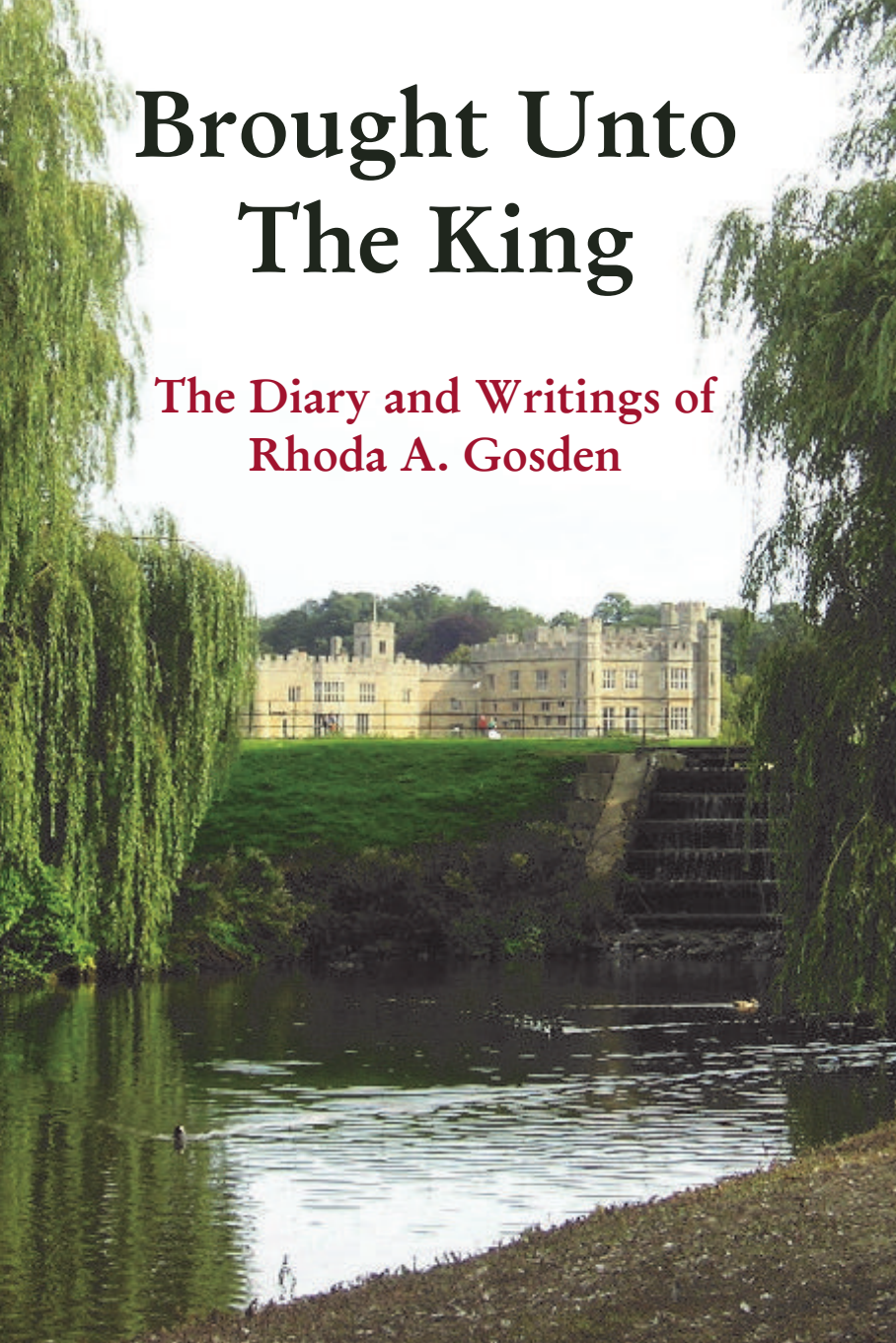


# Brought Unto The King

The Diary and Writings of  
Rhoda A. Gosden



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Rhoda A. Gosden

With a Foreword By  
Timothy J. Rosier

Edited by Matthew J. Hyde

“The king’s daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the king’s palace.” Psalm 45: 13-15.

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## Foreword

I consider it a privilege to be asked by my friend Matthew Hyde to write a foreword to the publication of Mrs. Gosden's diary. Mrs. Gosden was the beloved wife of the pastor of my childhood and youthful years. Regrettably, she only kept a spiritual diary in the years before her marriage.

