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Meditations On Eternity With Him

by Richard Baxter

O blessed day! when I shall rest with God! when I shall rest in the bosom of my Lord! when I shall rest in knowing, loving, rejoicing, and praising! when my perfect soul and body shall together perfectly enjoy the most perfect God! When God, who is love itself, shall perfectly love me, and rest in His love to me, as I shall rest in my love to Him, and rejoice over me with joy, and joy over me with singing, as I shall rejoice in Him!

How near is that most blessed, joyful day! It comes apace. "He that shall come will come, and will not tarry." Though my Lord seems to delay His coming, yet a little while and He will be here. What is a few hundred years when they are over?

How surely will His sign appear! How suddenly will He seize upon the careless world, even "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth unto the west!" He who is gone hence shall so come. Me thinks I hear His trumpet sound! Me thinks I see Him coming in clouds, with His attending angels, in majesty and glory! ...

Blessed saints, that have believed and obeyed! this is the end of faith and patience. This is it for which you prayed and waited. Do you now repent your sufferings and sorrows, your self-denial and holy walking? Are your tears of repentance now bitter or sweet? See how the Judge smiles upon you. There is love in His looks. The titles of Redeemer, Husband, Head are written in His amiable, shining face. Hark, He calls you! He bids you stand here on His right hand: fear not, for there He sets His sheep.

O joyful sentence! "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." He takes you by the hand, the door is open, the kingdom is His and therefore yours; there is your place before His throne! The Father receives you as the spouse of His Son, and bids you welcome to the crown of glory.

Ever so unworthy, you must be crowned. This was the project of free redeeming grace, the purpose of eternal love. O blessed grace! O blessed love! O how love and joy will rise! But I cannot express it; I cannot conceive it.

This is that joy which was procured by sorrow, that crown which was procured by the cross. My Lord wept, that now my tears might be wiped away. He bled that I might now rejoice; He was forsaken, that I might not now be forsaken; He then died, that I might now live. O free mercy, that can exalt so vile a wretch! Free to me, though dear to Christ! ...

Here shall I be encircled with eternity, and ever live, and ever, ever praise the Lord. My face will not wrinkle, nor my hair be gray, "for this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal, immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory. O death, where is now thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

The date of my lease will no more expire, nor shall I trouble myself with thoughts of death, nor lose my joys through fear of losing them. When millions of ages are passed, my glory is but beginning, and when millions more are passed, it is no nearer ending. Every day is all noon, every month is harvest, every year is a jubilee, every age is full manhood, and all this is one eternity. O blessed eternity! the glory of my glory! the perfection of my perfection! ...

Is not the place a meeting of lovers? Is not the life a state of love? Is it not the great marriage day of the Lamb? Is not the employment there the work of love, where the souls with Christ take their fill?

O then, my soul, begin it here! "Be sick with love," now that thou mayest be well with love there. "Keep thyself" now "in the love of God" and let "neither life, nor death, nor any thing, separate thee from it"; and thou shalt be kept in the fullness of love for ever, and nothing shall embitter or abate thy pleasure. For the Lord has prepared a city of love, a place for communicating love to His chosen, "and they that love His name shall dwell therein. ..."

O what will it then be to live in the perpetual love of God! "For brethren to dwell together in unity here, how good and how

How pleasant it is! To see a family live in love—husband and wife, parents, children, and servants doing all in love to one another; to see a town live together in love, without any envyings, brawlings, or contentions, law suits, factions or divisions, but every man loving his neighbor as himself, thinking they can never do too much for one another, but striving to go beyond each other in love—how happy, how delightful a sight is this! O then, what blessed society will the family of heaven be, and those peaceful inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, where there is no division nor differing judgments, no disaffection nor strangeness, no deceitful friendship, no, not one unkind expression, not an angry look or thought, but all are one in Christ, who is one with the Father, and all live in the love of Him who is love itself!

How delightful is it to me to behold and study these inferior works of creation! What a beautiful fabric do we here dwell in: the floor so dressed with herbs and flowers and trees and watered with springs and rivers; the roof so widely expanded, so admirably adorned! What wonders do sun, moon, and stars, seas and winds, contain! And hath God prepared such a house for corruptible flesh, for a soul imprisoned? And doth He bestow so many millions of wonders upon His enemies?

O what a dwelling must that be which He prepared for His dearly beloved children! and how will the glory of the New Jerusalem exceed all the present glory of the creatures! Arise, then, O my soul, in thy contemplation, and let thy thoughts of that glory as far exceed in sweetness thy thoughts of the excellencies below! Fear not to go out of this body, and this world, when thou must make so happy a change. But say, as one did when he was dying,

"I am glad, and even leap for joy, that the time is come, in which that mighty Jehovah, whose majesty in my search of nature I have admired, whose goodness I have adored, whom by faith I have desired and panted after, will now show Himself to me face to face. Amen."

O my Saviour, hasten the time of Thy return; send forth Thy angels, and let that dreadful, joyful trumpet sound! Delay not, lest the living give up their hopes; delay not, lest earth should grow like hell, and Thy Church, by division, be all crumbled to dust; delay not, lest Thy enemies get advantage of Thy flock, and lest pride, hypocrisy, sensuality and unbelief prevail against Thy little remnant, and share among them Thy whole inheritance, and when Thou comest, Thou find not faith on the earth.

Delay not, lest the grave should boast of victory, and having learned rebellion of its guest, should refuse to deliver Thee up Thy due! O hasten that great resurrection day when Thy command shall go forth, and none disobey; when "the sea and the earth shall yield up their hostages, and all that sleep in the grave shall awake, and the dead in Christ shall rise first"; when the seed which Thou sowest corruptible, shall come forth incorruptible; and graves that received rottenness and dust, shall return Thee glorious stars and suns!

Therefore dare I lay down my body in the dust, intrusting it, not to a grave, but to Thee; and therefore my flesh shall rest in hope, till Thou shalt raise it to the possession of everlasting rest.

"Return, O Lord, how long? O let Thy kingdom come!" Thy desolate "bride saith, Come!" for Thy spirit within her saith, Come, and teacheth her thus to "pray with groanings which cannot be uttered; yea, the whole creation saith, Come, waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Thou Thyself hast said, "Surely I come quickly; Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."