**THE EAGLE LIFE - STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT BY JOHN H. JOWETT**

**06. KEEPING IN TUNE by JOHN H. JOWET**

*"Thou shalt talk of them when thou walkest by the way."*

*Deuteronomy 6:7*

He was not to be satisfied with stated and formal times of meditation when his mind was to reverently consider the law of the Lord. He was to use his own moments in quest of the divine treasure, and he was to nourish the divine communion in his ordinary converse as he walked along the way. He was not only to consecrate the larger seasons, when he would tune his instrument, he was to give it devoted attention whenever his circumstances provided an opening. And that, I think, is most needed counsel in the culture of the soul. We not only need the prolonged times of praise, but also the short swallow-flights of song. We want the leisurely communion, but we also want the sharp ejaculation which expresses itself in a single word. We need the long gaze at our Lord, and we need the frequent glance.

I have been told that Mr. Chase, the great American artist who recently passed to his rest, was in the habit of carrying about in his pocket small objects which he enjoyed looking at -- an exquisite ring or some rarely attractive curiosity. He had his long seasons of studious contemplation of the loveliness that he yearned to capture in line and colour. But he had also moments of gazing when he turned his eyes on some beautiful thing. And we may follow his plan in the deepest things of the spirit. We can carry a divine signet ring about with us. We can carry with us through the day some great word of glorious revelation, and at odd moments we can bring it out and look into the depths of its eternal beauty. What is to prevent the busiest among us having some rich promise of grace which we can bring out and look at as we walk by the way? Perhaps we depend too much on the large and formal occasions, and we undervalue the ordinary times which stretch between these more dignified seasons, and which might be broken up into short and occasional glances at the treasures of the King. There are things we can ponder as we bow in the Temple; there are lovely things we can look at as we go along the road. Every literary student knows how much it helps in the acquisition and retention of a strong and sensitive English style to have a few great classical passages in the memory to which we can turn again and again, and so keep his own instincts and powers in tune with the orderly march and music of the masters. And so it is with the great styles of the soul, the grand manners of living, the revealed glory of the accepted children of God. Cannot we carry a little of their style with us? Cannot we snatch a glance at them as we go along the road? Cannot we sing a bit of one of their songs? Yes, we can do all this, and there will come a little rift in our grey sky and a beam of the eternal light will stream upon our way and transform a commonplace road into the highway of our God.