

SOPHIA'S CALL

"Wisdom crieth without: SHE UTTERETH HER VOICE IN THE STREETS: SHE CRIETH IN THE CHIEF PLACES OF CONCOURSE, in the openings of the gates: In the city SHE UTTERETH HER WORDS, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge. Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out My Spirit unto you, I will make known My Words unto you.

"Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out My hand, and no man regarded: But ye have set at nought all My counsel, and would none of My reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh: When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon Me, but I will not answer: they shall seek Me early, but they shall not find Me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the LORD: They would none of My counsel: they despised all My reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto Me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil," Proverbs 1:20-33.

Here is a striking picture of a woman standing, as a queen, in a crowded street of men, and she lifts up her voice with a sweet invitation, sweet, gracious and yet authoritative. HER NAME IS WISDOM. The lady's name is Wisdom, which is SOPHIA in the Greek.

The word is in the plural in the Hebrew language, as if to teach us that in this lovely form of a woman that all the manifold wisdoms are gathered into one. Who is she? It is easy to call her a "poetical personification" but that really doesn't explain her. It is clear that the book of Proverbs means much more than the human quality of wisdom. This is more than human wisdom because to her are

attributed august and Divine attributes, and **she is the co-eternal associate of the Lord Himself, dwelling as it were, in His bosom, and she comes forth to us to inspire all good deeds, to plead evermore with men, to enrich those who listen to her with choicest gifts.**

Intellectual clearness, moral goodness, spiritual devotion are all combined in the idea of this woman Wisdom as belonging to men. The Divine source of all, and the correspondence between the human and the Divine nature, are taught in the residence of this personified wisdom with God before she dwelt with men.

The whole of the manifold revelations, by which God makes known any part of His will to men, are her voice. Especially the call contained in the Old Testament revelation is this summons of this woman Wisdom.

We upon hearing the call of this woman Wisdom cannot but connect the incomplete personification of Divine Wisdom here with its complete incarnation of Jesus Christ who is the "power of God and the wisdom of God." And who embodies the lineaments of the grand picture of a wisdom crying in the streets, even while it is true of Him that "He does not strive nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets," for the crying, which is denied to be His, is ostentatious and noisy, and the crying which is asserted to be hers is the plain, clear, universal appeal of Divine love as well as wisdom. "The light of Christ lighteth every man that cometh into the world." The call of wisdom in this passage begins with remonstrance and plain speech, giving their right names to men who neglect her voice.

The first step in delivering men from evil, that is, from foolish courses is to put very clearly before them the true character of their acts, and still more of their inclinations. Gracious offers and rich promises come after, but the initial message of wisdom to such men as we are must be the accusation of folly. "When she cometh she will convict the world of sin."

The three designations of men in verse 22 are probably arranged so as to make a climax. First comes "the simple," or the word means "open." There is a "sancta simplicitas," a holy ignorance of evil, which is sister to the highest wisdom. It is well to be ignorant as well as "innocent of much transgression" and there is no more mistaken and usually insincere excuse for going into foul places than the pleas, that it is best to know the evil and so choose the good. That knowledge comes surely and soon enough without our seeking it. But there is a fatal simplicity, open eared, like Eve, **to the tempers whisper, which believes the false promises of sin, and as Bunyan has taught us, is companion of sloth and presumption.**

NEXT COME SCORNERS, WHO MOCK AT GOOD. A man must have gone a long way down the hill before he begins to gibe at virtue and godliness. But the descent is steep, though the distance is long, and **the "simple" who begins to do what is wrong will come to sneer at what is right.**

THEN LAST COMES THE FOOL, the name, which is in Proverbs, shortened for mental stupidity, moral obstinacy, and dogged godlessness, a foul compound, but one which is realized oftener than we think. "Simple," "scorner," "fool." "A fool has said in his heart there is no God."

