

Faith's Checkbook - Oct-Dec

365 devotionals by C H Spurgeon centering on the promises of Jehovah, the Covenant Keeping God. Search this page by depressing the "**Ctrl**" (Control) key (bottom row, far left of keyboard) and the letter "**F**" to bring up the "**Find**" box. Enter a word or phrase and click "**Find Next**". Remember that with any commentary you would be well advised first spend time studying the passage in context (**Click** to read Spurgeon's miraculous personal testimony)

FAITH'S CHECKBOOK

October-December

C H Spurgeon

Part 1	January - March
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Oct 1

A Covenant He Remembers

"He hath given meat unto them that fear Him: He will ever be mindful of His Covenant" (Psalm 111:5).

Those who fear God need not fear want. Through all these long years the LORD has always found meat for His own children, whether they have been in the wilderness, or by the brook Cherith, or in captivity, or in the midst of famine. Hitherto the LORD has given us day by day our daily bread, and we doubt not that He will continue to feed us till we want no more. As to the higher and greater blessings of the covenant of grace, He will never cease to supply them as our case demands. He is mindful that He made the covenant and never acts as if He regretted it. He is mindful of it when we provoke Him to destroy us. He is mindful to love us, keep us, and comfort us, even as He engaged to do. He is mindful of every jot and tittle of His engagements, never suffering one of His words to fall to the ground. We are sadly unmindful of our God, but He is graciously mindful of us. He cannot forget His Son who is the surety of the covenant, nor His Holy Spirit who actively carries out the covenant, nor His own honor, which is bound up with the covenant. Hence the foundation of God standeth sure, and no believer shall lose his divine inheritance, which is his by a covenant of salt (**See Trumbull's [Covenant of Salt](#)**).

Oct 2

Comfort En Route Home

"And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which He swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob" (Genesis 50:24).

Joseph had been an incarnate providence to his brethren. All our Josephs die, and a thousand comforts die with them. Egypt was never the same to Israel after Joseph was dead, nor can the world again be to some of us what it was when our beloved ones were alive. But see how the pain of that sad death was alleviated! They had a promise that the living God would visit them. A visit from Jehovah! What a favor! What a consolation! What a heaven below! O LORD, visit us this day; though indeed we are not worthy that Thou shouldest come under our roof. But more was promised: the LORD would bring them out. They would find in Egypt a cold welcome when Joseph was dead; nay, it would become to them a house of bondage. But it was not to be so forever; they would come out of it by a divine deliverance and march to the land of promise. We shall not weep here forever. We shall be called home to the gloryland to join our dear ones. Wherefore, "comfort one another with these words."

Oct 3

Reflections of the LORD's Beauty

"As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness" (Psalm 17:15).

The portion of other men fills their bodies and enriches their children, but the portion of the believer is of another sort. Men of the

world have their treasure in this world, but men of the world to come look higher and further. Our possession is twofold. We have God's presence here and His like-ness hereafter. Here we behold the face of the LORD in righteousness, for we are justified in Christ Jesus. Oh, the joy of beholding the face of a reconciled God! The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ yields us heaven below, and it will be to us the heaven of heaven above. But seeing does not end it: we are to be changed into that which we gaze upon. We shall sleep a while and then wake up to find ourselves as mirrors which reflect the beauties of our LORD. Faith sees God with a transforming look. The heart receives the image of Jesus into its own depths, till the character of Jesus is imprinted on the soul. This is satisfaction. To see God and to be like Him--what more can I desire? David's assured confidence is here by the Holy Ghost made to be the LORD's promise. I believe it. I expect it. LORD, vouchsafe it. Amen.

Oct 4

The Mighty Magnet

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Me" (John 12:32).