The Apostle Paul, when writing to the Corinthians, declared that the manner and purpose of his preaching was, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God". The spiritually minded reader will immediately recognise that this was the effect of Mr. J. K. Popham's preaching upon the writer of this diary, Rhoda Anna Gosden (née Fenner). It would appear that the Lord quickened her into eternal life when she was about 18 years old. Four years after this she began to keep a record of the Lord's dealings with her.

When the Holy Ghost effectually works in a man's soul, it awakens him to his true state by nature, and brings him into desperate need to be reconciled to God. His poverty then begins to pinch him hard, and he begins to thirst for, and cry out to the living God for mercy. An exercise is commenced in his soul that will remain with him all his days here below. In spite of many waxings and wanings, the Divine and sweet supplier of grace, will supply him in such a way as to see him safely through his pilgrimage and into the gates of the celestial city.



The work of grace is a wonderful thing! The great God of heaven shows the greatest favour to, and performs the greatest work for a fallen son of Adam. We fallen men are naturally rebels from him and alienated in our minds toward him. The greatest favour God can show, is to bring such men down to the feet of his only begotten and well beloved son. The feet of Immanuel is surely the safest place on earth! In this diary we read again and again throughout her pilgrimage, how Mrs. Gosden was brought down as a poor beggar, lost and ruined in herself, to plead for God's appearing, and his favour toward her. She knew well the plague of her own heart, and knew much of the tempter's power as he shot his fiendish arrows at her. Although so sweetly favoured from time to time, she also knew the hidings of God's lovely face from her, together with times of spiritual declension and wanderings, as well as experiencing "the trial of her faith". In line with all the dear saints, Mrs. Gosden knew the chastening and correction of the Almighty, for she was a daughter of Zion and not a bastard, as we read in Hebrews 12: 5-11. God was her Father "which according to his abundant mercy" had "begotten" her "again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1 Peter 1: 3).

The poor travelling pilgrims who are journeying through this modern apostate world, will, I believe, find a sweet companionship with the diarist in all her expressed hopes and fears. The godly over the centuries have found spiritual kinsmen as they read the Psalms, or the expressions of the patriarchs, the prayers of the godly kings and also of the

prophets. Are not the writings of the Apostles a sweet balm to us from time to time as they come with power. The writings of men are not to be compared to the inspired canon of Scripture, for “every word of God is pure” (Proverbs 30: 5). Yet over the years the godly have found a union to the more ordinary gracious writers. So I believe the pilgrims of today will find a companionship with Mrs. Gosden. We ourselves have to lean hard upon Christ in our day, as she also had to lean hard upon Christ in the days of her pilgrimage. I judge it safe to suggest that her exercises were similar to the Psalmist in Psalm 107, or as to how Fawcett expresses the spiritual pathway in Hymn 289 in *Gadsby’s Selection*:

Thus far my God has led me on,  
And made his truth and mercy known;  
My hopes and fears alternate rise,  
And comforts mingle with my sighs.

I do hope that the dear pilgrims of today who feel their need of some sacred token of Immanuel’s love to them will be much encouraged in reading through this diary. Mrs. Gosden longed for the manifestation of Christ to her soul as she heard the faithful preaching of Mr. J. K. Popham. The day of Jubilee did come in November 1905. How faithful the Lord is to his promises to the confessing and seeking sinner. Those promises are divinely sealed by the precious blood of Jesus, and he will hear the cries of his needy people as we read in Psalm 102: 17, “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer”. In common with all the saints, Mrs. Gosden further knew conflict, trials, sins and

temptations throughout her days here below, but received more tokens of his love in “thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you an expected end” (Jeremiah 29: 11).

We can truly see from this diary that Mrs. Gosden sat under a rich and faithful gospel ministry. Mr. Popham ever sought in his preaching that the hearers might know Christ formed in their hearts – see Galatians 4: 19. His preaching was not only solemn but also the pure doctrine of Christ, and thoroughly experimental in setting forth the gracious dealings of God with his people, which surely every true child of God will know for himself. Her own husband’s (Mr. J. H. Gosden) preaching was of the same vein, with that peculiar unction and authority. What a contrast this is with the general drift in our times. In many places where the gospel was preached faithfully there is now a subtil emphasis on our response, and our obedience, and flesh begins to glory in our wonderful works for God. The Holy Spirit working in a believer brings him continually into his closet where he has to draw near to God in secret, and to pour out his heart-felt desires and griefs, and also to petition for much needed grace to be given to him. It is so today and it was so with Mrs. Gosden in her day.

The Lord’s work is the same from one century to another century. The religion of which God is the author and finisher is truly ageless. The pilgrim’s way of life through all his days is summed up well by the Psalmist, King David, in Psalm 34: 6 – “This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles”. Although we live in a modern global age in which anti-christ is fast tightening his

deadly tentacles around the human race, it is good to remember and lay to heart, that the Lord's work will go on to the end of time. The very hairs of the heads of God's dear people are all numbered, and not a hoof of them will be left behind. They all will "see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads" (Revelation 22: 4). O may we each be found among them by his rich, free and sovereign grace!

My memory of Mrs. Gosden is from my childhood and early youthful days. She was a very kindly and gentle lady, friendly, and had a ready smile. Although childless herself, she was fond of children. Mrs. Gosden was much loved and respected by the godly friends at Priory Chapel, Maidstone.

I am truly glad that Dr. Matthew Hyde wishes to publish this diary. I believe that it will be a help and an encouragement to the travelling pilgrims who are "seeking a better country, that is an heavenly" (Hebrews 11: 16). May the Lord's approbation and blessing rest upon it.

Timothy J. Rosier

Maidstone,  
March, 2012



**The Fenner Family**

(from left to right) Alice, Rhoda (later Mrs. Gosden),  
Mrs. Fenner, Emily and Mildred.

## The Diary and Writings of Rhoda A. Gosden

*Rhoda Gosden (née Fenner), was born on 29th January, 1872, at West Tarring, near Worthing, West Sussex. Her father, George Fenner, owned a shop at Worthing and built a chapel, "Hope Chapel", on land next to his shop. Of her early life, we know little. In her diary which follows we learn that she dates the first stirrings of the work of the Holy Spirit to March 1890, when she was 18 years of age.*

~~~~~

### Poetry

*The following poem written in August 1890, five months after the commencement of the work of grace in Mrs. Gosden's soul, shows her exercise in the things of God:*

#### Immutable Love

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day,  
and for ever” (Hebrews 13: 8).

JESUS the Saviour is His Name,  
His love's eternally the same.  
Though we may change, He changes not;  
His love exceeds our utmost thought.

*Rhoda Gosden*

He loved His people when they lay  
A foe to God, to sin a slave;  
No will to seek Him, or desire  
To know Him, or to love aspire.

His love then yesterday to thee  
To-day shall prove the same, for He  
Has on His breast thy name engraved;  
For whom He died, He'll surely save.

To thee He'll prove His Word is true,  
He has supplies to bring thee through;  
No power shall ever once remove  
Those whom He stands engaged to love.

His love to thee has proved the same,  
Eternally it shall remain;  
He'll give thee cause to bless that love  
That never could from thee remove.

His love shall last while life remains;  
His power and truth shall still retain  
That glorious love that here shall prove  
A foretaste of His endless love.

From: *The Friendly Companion*, 1948, p212-213.

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*A further poem, written two years later, in 1892,  
demonstrates a growing concern for eternal realities:*

**The Aspirations of a Living Soul**

Is my soul a seeking soul,  
Seeking pardon through Christ's blood?

## *Diary and Writings*

All besides cannot me bless,  
Nothing less can do me good.

Is my case a needy case,  
Jesus Christ my soul's great need?  
Yes! in Him is all I want,  
Life and happiness indeed.

Is my heart a burdened heart?  
Aye, with sin and guilt oppressed.  
Wash a guilty sinner, Lord;  
Give my troubled spirit rest.

When His Word has given me peace,  
Cheered my often-troubled heart,  
Then in Him I have found rest,  
Jesus is my better part.

All the world can e'er bestow –  
Pleasures, honour, wealth, or fame;  
These I gladly would forego,  
Choose reproach for His dear Name.

All with Jesus Christ compared,  
Is but empty, dark, and vain;  
Nothing can this world afford,  
And I count this loss my gain.

In Him then is all I want,  
For Him gladly all I'd leave,  
With Him may I dwell at last,  
To Him all the glory give.

From: *The Friendly Companion*, 1948, p241.





**Wedding group of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Gosden.**

(from left to right) Back: Mr. Clark, Mr. & Mrs. J. H. Gosden & Mr. George Fenner;

Front: Miss Grace Gosden, Mrs. & Mr. Gosden Snr, Mrs. Fenner Snr. & Miss Mildred Fenner.



**Further Wedding group of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Gosden.**

(Mr. J. K. Popham can be seen just behind Mr. J. H. Gosden, in the middle of the back row.)

## The Diary

*Of greater significance, from March 14th, 1894, we have preserved a diary in which were recorded her spiritual exercises:*

### 1894

March 14<sup>th</sup>. Four years ago this month I trust the Lord convinced me of my state as a sinner before Him, and how gently has He led me since that time! It has often tried me because I have not had those deep convictions most of the Lord's people have. For instance, my dear sister;<sup>1</sup> in her how much more powerfully has been manifest the work of grace. I would desire to be thankful for the smallest evidence that the Lord is teaching me, but how often do I fear that my religion is only natural. Oh could I clearly see that my sins are all put away by the precious, precious blood of Christ!

---

March 20<sup>th</sup>. The Lord has granted me many mercies in providence, and yet because one thing was not just as I wanted I have been so ungrateful. I believe the Lord showed me a little of my sin this afternoon, so that I felt obliged to confess and ask Him not to deal with me as I so justly

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<sup>1</sup> Probably a reference to her sister Mildred (1874-1952), who was baptised at Galeed Chapel, Brighton, in October, 1902.

## *Diary and Writings*

deserve. I am afraid I am sinking into a dead worldly state again. How I dread such apathy! How well I have felt this verse express my feelings:

My heart by nature is a stone,  
And unconcerned can look upon,  
Eternal misery;  
Feels no affection for the Lord,  
Takes no impression from His Word,  
But lumpish is and dry.

(*Gadsby's* 905)

I am persuaded the Lord alone can give me repentance.  
Oh that He would grant me it, for His mercy's sake!

---

May, 1894. Was much encouraged in hearing Mr. Popham speaking of tokens for good the Lord's people receive. I felt I had experienced some of these; and then he remarked that He gives none of these things to a person out of Christ; if so He would deny Himself.

---

July. A remark I heard recently seemed to come to me personally. It was this: "I am either before God in the righteousness of His Son, or before Him in all my own depravity". It must be one or the other. Oh that the Lord would speak powerfully to my heart, that I might know I am under His gracious teaching! Was disappointed last evening, as Mr. Popham was unwell and unable to preach. I thought perhaps I look too much to the ministry, and not so much to