A great many superior intellects, cultivated ladies and gentlemen, university graduates, and the like, would be unceremoniously set down by this lady Divine Wisdom as fools. She would call them fools and surely if account is taken of the whole compass and duration of our being, and of all our relations to things and persons seen and unseen, nothing can be more stupid than godlessness, however cultured.

The word literally means coarse or thick, and may suggest the idea of stolid insensibility as the last stage in the downward progress.

But notice that the charge is directed, not against deeds, but dispositions. Perverted love and perverted hatred underlie acts. The simple love simplicity, preferring to be unwarned against evil. The scorner finds delight in letting his rank tongue blossom into speech, and the false direction

given to love gives a fatal twist to its corresponding hate, so that the fools detests "knowledge," as a thief a policeman's stick. **You cannot love what you should loathe, without loathing what you should love. Inner longings and revulsions settle character and acts.**

Verse 23 passes into entreaty, for it is vain to rouse conscience by plain speech, unless something is offered to make better life possible. **So this lady Wisdom comes with a rod, but also with gifts, but if the rod is kissed, the rewards are possessed.** The relation of the clauses in verse 23 is that the first is the condition of the fulfillment of the second and the third.

If we turn to Wisdom's reproof, two gifts will be bestowed by her. **Her Spirit will make us quick to hear and receive her words sounding without.** Whatever other good follows on responding to the call of Divine wisdom, and the remaining chapters of Proverbs, magnificently detail the many rich gifts that do follow, chief of all are spirits swift to hear and docile to obey her voice, and then actual communications to purged ears.

Outward revelation without prepared hearts is water spilt upon rock. Prepared hearts without a message to them would be but multiplication of vain longings, and God never stultifies Himself, or gives mouths without sending meat to fill them. **To the submissive spirit, there will not lack either disposition to hear or clear utterance of the Lord's will.**

But now comes a pause. Wisdom has made her offers in the crowded streets, and amid all the noise and bustle her voice has rung out. What is the result? Nothing. Not one's head has been turned in her direction, nor has one eye been lifted in her direction. And the bustle goes on as before. "They bought," and "they sold," as if no voice had spoken.

So, after the disappointed waiting of this lady Wisdom, her voice peals out again, but this time with severity in its tones. Notice how in verses 24 and 25 the sin of sins against the pleading Wisdom of God is represented as being simple indifference. "Ye refused." "No man regarded." "Set at nought." "Would none of." These are the things which

bring down the heavy judgments. **It does not need violent opposition or black crime to wreck a soul.** SIMPLY DOING NOTHING WHEN GOD SPEAKS IS ENOUGH TO EFFECT DESTRUCTION.

No one responds to this lady's gracious invitation. There is no need to lift up angry arms in hostility. If we keep them hanging listless by our sides, it is sufficient. **The gift escapes us, if we simply keep our hands shut or held behind our backs.** Ears which have not heard her, for seeing eyes which have not seen her because they loved evil simplicity and hated knowledge.

Then note the terrible retribution. That is an awful picture of the mocking laughter at her, accompanying the rush of the whirlwind and the groans of anguish and shrieks of terror. It is even more solemn and dreadful than the parallel representations in Psalm 2, for there the laughter indicates God's knowledge that the schemes of opponents are vain, but here it figures pleasure in calamities.

Of course, we must remember that the Wisdom thus represented is not to be identified with God, but still the imagery is startling, and needs to be taken along with declarations that has no "pleasure in the death of the sinner," and to be interpreted as indicating, with daring anthropomorphism, the inevitable character of "destruction." And the uselessness of appeals to the wisdom once despised.

We can joyfully remember that the "incarnate Wisdom," fairer than the ancient personification, wept over the city which He knew must perish.

Verses 28-31 carry on the picture of too late a change of mind, which results in inevitable retribution. **They who let this lady Wisdom cry and pay no heed to her, shall cry to her in their turn, and they will be unnoticed by her.** THEY WHOM SHE VAINLY SOUGHT SHALL VAINLY SEEK HER. Actions have their consequences, which are not annihilated because the doers do not like them, the fruit of their way or doings, but are filled with their own devices or counsels.

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The inexorable law works, deaf to

all her cries, in the field of the earthly life, both as regards condition and character, and that field of its operation is all that the writer of this book has in view. He is not denying the possibility of forgiveness, nor the efficacy of a change of mind, nor is he asserting that a seeking sinner never finds God or seeks God in vain, **but he is declaring that it is too late to cry out for deliverance from consequences of folly when the consequences have us in their grip, and the wishes for deliverance are vain, though signs of a change of mind are not.**

We cannot reap where we have not sowed. We must reap what we have. If we are such sluggards, that we will "not plough in the winter by reason of the cold," we shall "beg in harvest and have nothing." But only though the writer has probably one in this life this view, Jesus Christ has extended the teaching to the next. When He has told of those who will seek to enter in and not be able.

The experience of the fruits of their godlessness will make godless men wish to escape eating the fruits, and that wish shall be vain. It is not for us to enlarge on such words, **but it is for all of us to lay them to heart, and to take heed that we listen now to the beseeching call of this heavenly woman, Wisdom, in the tenderest and noblest form, as it appeared in Christ, the incarnate Word.**

Verses 32 and 33 generalize the preceding promises and warnings in a great antithesis. "The backsliding and or turning away of the simple slay them." There is allusion to Wisdom's call in verse 23. The simple had turned, but in the wrong direction, away from and not towards her. **To turn away from heavenly Wisdom is to set one's face toward destruction. It cannot be too earnestly reiterated that we must take our choice of one or two directions for ourselves, either towards God, to seek whom is life, to find whom is Heaven, or away from Him, to turn our backs on whom is to embrace unrest, and to be separate from whom is death.** "The security of fools," by which is want, not their safety, but their fancy that they are safe, "destroys them."

No man is in such danger as the careless man of the world who thinks that he is all right. A traveller along the edge of a precipice in the night, who goes on as if he walked a broad road and takes no heed to his footing, will soon change his mind about his rashness at the bottom, mangled and bruised. A man who in this changing world fancies that he sits as a king, and sees no sorrow, will have a rude awakening. A moment's heed saves hours of pain.

The alternative to this suicidal folly is in listening to your Right-Woman, Wisdom's call. And whoever does that will " dwell safely," not in fancied but real security, and in his quiet soul there need be no unrest from feared evils. For he will have hold of a charm which turns evils into good, and with such a guide he cannot go astray, nor with such a defender he be wounded to death,

nor with such a companion as wisdom, ever be solitary.

If Christ be our Light, and He is, we shall not walk in darkness.

If He is our Wisdom, and He is, we shall not err.

If He is our life, and He is, we shall never see death.

If He is our God, and He is, we shall fear no evil.

Have you met this lady, Wisdom? She has been asking for you. She is your Right-Woman. She is important to you and your life here on this Earth. **She always is crying out for you. Won't you have anything to do with her?**

"The world by wisdom knew not God, but by the foolishness of the preaching of the cross God saved them."

WISDOM'S GIFT TO YOU

"That I may cause those that love me to inherit substance," Proverbs 8:21. The word we have here for substance is the Hebrew word for "being" or "existence." It is a peculiar word here and it is in a unique construction in this passage.

The prize actually held put here by Wisdom to her lovers is much more than worldly goods. In deepest truth, the being which is theirs is God Himself. **They that love and seek wisdom possess the Lord, and in possessing the Lord they become possessors of their of their own being or existence.** We are then owners and lords of ourselves, and have in our minds a fountain of life, because we have God dwelling with and in us. THIS IS THE SEARCH THAT ALWAYS FINDS. "Those who love her (Wisdom)."

Now many people love wisdom, as a philosopher might, but this is a deeper source of wisdom than what the Greeks had, and what they meant by wisdom was a widely different attitude of mind from that of what this lady is offering. It could never be said of the disci-

ples of Plato that their quest was sure to end in finding what they sought. Many a man then, and many a man since, and many a man today, has "followed knowledge, like a sinking star," and has only caught a glimpse of a far off and dubious light.

There is only one search which is certain always to find what it seeks, and that is the search which knows where the object of it is, and seeks not as for something the locality of which is unknown, but as for that which the place of which is certain. The manifest manifold voices of human aims cry, "Who will show us any good?" The seeker who is sure to find is he who prays, "Lord, lift up the light of Thy countenance upon us." **The mind that truly and supremely affects God is never condemned to seek in vain.**

The lady, the wisdom of this book, herself is presented as proclaiming, "They that seek Me earnestly shall find Me," and humble souls in every age since then have set to their seal that the word is true to their experience. For there are two seekers in each case, God and man. "The Father seeketh

such to worship Him," and His love goes through the world yearning and searching for minds that will turn to Him. The Shepherd seeks the lost sheep, and lays it on His shoulders to bear it back to the fold. **Jesus Christ is the incarnation of the seeking love of God. And the human seeker finds God, or rather is found by God, for no aspiration after Him is vain, no longing unresponded to, no effort to find Him unresponded to.**

WE HAVE AS MUCH OF GOD AS WE WISH, AS MUCH AS OUR DESIRES HAVE FITTED US TO RECEIVE. The all-penetrating atmosphere enters every chink open to it, and no seeking soul has ever had to say, "I sought Him but found Him not." Is there any other quest of which the same can be said? Are not all paths of human effort strewn with the skeletons of men who have fretted and toiled and in vain attempts, all their lives, to grasp aims that have eluded their grip? Do we not all know the sickness of disappointed effort, or the sadder sickness of successful effort, which has secured the apparent good and found it not so good after all?

The Christian life is, amid all the failures of human effort, the only life in which the seeking after good is but a little less blessed than the finding of it, and in which it is always true that "He that seeketh findeth." Nor does such finding deaden the spirit of seeking, for in every finding there is a fresh discovery of new depths in God, and a consequent quickening of desire to press further into the abyss of His being, so that aspiration and fruition ever beget each other, and the upward, Godward progress of the soul is eternal. "That I may cause those that love Me to inner existence, being." This is the finding that is always blessed.

We have seen that "being" is the gift promised to the lovers of this lady called Wisdom, and that the promise may either be referred to the possession of God, who is the fountain of all being, or to the true possession of ourselves, which is a consequence of our possession of Him. In either aspect, the possession is blessedness. **If we have God, we have real life. We truly own ourselves when we have God. We really live when God lives in us, the life of our lives. We are ourselves, when we have ceased to be**

ourselves, and have taken God to be the self of ourselves.

Such a life of God possessing, brings the one good which corresponds to our whole being. All other good is fragmentary, and being fragmentary is inadequate, as men's restless search after various forms of good but too sadly proves. Why does the merchantman wander over sea and land seeking for many goodly pearls? Because he has not found "one of great price," but tries to make up by their number for the insufficiency of each.

But the soul is made, not to find its wealth in the manifold but in the one, and no aggregation of incompletenesses will make up completeness, nor any number of partial satisfactions of this and the other appetite, or desire make a man feel that he has enough and more than enough. We must have all good in one Person, if we are ever to know the rest of full satisfaction. It will be fatal to our blessedness if we have to resort to a hundred different sources for different supplies.

The true blessedness is simple and yet infinitely complex, for it comes from possessing the one Person in whom dwell for us all forms of good, whether good be understood as intellectual or moral or emotional. That which cannot be everything to the soul that seeks is scarcely worth the seeking, and certainly it not wisely proposes as the object of a life's search, for such a life will be a failure if it fails to find its object, and scarcely less tragically, though perhaps less conspicuously, a failure if it finds it.

All other good is but apparent. **God is the one real Object that meets all man's desires and needs, and makes the man blessed with real blessedness, and fills the cup of life with the draught that slakes thirst and satisfies the thirstiest. AND THIS SEEKING THAT ENDS UP AS BLESSEDNESS, ALWAYS LASTS.**

He who finds God, as every one of us may find Him in Christ, has found a good that cannot change, pass, or grow stale. His blessedness will always last, as long as he keeps fast hold of that which he has, and let's no man take his own.