Come, ye workers, be encouraged. You fear that you cannot draw a congregation. Try the preaching of a crucified, risen, and ascended Savior; for this is the greatest "draw" that was ever yet manifested among men. What drew you to Christ but Christ? What draws you to Him now but His own blessed self? If you have been drawn to religion by anything else, you will soon be drawn away from it; but Jesus has held you and will hold you even to the end. Why, then, doubt His power to draw other? Go with the name of Jesus to those who have hitherto been stubborn and see if it does not draw them. No sort of man is beyond this drawing power. Old and young, rich and poor, ignorant and learned, depraved or amiable--all men shall feel the attractive force. Jesus is the one magnet. Let us not think of any other. Music will not draw to Jesus, neither will eloquence, logic, ceremonial, or noise. Jesus Himself must draw men to Himself; and Jesus is quite equal to the work in every case. Be not tempted by the quackeries of the day; but as workers for the LORD work in His own way, and draw with the LORD's own cords. Draw to Christ, and draw by Christ, for then Christ will draw by you.

Oct 5

At God's Bidding

"And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men" (Micah 5:7).

If this be true of the literal Israel, much more is it true of the spiritual Israel, the believing people of God. When saints are what they should be, they are an incalculable blessing to those among whom they are scattered. They are as the dew; for in a quiet, unobtrusive manner they refresh those around them. Silently but effectually they minister to the life, growth, and joy of those who dwell with them. Coming fresh from heaven, glistening like diamonds in the sun, gracious men and women attend to the feeble and insignificant till each blade of grass has its own drop of dew. Little as individuals, they are, when united, all-sufficient for the purposes of love which the LORD fulfills through them. Dew drops accomplish the refreshing of broad acres. LORD, make us like the dew! Godly people are as showers which come at God's bidding without man's leave and license. They work for God whether men desire it or not; they no more ask human permission than the rain does. LORD, make us thus boldly prompt and free in Thy service wherever our lot is cast.

Oct 6

The Leadership of Our Guide

"Howbeit when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all Truth" (John 16:13).

Truth is like a vast cavern into which we desire to enter, but we are not able to traverse it alone. At the entrance it is clear and bright; but if we would go further and explore its innermost recesses, we must have a guide, or we shall lose ourselves. The Holy Spirit, who knows all truth perfectly, is the appointed guide of all true believers, and He conducts them as they are able to bear it, from one inner chamber to another, so that they behold the deep things of God, and His secret is made plain to them. What a promise is this for the humbly inquiring mind! We desire to know the truth and to enter into it. We are conscious of our own aptness to err, and we feel the urgent need of a guide. We rejoice that the Holy Spirit is come and abides among us. He condescends to act as a guide to us, and we gladly accept His leadership. "All truth" we wish to learn, that we may not be one-sided and out of balance. We would not be willingly ignorant of any part of revelation lest thereby we should miss blessing or incur sin. The Spirit of God has come that He may guide us into all truth: let us with obedient hearts hearken to His words and follow His lead.

Oct 7

Always First in Fellowship

"He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him, as He said unto you" (Mark 16:7).

Where He appointed to meet His disciples, there He would be in due time. Jesus keeps His trust. If He promises to meet us at the mercy seat, or in public worship, or in the ordinances, we may depend upon it that He will be there. We may wickedly stay away from the appointed meeting place, but He never does. He says, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I"; He says not, "There will I be," but, "I am there already." Jesus is always first in fellowship: "He goeth before you." His heart is with His people, His delight is in them, He is never slow to meet them. In all fellowship He goeth before us. But He reveals Himself to those who come after Him: "There shall ye see him." Joyful sight! We care not to see the greatest of mere men, but to see Him is to be filled with joy and peace. And we shall see Him, for He promises Himself to them. Rest assured that it will be so, for He does everything according to His word of promise: "As he said unto you. Catch at those last words, and be assured that to the end He will do for you "as he said unto you."

Oct 8

Never Alone

"Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken" (Isaiah 62:4).