*Rhoda Gosden*

the Lord for His own teaching as I ought. O Lord, do make me right in this matter! Teach me and cause me rightly to esteem Thy servant, but make Thyself chief in my affections. Cast out every rival, and reveal Thyself as all my desire.

---

August. "And some fell upon a rock, and as soon as it sprung up it withered away because it lacked moisture" (Luke 8: 6). This does seem so like my case. How hard my heart is! I do feel the need of that gracious Spirit's reviving. I am so barren. One remark lately was encouraging: "When the Lord shows a person a lack, it is that He will make up that lack". Oh then, blessed Spirit do come! Thou hast shown me my own helplessness; do reveal the Lord Jesus in all His suitability to my soul. His precious blood applied to my soul would break my rocky heart in a moment.

---

September. I have had such dreadful fears about my soul. I cannot get what I want. Oh if I should never realize what I am seeking after! I feel so afraid that I am deceived. The word struck me so solemnly: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked" (Galatians 6: 7). Oh that He would undeceive me if I am wrong, and make me right! Sometimes I feel so concerned about my soul state, and then it surprises me how little a thing will carry me away, and I seem as unconcerned as ever. Whatever it costs me, Oh may the Lord make me right!

## *Diary and Writings*

Lord, deny me what Thou wilt,  
Only ease me of my guilt.  
Suppliant at Thy feet I lie;  
Give me Christ, or else I die.

*(Gadsby's 737)*

---

October 31<sup>st</sup>. A circumstance in providence has so tried me. Oh that I could cast my burden upon the Lord! Sometimes I have felt that I could not live without prayer. How often the Lord has answered my petitions! In providential matters I mean; for I have never had that clear answer for my soul, that testimony that the Saviour shed His precious blood for my sins. O Lord, do keep me waiting for Thee! May the desires in my heart (I have at times) prove to be of Thine own begetting.

By nature prone to ill,  
Till Thy appointed hour,  
I was as destitute of will  
As now I am of power.

*(Gadsby's 278)*

But I have a strong hope at times in my soul that the Lord has done that for my soul for which I shall praise Him for ever and ever.

---

November. Am tried at times about writing thus my thoughts. It has seemed a relief even to write my troubles; for I have felt unwilling to speak of them to any person. Have felt so worldly lately, and even worse; I have feared

*Rhoda Gosden*

that my case was like the unclean spirit going out of a man and returning again (Luke 11: 26). Mr. P. spoke my heart's desire in prayer last evening: "That the Lord would teach us distinct things distinctly". For I seem in a confused state, not one thing clear. O Lord, Thy work alone in my heart can do me any real good, and without this I cannot be satisfied!

---

December 3<sup>rd</sup>. I have been thankful lately for the least movement Godward. The last few days I have had such strong desires wrought in my heart for a revelation of Jesus Christ and His great salvation. These changes from my heart come suddenly, and oh how soon gone! Is the Holy Spirit prompting me to secret prayer, as Mr. Hart so beautifully expresses it? (*Gadsby's* 237) If indeed it is so, I must have an answer in God's good time, because He maketh intercession according to the will of God. But oh my sins, my dreadful sins!

Can blood such horrid crimes atone?

Yes, blood so rich as Thine!

(*Gadsby's* 860)

I have felt lately how perfectly just the Lord would be in sending me to hell, and that He would be glorified in my damnation. Shall I ever glorify Him for my salvation? Oh to know I am one for whom He bore the wrath due to their sins! Lord, do tell me Thy dreadful sufferings were for me. Oh break my heart with a sense of Thy rich mercy!

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## *Diary and Writings*

1895

January, 1895. I want to tell my book what has troubled me so lately. No one knows my trouble but the Lord. One night especially I felt sure I had committed the unpardonable sin, that I had sinned beyond the reach of mercy; for I had written to my minister what I thought at the time was the Holy Spirit's work in my heart, and now it was suggested this was blasphemy against the Holy Ghost in speaking of His work, of which I really had not been a partaker. This word relieved me a little: "Thy enemies shall be found liars unto thee" (Deuteronomy 32: 29). Then dreadful thoughts came, that if I had not already committed this sin, I should be left to do so. These temptations seem too powerful for me. I want the Lord to come and make the matter plain. Oh that He would convince me that my sins which are many are all forgiven! His Word alone can satisfy my soul.

---

January 28<sup>th</sup>. Was a little relieved yesterday reading 1 John 3: 20: "If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and knoweth all things". Yes, He knows whence these dreadful temptations spring; for even in reading God's Word, such thoughts rush in upon the mind to make me feel I cannot read any more. I was much encouraged in reading Mr. Bourne<sup>2</sup>. He speaks of similar fears and temptations, and

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<sup>2</sup> James Bourne (1773-1854), Huntingtonian minister at Maney Chapel, Sutton Coldfield. See: *Life and Letters of James Bourne* (2008) Gospel Standard Trust Publications, Harpenden, UK.



*Rhoda Gosden*

