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MEDITATIONS
on
THE GREAT FATHER

by J. Hudson Taylor
(1832-1905)

"The LORD GOD is a Sun and Shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Psalm 54:11

HOW pleasant it is to the heart of a true child to hear his father well spoken of, and to rejoice that he is the child of such a father! We feel that we can never thank GOD sufficiently for our privileged lot, who have been blessed with true and loving Christian parents. But if this be the case with regard to the dim and at best imperfect earthly reflections, what of the glorious Reality — the great FATHER — the source of all fatherhood, of all protection — of all that is blessed here, and true, and noble, and good — and of all the glories to which we look forward in the future? "The LORD GOD is a Sun and Shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."

"The LORD GOD is a Sun and Shield," and this in the fullest conceivable sense. None of His works can fully reveal the great Designer, and Executor, and Upholder; and the loftiest thoughts and imaginations of the finite mind can never rise up to and comprehend the Infinite. The natural sun is inconceivably great, we cannot grasp its magnitude; it is inconceivably glorious, we cannot bear to gaze for one moment on its untempered light. The source to us of all heat, we have to shield ourselves from its tropical power, though millions of miles from its surface: the sustainer of the essential conditions of physical life, and the great ruler and center of the solar system — how great and glorious is the natural sun! And yet it may be the very smallest of all the countless suns that GOD has made! What of the glorious MAKER of them all!

"The LORD GOD is a Sun." Ah! He deserves the name, He is the Reality of all that sun or suns exhibit or suggest. My reader, is He the Sun to you? Do you count all that to be darkness which does not come from and accord with His light: all that to be disorder which does not implicitly accept and delight in His rule? "O LORD of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee!" Self-will is unmingled folly; its end is injury and loss.

And the LORD GOD is a Shield. Dangers encompass us, unseen, at every moment. Within us, in the

wonderful and delicate organization of our bodies — around us, when in circumstances of the greatest comfort and apparent safety — are dangers unseen, which at any moment might terminate our earthly career. Dangers seen sometimes appall us, or appall those who love us: but they are not more real than many we never dream of. Why do we live so safely, then? Because the LORD GOD is a Shield. Foes, too, are never far from us. The world, the flesh, and the devil are very real; and unaided we have no power to keep or deliver ourselves from them. But the LORD GOD is a Shield. It is a small matter then to go to China, a very small additional risk to run; for there, as here, the LORD GOD is a Shield. Should war break out, in this we may be confident; for He has said He will never fail nor forsake His own. Only when our work is done will He take us home; and this He will do whether we serve Him here or there. To know and to do His will — this is our safety; this is our rest.

Sweet are His promises — grace will He give, and glory. Grace all unmerited and free — that which is really for our good, for CHRIST'S deservings, not for ours. And glory too — glory NOW, the glory of being His, of serving Him in each least duty of life, and glory in the soul. Glory apparent, too, as with unveiled faces we behold and rejoice in His glory, and reflect it ever more and more. And glory to come, when we have done and suffered His will here, and are "for ever with the LORD!"

"No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly." Ah! how often, when we have been dissatisfied with the ways of GOD, we ought to have been dissatisfied with our own ways: We did not think, perhaps, that in some matter or other we were not walking uprightly. If not so, however, then the thing we desired was not for our good, and therefore was not given; or the thing we feared was essential to our good, and hence was not withheld. We are often mistaken: GOD, never. "No good thing will He withhold": shall we be so foolish, so wayward, as after this to desire that which our FATHER in heaven withholds?

But sweet as are GOD'S promises, the PROMISER is greater and better. Finite human words fetter the expression of the heart of the Infinite GIVER. Hence if we had claimed all the promises, had opened our mouths most wide, and had asked with all the blessed presumption of loved and favored children — yet, above and beyond the promises, He would still be able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think. He delights to do so! Let not low thoughts, GOD-dishonoring thoughts, unbelieving, distrustful thoughts, limit His blessings; for "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly."