



AND I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them. (Rev 14:13)

Horatius Bonar – the prophet of Edinburgh, his hymns and message:

Horatius Bonar was a strong witness for God in Scotland, but his voice carries down the corridors of time to our own day and country because his message was true, biblical and timeless. It rang with the power of authority – an authority derived from God’s Word and not his own. He was not only a sound and courageous preacher, but a beloved hymn writer as well who inculcated strong doctrinal and polemic messages in his hymns.

His hymns may be too convicting and rich in body for the modern church as we hear them sung less and less; but as the flood of time rolls on to greater and greener spiritual pastures, perhaps they will again appeal to the heart of those lost on the slopes of modern apostasy.

Altogether, Bonar wrote more than 140 hymns. The following hymns by Bonar are included in the 1940 Hymnal:

This is the Hour of Banquet and Song – # 206
I heard the Voice of Jesus say. # 424
Here, O my Lord, I see Thee face to face. # 208
O Love that Casts out Fear – # 457
Go labor on, Spend and be Spent - # 573

I have included an excerpt from Bonar’s work below as a devotion for us today. I am on travel and unable to submit my usual devotion on hymns, but the reader is blessed to read a better devotion from a grand and venerated master of bygone days.

The Watchman

*Thy way, not mine, O Lord, however dark it be;
Lead me by Thine own hand, choose out the path for me.*

...if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.' ... I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me. (Ezekiel 33:6-7)

"Someone, then, must undertake the ungracious task of probing and laying bare the evils of the age; for men must not be allowed to congratulate themselves that all is well. If others will not, he will.

If others shrink from the obloquy of such a work, he will not.... He loves his fellow-men too well. They may upbraid him; they may call him a misanthropist, or a prophet of evil; they may ascribe his warnings to the worst of motives, such as pride, or arrogance, or self-esteem, or malice, or envy; but he will give no heed to these unjust insinuations.

He will prefer being thus misunderstood and maligned, to allowing men to precipitate themselves upon a ruin which they see not. Rather than that they should perish, he will allow his own good name to be spoken against. He will risk everything, even the hatred of brethren, rather than withhold the warning. If they give no heed to it, he has, at least, saved his own soul. If they do, he has saved both his own soul and theirs.

He would rather take up the glad tidings of peace and tell men of Him who came the first time for shame and death, and who is coming the second time for glory and dominion; but he feels as one who has a special and personal message to deliver, which cannot be postponed.

He must remember that he is a watchman; and, having seen danger pressing on, he must not hesitate to make it known. He must speak his message of forewarning and rebuke, sparing no arrows, and neither smoothing down nor hiding any form of sin, but laying his finger upon every sore, and beseeching men to turn from their ungodliness. The evils around him press upon him sadly; the coming evils are foreshadowed upon his spirit, and, therefore, he lifts up his voice like a trumpet.

Satan has many snares which need to be detected; the world has many spells and lures which must be disenchanting; religion has many guises which must be unmasked, many devious paths of inconsistency which must be pointed out, many cherished errors which must be condemned, many carnal taints which must be abhorred and shunned. All these he must protest against without fear or favour."

(Scottish pastor, Horatius Bonar: 1808-1889)