the Lord graciously delivered him. But oh if I could but feel more godly sorrow! The dreadful impenitence and hardness I feel, I cannot tell anyone. One minute I feel I can never be happy and cheerful again unless the Lord Himself blesses me, and then (oh how sad to tell!) I am as unconcerned as ever. There surely never was a case just like mine. Yet I am sure of this: the balm of Gilead, the precious blood of Christ, would make all matters right at once. Oh to feel peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!

---

February 12<sup>th</sup>. Was very discouraged because I felt so little in hearing Mr. Popham from: “God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Galatians 6: 14). I think sometimes the Lord has taught me that without Him I can do nothing. Often in prayer I have asked Him to deepen the work (if indeed it is begun). Hymn 295 (*Gadsby’s*) strikes me as so like my case. I suppose I thought if the Lord answered this prayer, I “should more of His salvation know and seek more earnestly His face”. But oh,

Instead of this He makes me feel  
The hidden evils of my heart,  
And lets the angry powers of hell  
Assault my soul in every part!

(*Gadsby’s* 295)

Yet as this is the Lord’s way of bringing His people to seek their all in Him, may I be enabled to wait patiently for Him.

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## *Diary and Writings*

April 12<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Popham spoke of several things people might feel without ever being saved, such as a natural feeling of being a sinner, and even terrors of the wrath of God. But one thing (he said) you can never feel without being saved, and that is a sense of forgiveness of sins. This last I have never had, and certain things I have felt seem now to be but presumption. I care not what I suffer if the Lord will but make me right. Oh the mercy of being a saved soul!

---

April 30<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Popham spoke from Acts 24: 16. He said one can only feel a conscience void of offence toward God by having the blood of Christ applied to the conscience by the Holy Ghost. The Apostle also wanted this toward men. The grace of God (he said) exercised people to walk well before men, to bring no reproach upon the truth they profess. Oh may my walk and conduct be consistent! I would be rightly exercised in this matter, and look to the Lord from whom all good works proceed. Mr. Popham said this would never give one a better title for heaven; the dying thief had as good a title as the Apostle Paul.

---

May 13<sup>th</sup>. I know I have never had such terrors of the wrath of God against sin as some, and I am discouraged on this account. Oh may the Lord teach me all that is needful for my soul's salvation! I would rather know the worst of my case than be deceived. Oh that He would teach me more deeply my need of Christ!

---

## *Rhoda Gosden*

May 22<sup>nd</sup>. A circumstance to-day has so tried me and has even weakened my body, causing me to feel it may but be a short time these temporal matters will be of any moment with me; then comes the thought of my immortal soul. O Lord, make this my chief concern! Oh witness with my heart that I am Thine, and take me at last to dwell with Thee for ever!

---

July 28<sup>th</sup>. Have hoped the way might be made to sit under Mr. Popham's ministry, and thought I cannot give up my desire for this. I hope the Lord is teaching me to look to Him alone from whom help must come. This line has followed me:

What sinners value, I resign;  
Lord, 'tis enough if Thou art mine.

*(Gadsby's 473)*

For a while I felt I could be satisfied with anything, could I but know indeed that God was mine and I was His. But how soon my heart runs away from all that is good! My nature is indeed of the earth, earthy. O Lord do come and set up Thy kingdom in my heart, and bring all my will into subjection to Thine!

Oh crucify this self, that I  
No more, but Christ in me, may live!

*(Gadsby's 1075)*

## *Diary and Writings*

October 15<sup>th</sup>. I cannot bear to have to write the same thing again! Oh will it be always thus? My heart seems to have wandered far from the Lord. Truly I feel as though He said of me: “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone” (Hosea 4: 17). Because things have not been so prosperous as I thought they should be, the dreadful base ingratitude of my heart rose to such a pitch that I feared the hand of God would go out against me. I think this is my besetting sin – over anxiousness. The cares of this life I fear often choke the word. O Lord, do come and make me truly a child of Thine, heal my backslidings; bring me to Thy feet with weeping and supplications! Enable me to press hard after Thee. Let nothing fill the aching void in my heart but Thyself.

---

December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Lord has been pleased to send some very trying things lately in His all-wise providence. My dear sister’s affliction and my brother’s case have pressed me down. Oh that the Lord would change his heart! Mr. Popham was speaking recently of how the Lord often uses afflictions to bring His people nearer to Himself. He remarked that sanctified afflictions are immeasurably better than unsanctified prosperity. Then may I see the Lord’s hand in His dealings with us. I often feel I need many trials and cutting dispensations to bring me to the place I have desired – the person to whom the Lord looks and with whom He will dwell, even him of a poor and contrite spirit and who trembleth at His word. I do so covet this effect of the true grace of God – a sober spirit.

---

1896

