

WRITINGS OF J G DECK

by J.G. Deck

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by J.G. Deck, compiled for study and devotional reading.

2 Chapters

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S. Heaven's Joy.

Heaven's Joy. WILL it be the glory bright Of those realms of endless light
Streets all paved with crystal gold?

Gates of pearl of price untold?

Harps, and thrones, and diadems, Palaces and costly gems? No more sorrow, grief, or pain -
Meetings ne'er to part again - Eyes undim'd by any tear - Peace unruffled by a fear?

All and more than this is given, But 'tis not the "joy of heaven."

One there is, and one alone, Ev'ry ransomed saint will own As the central fount of bliss;

Heaven were empty without this.

Jesus, Lamb of God, Thou art Now the centre of my heart;

While by faith Thy face I see, While I live and feed on Thee, E'en in this sad weary waste Often
heavenly joy I taste;

Thou the joy of joys shalt be Of my heaven's eternity.

J. G. Deck.

S. The Days of the Week

The Days of the Week

There are certain divisions of time obvious to all - natural divisions, as days and years - in connection with the two great lights God has set in the heavens (see Genesis 1:16); but there is another period of time - the week - of which we know nothing, save by the Word of God. From that we learn that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day" (Exodus 20:11) - six days of work followed by one of rest. And so important is this, that the week - a period of toil closing with a day of rest - becomes a divine institution, dimly recognized by Noah in the ark, also by the giving of the manna in Exodus 16:1-36, but definitely established under the law, God calling the Sabbath His holy day (Isaiah 58:13), and giving it as a sign between Israel and Himself. (Exodus 31:13.) So that the week has to do with work and rest - God's work and God's rest. But soon sin entered in, and death by sin. Adam, the responsible head of the first creation, fell, and all connected with him was irretrievably ruined - "in Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22); and God's rest being broken, He becomes a worker again (John 5:17), and in various ways, in grace and government, at sundry times and in divers manners, till He closed up the history of the first man and of the first creation by the mission of His Son, who spoke the words and did the works His Father gave Him to do, ending His perfect work and life of devotedness to God and man in death, dying on the accursed tree, under the judgment due to sin, as the Lamb of God.

It seems significant that His work ended on the sixth day, which was the day on which God wrought His greatest works (Genesis 1:24-31), pronouncing all very good. On the sixth day all the blessed life-work of our Lord terminated, but especially the work which was before Him all through - the sacrifice of Himself, the drinking of the cup - in fact, all that was accomplished for God and for man eternally in the cross; so that He could utter that victor cry, "It is finished," a divine proclamation concerning His own work that it was very good. "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I have finished the work. . . . It is finished." Thus creation-work ends on the sixth day, and redemption-work also, and everything in connection with the first man ends in death. Moreover, the Sabbath, spent by our Lord in the tomb, gives no deliverance or light or cheer. A new order of things has to be ushered in and established. Resurrection, life out of death, a death not alleviated, but which has exerted all its power, but on One who could not be holden of it, who has annulled it, who death by dying slew. That One has risen - the Lord of life, the First-begotten from the dead, the First-born of many brethren, the beginning of the creation of God. The old one so gone, no longer reckoned, but the one which succeeds is called the creation of God. It was grand to see David, after jeopardizing his life in the valley of Blab, come up triumphant, carrying the trophies of his victory. But what was that to that which we see! We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour. He did not risk His life. He, knowing all that was before Him, laid it down. He endured the cross, He drank the cup, He finished the work to the satisfaction of the God who gave it Him to do, and to His eternal glory. And when did this marvellous event, the resurrection, take place? On the first day of the week. The

new order commences on that day. Look at the account given in John 20:1-31 of "the active grace of Christ risen," as another has so happily expressed it. See Him passing from one to another, to individuals first, to comfort their hearts, to lighten their darkness; and then, at the close of it, "in the midst" of the gathered ones - gathered, not intelligently, but instinctively, as sheep huddled together at the alarm of danger, their very fears, sorrows, perplexities, together with the news of some having seen Him, drawing them together. What a meeting! Jesus in the midst. And He speaks peace to them. He spoke it before He suffered, but He has made it now by the blood of the cross, and because they are so slow to take it in He repeats it. Then saith Jesus to them again, "Peace be unto you." Then were the disciples glad. The sight and words of the risen Christ dispel their darkness and their fears. And that is our day, the Church's day, the eighth day, the morrow after the Sabbath. (Leviticus 23:1-44.)

Resurrection ushers in the new order on that day - the first day of the week; and thus we find the disciples (Acts 20:7) on that day coming together to break bread, and Paul waiting to be present. No other day would have been like it, for it is the Lord's day (Revelation 1:10); and 1 Corinthians 16:2 unmistakably confirms all this.

What grace, what favour, bestowed on us to be able still to gather on the first day of the week - the resurrection day - to remember Him, to show forth His death, He in the midst. Oh to enter into it more by the power of the Spirit, to praise, to worship, to adore! Let us watch that we are not drawn together by mere duty, or by our necessities; but rather that, as a holy priesthood, we are found offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ, seeking, according to His will and word, to prepare a place where He can have His way in a world that has rejected Him, a spot in the midst of His own where His heart will be gladdened, where He will have a portion as well as give one. "Let my Beloved come into His garden, and eat His pleasant fruits." J. G. Deck.

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