

world, our faith' (1 John 5, 4). Now we know that faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, and these are the spiritual and eternal goods which make us despise all that is merely carnal and transitory.

And the second way in which Christ has overcome the world is this. He cast forth the prince of this world. 'Now shall the prince of this world be cast out' (John 12, 31). 'Despoiling the principalities and powers, he hath exposed them confidently in open shew, triumphing over them in himself' (Col. 2, 15). So in the strength of Christ's victory man is able to defeat the devil. 'Shalt thou play with him as with a bird or tie him up for thy handmaid?' (Job 40, 24). We can take this to mean that since the passion of our Lord, even young Christian maidens and little children have scorned and derided the devil.

Lastly, Christ converted men to himself. And this is the third way in which he overcame the world. The world actually rebelled against its Saviour, but Christ drew all to himself. 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself' (John 12, 32). 'Behold the whole world is gone after him' (John 12, 19).

Let us then never fear tribulations, because Christ himself has come forth victorious. 'But thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Cor. 15, 37).



## OF NEED IN TIME OF WAR

### MECHTHILD OF MAGDEBURG

**I** WAS commanded to pray very earnestly for the need there now is in Saxony and Thuringia. As I gave myself to prayer with praise and longing, our Lord would not receive me but kept solemn silence. I had to endure that for seventeen days in patient waiting. Then I said: 'Ah, dear Lord! when will the appointed hour come when Thou wilt that I pray for this need?' Then He appeared to me and said:

'Those who now suffer grievous need  
 Are like the early promise of the dawn  
 In its first flush of beauty—  
 But the sun of everlasting light  
 Shall rise for them  
 And bring them everlasting joy after this need.  
 Thereby shall they be sanctified  
 And illumined as the sun  
 When it reaches its zenith  
 And rides high in the sky.

Some there are in this army  
 Now in need and fear  
 Whom I allow to be captured and slain  
 That they may come to Me.

Those who caused the war  
 Are evil in themselves  
 And dreadful in their works.  
 When they even dared to take sacred things  
 From My Churches,  
 I knew that everlasting death must follow.  
 Those who rob in the streets  
 Would be robbers and evil men  
 Even were there no war;  
 But thus the wicked  
 Make the blessed good!  
 Therefore must God love His own in suffering  
 If He can win them no other way.<sup>1</sup>

Thus He spoke to me of the devout. When the war will  
 end I know not. But I know I must still welcome the friends  
 of God with delight: I also know that whatsoever they suffer  
 God will never forsake them for He is their help and com-  
 fort in every need. Therefore we must fight and suffer gladly  
 that later we may shine before Him.

(From *The Revelations of Mechthild of Magdeburg*,  
 translated by Lucy Menzies. Longmans. p. 229.)<sup>1</sup>

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