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STORY
OF
LITTLE TUKARAM.

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STORY

OF

LITTLE TUKARAM.

In the valley of the river Godavari, there lived a little boy called Tukaram. His father and mother were dead ; and they left him to a poor widow, who took pity on him, and called him her son. This woman was a devotee. She spent her time in visiting what are called " holy places," praying to a great many idols, and living by begging. Little Tukaram went about the country with this woman, whom he was taught to call his mother.

A missionary one day met Tukaram, and asked him to come to his school. That pleased the little

fellow very much ; for he had found out that it was a very good thing to be able to read. So, early the next day, with a piece of bread on his head, for it was some distance, he started off for the school. On his way he came to the bank of a river, where he saw many people, who seemed to be in great trouble.

What was the matter ? Had somebody that could not swim fallen in ? Was any body drowned ? The river was swollen by a night's rain, and was very high. Something had fallen into the stream. It was an idol-god, which stood on the rivers bank, that had tumbled in, and it could not swim, any better than a stone ; so the people of the village had turned out to fish it up. They had got a rope round its neck,

and were pulling and shouting with all their might. They could not save it any more than it could save them. They must leave it to its fate, or wait till the water went down, and then drag it out with oxen.

Little Tukaram stopped and looked at this strange sight with wonder. He then stripped off his clothes, piled them on his head, plunged boldly into the stream, and swam to the other side, where the missionary's school was. How much more power he had in the water than the god ! The little stranger was kindly welcomed at the school. After his bashfulness wore off, and he became acquainted with the scholars, he told them about the drowned god.

“ Oh,” said the little boys at school, “ it is not a god ; it is an

idol. It is a made god. It has eyes, but it sees not ; it has ears, but it hears not ; it has a mouth, but it speaks not ; it knows nothing, and it cannot help those who pray to it any better than it can help itself. It is a *dead* god. It is not *our* God ; our God is the *living* God.

“ Who is your God ? ” asked little Tukaram.

“ Jehovah,” answered the children, “ who is the Maker and father of us all.”

“ Where does He live ? ” asked Tukaram.

“ He is a spirit,” answered the children. “ He lives everywhere, He sees everybody, He knows everything.”

Little Tukaram was filled with wonder. A drowned god did not indeed seem like a god to worship

and pray to. His poor little head was full of painful and puzzling thoughts; but a great new thought was lodged there—the thought of a *living* God, instead of the dead god, the idols of stone and brass which he had before bowed down to.

Then he learned that God so loved this world, that He sent His dear son Jesus Christ to save us from our sins. Jesus Christ was born as a little child by the power of God. When He grew up, He went about teaching, showing by His wonderful works, as healing the sick by a word and raising the dead, that He was the Son of God. He lived a life of spotless holiness, and kept all Gods laws which we had broken. Wicked men hated Him, and put Him to death by nailing His

hands and feet to a cross of wood. Jesus Christ allowed them to do this, although He had all power, because He came into this world to die for us that we might through Him obtain everlasting life. On the third day, Jesus Christ rose from the dead, and afterwards went up to heaven, where He is now in glory, ready to hear all who call on Him.

Tukaram soon tore the beads from his neck, and said he would be a Christian. After this time he prayed to God, and the Holy Spirit gave light to his mind, and grace to his heart; so that he became a true believer in God and His Son Jesus Christ.

By and by, his adopted mother heard of it, and came to the school. She was very angry at the change she saw in the boy,

and determined to take him away from school. But the loving spirit of the missionary and the Christians quite overcame her. What she saw and heard had a strange effect upon her. She said to herself, "It is my little boy, and yet it is not he," Christian Tukaram was not the heathen Tukaram. She stayed to hear more. The Holy Spirit opened her blinded eyes to see the truth; and at last she found, through faith in Jesus Christ, the peace and joy she had been long seeking for among the idols of her own land, and which she had never obtained. The burden of her sins was rolled away, and a sense of pardon filled her new happy soul.

Some months after this, Tukaram and his mother stood up,

with five others, in a small Christian church in India, and publicly professed their faith in Jesus Christ.

My friend, do you bow down to idols that cannot see or hear, or do you worship the one true God, the great Creator of heaven and earth? Have you ever felt that you are a sinner, so stained with sin as to be quite unfit to enter heaven? Have you taken refuge in Jesus Christ the only Saviour? Have you asked God to cleanse your heart by His Holy Spirit?

Humbly kneeling before God, accept Jesus as your Saviour, seek by the Holy Spirit to lead a new life, and endless happiness will be yours.



MORNING PRAYER.

O Lord, I thank thee for taking care of me the past night. Forgive all my sins for the sake of Jesus Christ, and may thy Holy Spirit create in me a clean heart. Watch over me this day, and keep me from all sin. Make all men know thee and love thee. Hear my prayer for the sake of Jesus Christ. Amen.

EVENING PRAYER.

O Lord, look down on me this night. Forgive for Christ's sake, whatever I have done wrong, and may thy Holy Spirit make me holy. Bless my friends, and have mercy upon all men. Take care of me this night; and when I die, let my soul go to be with thee for ever. I ask all in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