September 25<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Popham often contends for a personal particular manifestation of Christ to the soul. He spoke truly of how He brings His people into the dust and makes them feel truly lost in themselves, before He reveals Christ to the soul. I feel certain I have not been brought down low enough for Christ to reveal Himself to me. I feel, as Philpot says: “I want power to sink”<sup>3</sup>. Mr. Popham said: “If the Lord has spoken any word to your soul, give Him no rest until He makes that particular word good in your experience”. This word seemed to encourage me; they came with some power a few months ago: “The vision is for an appointed time...though it tarry, wait for it” Habakkuk 2: 3). These words seemed almost on my lips: “Lord, Thou art good to them that wait for Thee!”

---

December 31<sup>st</sup>. I must record an encouragement in hearing. Mr. Popham’s text was: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Luke 12: 34 or Matthew 6: 21). He spoke of the intense desires the Lord gives His people for Himself; how nothing can satisfy the immortal appetite

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<sup>3</sup> See: sermon preached on Isaiah 40: 29-31, at Zoar Chapel, London, on July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1845, by J. C. Philpot (Sermon number 77 in *Zoar Chapel Pulpit*, or number 39 in *Sermons by J. C. Philpot* (A. J. Watts/Gospel Standard Trust Publications Ed.) Philpot is actually quoting William Gadsby.

## *Diary and Writings*

of a living soul, but Jesus Christ revealed. He seemed to speak exactly as I have felt lately and said: "If I have such a case here, you go on in this way as well as you can. The time will come when the Lord will say: 'Be it unto thee even as thou wilt' (Matthew 15: 28)." One remark he made has tried me: "If you have no revelation of Christ in your soul in this life, you will never have it, and it will then be manifest that you never really prayed for it." Laying awake, the thought quite overwhelmed me, that I may perhaps *never know* this precious Christ as my Saviour. This seems to me the most dreadful punishment, and I thought if the Lord sends me to that place where hope can never come, I should want to love Him there; for I can say I have seen a beauty in Him that I should much desire Him. Yes, I feel nothing will satisfy my soul but Himself. And will He deny me?

Mr. S. remarked that Ephraim did not say: "After I turned myself", but "after that I *was* turned" (Jeremiah 31: 19); implying his inability to repent of himself without the Lord's gracious power, as it is written: "Him hath God exalted to *give* repentance" (Acts 5: 31). How glad I have felt of this word at times! I think I have made a great mistake in this matter, thinking that repentance was a condition of salvation, whereas I feel it must be as much the Lord's own gift as a knowledge of His salvation. How often I have wished I could claim as my own the words of Isaiah 12: 3: "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation". "The joy of salvation, when shall it be mine?" (*Gadsby's* 262)

1897

August 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. P. seemed exactly to tell out the feelings of my soul (on Peter 5: 7), which helped me greatly; but when he came to speak of the concern a living soul had respecting this all-important matter, I felt I have never been exercised deeply enough. He said: "What is the concern of a large business compared with the interest of an immortal soul?"

---

September 16<sup>th</sup>. A circumstance occurred this week which made me look back on my past life in a way I have never exactly done before. I recollected the time when I hated the truth of God, and His people for the life of God they possessed and manifested in their lives. How thoroughly determined I was that I would never be like these people, whom I so despised. Yet I kept most of these bitter things to myself. But oh how has this word pierced me! "Whose hatred is covered by deceit; his wickedness shall be showed before the whole congregation" (Proverbs 26:26). Once in particular when my dear Father was reading a hymn of Berridge's, oh the hatred I felt rise in my heart against the writer of that hymn, and my Father for reading it! And I have never felt my sins forgiven. O Lord, do manifest Thyself to my soul as my sin-pardoning God and Saviour! Do let me know that my sins which are many are all forgiven! I feel if they are never forgiven, hell will be my deserved, but dread abode. In looking back I could remember the day and the place where a solemn conviction

## *Diary and Writings*

entered my soul that there was a holy God, and I was a guilty sinner in His sight. The thought that came into my mind was: "If I live and die in the state I am now in, where God is I never can be." Sometimes I have hoped the Lord began His work in my heart at this time; then again I fear it was never begun at all, because I feel so little real sorrow for my sins. O Lord! Thou knowest.

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December 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. P. spoke very searchingly from Revelation 3: 21, and said: "The warfare of a true Christian is no drawn battle. He must either overcome or be defeated". True religion is no easy thing, and he feared many people come very near to the word: "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion" (Amos 6: 1). Also how one may be as much lost in religious generalities, as lost in the vanities of the world. One thing he said I hope does not quite apply to me: "They seem to have no aim, only fighting uncertainly and beating the air". I do hope at times I have a distinct aim. Ah sometimes *I do know what I want*, what my soul is after – a revelation to my soul of the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation! Oh may the Lord give me that faith Mr. Hart speaks of: "...a fixed and constant faith, Jesus Christ to keep in view" (*Gadsby's* 796), to press through all to reach Him, though victory often "hangs in doubtful scale"! What a conflict it is!

