

**PLAIN SERMONS ON  
SOME QUESTIONS  
IN HOLY SCRIPTURE**

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Plain Sermons on Some Questions in Holy Scripture by C. P. Longland

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**C. P. LONGLAND**

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# PLAIN SERMONS

ON

Some Questions in Holy Scripture.



BY THE

REV. C. P. LONGLAND,

*Curate of Trinity, Greys, Oxon,*

AND

*Chaplain of The Union, Henley-on-Thames.*

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## PREFACE.

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THESE Sermons, which have been used in the ordinary course of ministerial duties, are now published with the hope that God may make them instrumental for good.

*August, 1867.*

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## SERMON I.

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*"Whither goest thou?"*—GEN. XXXII. part 17.

THE question which is asked in our text, is a question which Jacob, on his return from his long sojourn of twenty years at Padan-Aram, supposed would be asked of his servants as they met with his brother Esau. Jacob had, as we all know, deceived in former years his father Isaac, and by that deceit gained the blessing which of right belonged unto Esau, his elder brother. This deceit of Jacob had called up in the mind of Esau deep hatred, and a determination to slay his brother. On account of this Jacob fled from his father's home, and sojourned for twenty years at Padan-Aram, with his mother's brother Laban.

At the end of the twenty years Jacob resolved to return to his father Isaac. As he was returning, he was informed that Esau his brother was coming to meet him with four



hundred men. These tidings were brought to him by the messengers whom he had sent to Esau, to entreat him that he "might find grace" in his sight.

Through these tidings, as he knew not the mind of Esau towards him, "Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." In order to conciliate Esau, with the hope of gaining his brother's kindness and forgiveness, he sent on before him a present of goats and sheep, of camels and kine, of bulls and asses; "And he said unto his servants, Pass over before me, and put a space betwixt drove and drove. And he commanded the foremost, saying, When Esau my brother meeteth thee, saying, Whose art thou? And whither goest thou? And whose are these before thee? Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's: it is a present sent unto my lord Esau: and behold also he is behind us."

It is to this the question in the text first referred. But I do not mean to use the question any further with regard to Esau, and to Jacob, and to the servants of Jacob.

I have another use for the question. It is one of those every-day questions which men ask of their fellow-men; and which, as they

ask them, have nothing more in them than some passing inquiry of the earth. Still, they are questions which may be used to ask the most serious things connected with eternity.

“Whither goest thou?” Simple question enough is this, if only our thoughts have respect to this present world. For then it simply means, To what place are you now directing your steps?

But most serious of all questions is it, if in the thought of another world, and of the life of that world, we ask of our own souls, or ask of our neighbours’, “Whither goest thou?” i.e., “To what home art thou drawing nigh? To what life art thou hastening, when this life shall close, and this world cease to be thy home?”

It is in this way that I purpose to use the question. With the thought of eternity, I would ask of my own, and of your souls, Brethren, “Whither goest thou?” “Whither goest thou?” For, Brethren, we cannot possibly be ignorant of this truth, that each one of us is ever journeying on; is ever moving, as it were, like a pilgrim, onwards through Time to something beyond Time; is ever living on the earth a life which, so far as

the body is concerned, is a life that daily hastens to its close. Each one of us must feel, must know, must own this.

Come, let us think awhile on this.

Once we were, each one of us, the infant of a day old. Our infancy soon passed away. And, lo, we were children, by whom the pleasures, and the sorrows; the hopes and the fears; the right and the wrong-doing of this life began to be things felt, and known, and done, and grieved over, or rejoiced over.

But how soon did our childhood pass away! How soon did our youth give place to our manhood in its strength! And we, as men and women, rejoiced in our strength, and found many things which, at least, seemed to be pleasures, even though we knew also many things that brought us much abiding sorrow.

And now, with many of us, the strength of manhood is passing away. The hopes which once we had are laid aside; and in many ways we have found that life, mere earthly life, passes away as a thing of vanity.

By some, too, amongst us, the last stage of life has been reached, and its weakness is felt. Strength is gone. Feebleness and tottering steps are known and felt. Nearer and nearer