For the Christian's good is the only one that does not tend to grow old and pale. We can never exhaust God. We need never grow weary of Him. Possession robs other wealth of its glamour, and other pleasures of their poignant sweetness. We grow weary of most good things, and those which we have long had, we generally find get somewhat faded and stale. Habit is a fatal enemy to enjoyment. But it only adds to the joy which springs from the possession of God in Christ.

Swedenborg said that "the oldest angels look the youngest," and they who have longest experience of the joy of fellowship with the Lord, are they who enjoy each instance of it most. We can never drink the chalice of His love to the dregs, and it will be fresh and sparkling as long as we have lips that can absorb it. "He keeps the good wine till the last."

The Christian's good is the only good that cannot be taken away. Loss and change beggars the millionaire sometimes and the possibility of loss shadows all earthly good with pale foreboding. Everything that is outside the substance of the soul can be withdrawn, but the possession of God in Christ is so intimate and inward, so interwoven with the very deepest roots of the Christian's personal being, that it cannot be taken out from those by any shocks of time or change.

There is but one hand that can end that possession and that is his own. He can withdraw himself from God, by giving himself over to sin, the flesh, and the devil.

THE LADY WISDOM AND CHRIST

"Then I was by Him, as one brought up with Him: AND I WAS DAILY HIS DELIGHT, rejoicing always before Him: Rejoicing in the habitable part of His Earth: and my delights were with the sons of men," Proverbs 8:30, 31.

Lady Wisdom stands opposed to blatant folly, and seeks to draw men to herself by lofty motives and offering them only pure delights. She is not a person, but she is a personification of an aspect of the Divine nature, and seeing that she is held forth as willing to bestow herself on men, that queenly figure

He can empty the shrine and compel the indwelling of Deity to say, as the legend told was heard in the temple the night before Roman soldiers desecrated the Holy of Holies, "Let us depart." But besides himself, "Neither things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature," has power to take away that faithful God to whom a poor soul clings, and in whom thus clings finds its unchangeable good.

The Christian's good is the only one from which we cannot be taken. A grim Psalm paints for us the life and end of men, "Who trust in the multitude of their possessions, and whose inward thought is that they have founded families that will last," It tells how, "This their way is folly," and yet is approved with acclamations by the crowd. It lets us see the founder of a family, the possessor of broad acres, going down to the grave, carrying nothing away, stripped of his glory and with death for his shepherd, who has driven his flock from pleasant pastures here into the dreariness of Sheol.

But that shepherd has a double office. Some he separates from all their possessions, hopes, and joys. Some he, stern though his aspect and harsh though his guidance, leads up to the green pastures of God, and as the last messenger of the love of God in Christ, unites the souls that found God amid the distractions of Earth with the God whom they will know better and possess more fully and blessedly, amid the unending felicities and progressive blessedness of Heaven.

shadows the great truth of God's self-communication as being the end and climax of all His revelation.

You are on the wrong track if she seems to some to resemble the "SOPHIA" of the Greek thought, and not the unique "SOPHIA" of Divine thought. It is really an anticipation of Jesus Christ more than it is of the Greek thinkers. The way of the perfect revelation of God is the incarnation which was prepared by prophets and psalmists. And here we see it also as wisdom which was always with God, and yet had its delights with the sons of

men, "And while rejoicing always before Him, yet rejoiced in the habitable parts of the Earth."

So here we see the self-revelation in Proverbs of the personified Divine Wisdom, and compare it with the revelation of the incarnate Divine Word. We see first in our verse the self-revelation of Wisdom. The words we have translated before us, "as one brought up with Him," are literally in the revised version, "as a master workman" and seem intended to represent wisdom, that is, of course, the Divine Wisdom, as having been God's agent in the creative act.