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1898

This year has opened with a dark trial. The prayer of Jehoshaphat has expressed the feelings of my heart: "We have no might against this great company, neither know we what to do; but our eyes are up unto Thee, O Lord" (2 Chronicles 20: 12). This word seemed to look at me last night: "Hast thou not procured these things unto thyself?" (cf. Jeremiah 2: 17)

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July 10<sup>th</sup>. Oh the bitter grief I have felt at the loss of my dear, dear Father! I cannot feel that spirit of true submission to that divine will which willed away from me my dear parent. Also I have so much to regret that the last few weeks of his life should have been under such trying circumstances. I suppose I wanted him to have a smooth path to glory, when the Lord willed that it should be through much tribulation he should enter the kingdom. Oh that I could hear the Lord's voice in this sad and heavy trial! I have thought much of what a friend said recently: "Afflictions do not leave people as they find them". May it be mine to prove, "bettered by the cross".

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August 8<sup>th</sup>. I cannot tell how sweet these words seemed for a few moments:

Sinners in corruption's pit,  
Know they greatly need Him;

## *Diary and Writings*

He and He alone is fit,  
From it to relieve them.

(*Gadsby's* 574)

Oh I do hope the Lord Jesus has not been to my soul as a “root out of a dry ground, having neither form nor comeliness” (Isaiah 53: 2)! No, I hope I have felt Him to be the one thing needful.

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September 9<sup>th</sup>. This word has made me tremble: “Who concerning faith have made shipwreck” (1 Timothy 1: 19). But when Mr. P. was speaking from John 6: 67 and said: “Will you go away from the Fountain?” Oh, I thought, this is the very thing that I want! Fountain? Yes, I want the Lord to “put me in with His own hands, and that will make me well”. This, this is the remedy for sin’s guilt and filth, but what will it do for me unapplied? Oh to feel the atonement! The best part of the service to me seemed the hymn: “Christ is the Friend of sinners” (*Gadsby's* 806). This has been a little encouraging during the week, but what is this to me unless revealed to my heart as for *me*? Lord, do say unto my soul: “I am thy salvation” (Psalm 35: 3). Oh let me never rest until I am assured Thou art my Friend (Proverbs 6: 3)! I do not seem to have one earthly friend to whom I can tell my griefs; not one seems to understand me.

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October. In speaking from Matthew 5: 4, Mr. P. mentioned many things I have felt; but he said rebbrates

*Rhoda Gosden*

have conviction of sin. It is not the sense of sin only that can save the soul (though the malady must be felt). It is the divine application of the Remedy that proves one to be taught of the Spirit. Mr. P. so earnestly contends for a knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of sins. Oh the many fears I have that I shall never receive this! It is what I want and the aim of my spirit (at times); then again I seem shut up in hard grief, and can find no outlet for the misery I feel. I often go down on my knees and try to pray and get up and say: "It is no use. I cannot pray". Oh the sinfulness of my prayers! Oh my sinful inability! I have wished I had not an immortal soul. Oh the dreadful dismay I have felt at the thought of leaving this world with a naked immortality! But oh to have (as Mr. P. once said) an immortality clothed with eternal life! I have to keep my misery pent up in my own heart, for I do not want my friends to know my trouble. Even in my dreams it has pressed heavily upon me. Yesterday Hart's words seemed to speak what I felt I wanted:

What is it to be blest indeed,  
But to have all our sins forgiven;  
To be from guilt and terror freed,  
Redeemed from hell and sealed for heaven?

*(Gadsby's 790)*

Oh this is the very thing I want!

Shall I seek but seek in vain?  
Shall I ask and not obtain?

*(Gadsby's 964)*

## *Diary and Writings*

October 16<sup>th</sup>. I thought yesterday I received a mark of the Lord's having a favour to me. My heart heaved out a wish or two (I hope) to the Lord, and He granted me my unexpressed desire. But oh that He would send me distinct answers *about my soul!* Ah! "My heart misgives me oft" about this matter,

...And conscience storms within;  
But one sweet smile from Thee,  
At once would make me clean.  
If Thou art mine all will be well  
And why not so? For who can tell?

(*Gadsby's* 947)

Lord, deny me what Thou wilt in Thy holy providence,  
but deny me not Thyself.

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November 20<sup>th</sup>. Much tried about my own case and that of several others who attend the preaching; so many I fear seem satisfied with a mere profession of the truth. Laying awake, this word sank me in spirit exceedingly: "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in but shall not be able" (Luke 13: 24). Oh the many fears I have of being deceived about my soul, lest I should sink at last into that place where hope can never come, professing the truth yet destitute of its power in my soul! Mr. P. spoke recently of the forgiveness of sins, how freely it comes, and how passive the receiver of it is; though the effects of it are not passive. Oh may I know this in my very soul as a divine reality! Be this religion mine!

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