that in saying, 'Let not the sun go down upon your wrath,' the Apostle meant that we must be angry only until sundown. On this interpretation, we should have increased scope for our anger when the days were longer. And on going into regions further north, we should find the term of wrath extending itself towards a full period of half a year!

The notion, on the other hand, that he simply meant that passionate anger should last only for a short time is not particularly quaint. Nor is it particularly interesting or instructive. It lacks point. But the Apostle's real meaning is, I think, is apt as it is beautifully precise.

It has just been said, 'Be ye angry; and sin not.' And if our anger be sinless, it surely has reverence at its root—a fine sense of sacred order which makes it impossible that we should face some things without indignation. But if duly present, reverence also hedges in all the scope of this passion of anger with stiller, yet deeper and more commanding passion.

It is, let us say, the hour of eventide, falling upon a reverent heart, at leisure to feel its tone.

That heart is deeply calmed. For its reverence makes it responsive to the fitness of things, and so to the quiet which God is making all about it.

Again, it is the hour of noon. Yet a stilling has visited the spirit even in like manner. It is one of those seasons of quietening of which the season of sundown is ever *typical*: one of those seasons of which the restful serenity of sundown may, indeed, again and again be the occasion, but *continually* the type.

The moment of the soul's wrath had been just before, with strong emotional ferment. Yet when the reverent spirit feels the same Hand which makes the sun go down, and stills the world, making quiet about it and within, it answers at once to the gentle influence. It rests from its tumult. Wrath is lulled.

But what if the spirit had resisted?

Then wrath would have been obtrusive as some vivid spring growth, bursting its unseasonable way into the midst of autumn's 'calm decay.' For wrath's day was done. Perhaps within a few minutes after its stormy labour began, *its* brief working-day was over—its sun went down at once, and there was no more place for it. How should it then linger—a belated and unwished-for meddler, a disturber and destroyer trampling the darkened fields?

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Entre Nous.

The Great Text Commentary.—The best illustration this month has been sent by the Rev. Charles O. Main, Cranbrook, B.C., Canada, to whom a copy of Bain's *The New Reformation* has been sent. Illustrations for the Great Text for August must be received by the 1st of July. The text is Lk 11².

The Great Text for September is Lk 11¹³—'If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?' A copy of Davidson's *The Stoic Creed* or of Adams Brown's *Christian Theology in Outline* will be given for the best illustration. Illustrations must be received by the 1st of August.

The Great Text for October is Lk 13²⁴—'And he said unto them, Strive to enter in by the narrow door: for many, I say unto you, shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able.' A copy of Scott's *The Fourth Gospel: Its Purpose and Theology*, or of Allen's *St. Matthew* ('Int. Crit. Com.'), will be given for the best illustration. Illustrations must be received by the 1st of September.

Those who send illustrations should at the same time name the books they wish sent them if successful.

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