In the preceding context, she triumphantly proclaims her existence before the "works of old," and that she was with God, "or ever the Earth was." Before the everlasting mountains she was, before fountains flashed in the light and refreshed the Earth, here waters flowed. But that presence is not all. **Wisdom was the Divine agent in creation.**

That thought goes beyond the ancient one, "He spake and it was done." Genius regards the Divine command as the cause of the creatural being. God said, "Let there be, and there was." The putting forth of His will was the impulse to which creatures sprang into existence at response. This wonderful universe depicted here is not only "very good" and also a product of a sovereign will, but of one guided in its operations by all seeing wisdom.

Then we have the relation of this Divine wisdom to God as represented as being a continual delight and a childlike rejoicing in Him, or as the word literally means, "a sporting in Him." **Delighting and sporting.** Whatever energy of creative action is suggested by the preceding figure of a "master workman," that energy had no effort. To this Divine wisdom that energy was an easy task.

She was not so occupied with it as to interrupt her delight in contemplating God, and her tasks gave her infinite satisfaction, for she "rejoiced always," before Him, and she rejoiced in His habitable Earth. And we can see in this verse the glow of satisfaction that we may feel over a piece of well done work, the poets or the painters

rapture as he sees his thoughts boiled forth in melody or glowing on canvas.

But there is a greater thought than these there, for it says, "AND MY DELIGHT WAS WITH THE SONS OF MEN." "Wisdom delights in men." It is noteworthy that the same word is used in the preceding verse. The "delight of the heavenly wisdom in God," is not unlike that directed to men. "The sons of men," are the last, noblest work of creation, and on them, as the shining apex, HER DELIGHT SETTLES. The words described not only what was true when man came into being, as the utmost possible climax of creatural excellence, but are the revelation of what still remains true.

She always delighted in the Lord, and the things of the Lord, His whole creation, everything He did, the universe and man. You cannot feel but how in all this most striking disclosure of the depths of God, a deeper mystery is on the verge of revelation. There is here, as we have said, a personification, but there seems to be a person shining through, or dimly discerned moving behind the curtain.

Wisdom is the agent of creation. She creates with ease, and in creating delights in God as well as in her work, which calls forth no effort in doing, and done, is all very good. **She delights most of all in the sons of men, and that delight is permanent.**

Does not this belong with the prophets and psalmist and those who also cried out before Him, "Hosanna to Him that cometh in the Name of the Lord?"

In the New Testament we find an answer to the question, the higher revelation of the Divine wisdom. There can be no doubt that the New Testament is committed to the teaching of the eternal Word of God, who was incarnate in Jesus Christ, was the agent of creation. John, in his prologue to the Gospel, utters the deepest truths in brief sentences of monosyllables, and says them without a trace of feeling that they needed proof. To him they are axiomatic and self-evident.

"All things were made by Him." The words of a child, the thought takes a flight beyond the furthest reach of the mind to men. Paul, too, adds his Amen when he

says, "All things have been created through Him and unto Him and He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together." And in the book of Hebrews it declares a Son "through whom also He made the worlds, and who upholds all things by the Word of his power," and transfers to Jesus Christ the grand poetry of the psalmist who hymned, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the Earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands."

So we know that the eternal Word, which was from the beginning, was made flesh and dwelt among us. The personified wisdom of Proverbs is the personal word of John's prologue. John almost quotes the former when he says, "The same was in the beginning with God," for his word recalls the grand declaration, "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way.... I was set up in the beginning or ever the Earth was."

Then there are two beginnings, one lost in the depths of timeless being. One, the commencement of creative activity, and that Word was with God in the remotest, as in the nearer, beginning.

But Proverbs anticipates the perfect revelation of the New Testament still further, in its thoughts of an **unbroken communion between the personified Wisdom and God.** That thought of perfect communion and interchange of delights flashes into wondrous clearness when we think of Him who spake of "the glory which I had with Thee before the foundation of the world," and calmly declared "Thou lovest Me before the foundation of the world."

Into that depth of mutual love we cannot look, and our eyes are too dim-sighted to bear the blaze of that flashing interchange of glory, but we shall rob the earthly life of the Lord Jesus Christ of its pathos and saving power, if we do not recognize that in Him, the personification of Proverbs has become a Person, and that when He became flesh, He not only took on Him the garment of mortality, but laid aside, the visible robes of His imperial majesty, and that His being found in fashion as a man was humbling Himself beyond all humiliation that afterwards was His.

But still further, the Gospel reality fills out and completes the personification of Prov-

erbs in that it shows us a Divine Person who so turned to "the sons of men," that He took on Him their nature and Himself bore their sicknesses. The great thought of Jewish writers of the Divine condescension, was sure that God's love still rested on men, sinful as they were, but not even He could foresee the miracle long suffering love in the incarnate Christ, and He had no power of insight into the depth of the heart of God, that enabled Him to foresee the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ.

It still is most incredible. But passing all anticipation as it is, it is the root of all joy, the ground of all hope, and to millions of sinful souls it is their only refuge, and their sovereign example and pattern of life. The Jewish writer had a glimpse of a Divine Wisdom which delighted in man, but he did not dream of the Divine stooping to share in man's sorrows, or of its so loving humanity as to take on itself its limitations, not only to have compassion on them as God's images, but to take part of the same and to die. **That man should minister to the Divine delight is wonderful, but that God should participate in man's griefs passes wonder.**

Thereby a new tenderness is given to the ancient personification, and the august form of the Divine wisdom softens and melts into the yet more august and tender likeness to the Divine love.

Nor is there only an adumbration of the redeeming love of Jesus Christ as He dwells among us, here, **but we have to remember that Jesus Christ delights in the sons of men when they love Him back again.** All the sweet mysteries of our loving communion with Him, and of His joy in our faith, love and obedience, all the secret treasures of His self-impartation to, and abiding in, souls that open themselves to His entrance, are suggested in that thought. We can minister to the joy of Jesus Christ, and when He is welcomed into any heart, and any man's love answers His, He sees of the travail of soul and is satisfied.

There is the call of the personal word to each of us. The Wisdom of Proverbs is portrayed in her queenly dignity, as calling man to herself, and promising them the satisfaction of all their needs. She describes herself

that the description may draw men to her. **The self-revelation of God is His mightiest means of attracting men to Him.** We but need to know Him as He really is, in order to love Him and cling to Him.

A fairer form than hers has drawn near to us, and calls us with tenderer invitations and better promises. The Divine Wisdom has become man with "sweet human hands and lips and eyes." Such was His delight in the sons of men that He empties Himself of His glory, and finished a greater work than that over which He presided when the mountains were settled and the hills brought forth.

Now He calls us, and His summons is tenderer, and gives promise of loftier blessings than the call of Wisdom was and did. She called to the simple, "Come eat ye of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." He invites us, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink," and He furnishes a table for us, and calls us to eat of the bread which is His body broken for us and to drink of the wine which is His bloodshed for many for the remission of sin.

She promises "riches and honor," durable riches and righteousness. **His voice vi-**

brates with compassion, and calls the weary and heavy laden, of whom she scarcely thinks, and offers to them a gift, which may seem humble enough beside her more dazzling offers of fruit, better than gold and revenues, better than choice silver, but which comes closer to universal wants, **the gift of rest, which is really what all men long for, and none but they who take His yoke upon them possess.**

"See that ye refuse not Him that speaketh," for if they escaped not when they refused her that speak through the Jewish thinkers lips of old, "much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from Him that beseecheth us from Heaven."

Jesus Christ is the power of God and the Wisdom of God, and it is in Him crucified that our weaknesses and our folly are made strong and wise, and wisdom's ancient promise is fulfilled, "Whoso findeth Me findeth life, and shall obtain favor of the Lord."

This lady Wisdom calls and invites you to delight with her as always in His creation and in Him as Creator and Saviour. What a delight SOPHIA (wisdom) is.