"Forsaken" is a dreary word. It sounds like a knell. It is the record of I sharpest sorrows and the prophecy of direst ills. An abyss of misery yawns in that word forsaken. Forsaken by one who pledges his honor! Forsaken by a friend so long tried and trusted! Forsaken by a dear relative! Forsaken by father and mother! Forsaken by all! This is woe indeed, and yet it may be patiently born if the LORD will take us up. But what must it be to feel forsaken of God? Think of that bitterest of cries, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Have we ever in any degree tasted the wormwood and the gall of "forsaken" in that sense? If so, let us beseech our LORD to save us from any repetition of so unspeakable a sorrow. Oh, that such darkness may never return! Men in malice said of a saint, "God hath forsaken him; persecute and take him." But it was always false. The LORD's loving favor shall compel our cruel foes to eat their own words or, at least, to hold their tongues. The reverse of all this is that superlative word Hephzibah "the LORD delighteth in thee." This turns weeping into dancing. Let those who dreamed that they were forsaken hear the LORD say, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

Oct 9

What Sanctifies Our Offerings?

"And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD" (Leviticus 4:7).

The altar of incense is the place where saints present their prayers and praises; and it is delightful to think of it as sprinkled with the blood of the great sacrifice. This it is which makes all our worship acceptable with Jehovah: He sees the blood of His own Son and therefore accepts our homage. It is well for us to fix our eyes upon the blood of the one offering for sin. Sin mingles even with our holy things, and our best repentance, faith, prayer, and thanksgiving could not be received of God were it not for the merit of the atoning sacrifice. Many sneer at "the blood"; but to us it is the foundation of comfort and hope. That which is on the horns of the altar is meant to be prominently before our eyes when we draw near to God. The blood gives strength to prayer, and hence it is on the altar's horns. It is "before the LORD," and therefore it ought to be before us. It is on the altar before we bring the incense; it is there to sanctify our offerings and gifts. Come, let us pray with confidence, since the Victim is offered, the merit has been pleaded, the blood is within the veil, and the prayers of believers must be sweet unto the LORD.

Oct 10

Open Door of Communion

"I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it" (Revelation 3:8).

Saints who remain faithful to the truth of God have an open door before them. My soul, thou hast resolved to live and die by that which the LORD has revealed in His Word, and therefore before thee stands this open door. I will enter in by the open door of communion with God. Who shall say me nay? Jesus has removed my sin and given me His righteousness; therefore I may freely enter. LORD, I do so by Thy grace. I have also before me an open door into the mysteries of the Word. I may enter into the deep things of God. Election, union to Christ, the Second advent-all these are before me, and I may enjoy them. No promise and no doctrine are now locked up against me. An open door of access is before me in private and an open door of usefulness in public. God will hear me; God will use me. A door is opened for my onward march to the church above, and for my daily fellowship with saints below. Some may try to shut me up or shut me out, but all in vain. Soon shall I see an open door into heaven: the pearl gate will be my way of entrance, and then I shall go in unto my LORD and King and be with God eternally shut in.

Oct 11

Free to Travel

"And I will strengthen them in the LORD: and they shall walk up and down in His Name, saith the LORD" (Zechariah 10:12).

A solace for sick saints. They have grown faint, and they fear that they shall never rise from the bed of doubt and fear; but the Great Physician can both remove the disease and take away the weakness which has come of it. He will strengthen the feeble. This He will do in the best possible way, for it shall be "in Jehovah." Our strength is far better in God than in self. In the LORD it causes fellowship, in ourselves it would create pride. In ourselves it would be sadly limited, but in God it knows no bound. When strength is given, the believer uses it. He walks up and down in the name of the LORD. What an enjoyment it is to walk abroad after illness, and what a delight to be strong in the LORD after a season of prostration! The LORD gives His people liberty to walk up and down and an inward leisure to exercise that liberty. He makes gentlemen of us: we are not slaves who know no rest and see no sights, but we are free to travel at our ease throughout Immanuel's land. Come, my heart, be thou no more sick and sorry; Jesus bids thee be strong and walk with God in holy contemplation. Obey His word of love.

Oct 12

Mark of Covenant Grace

"And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul that thou mayest live" (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Here we read of the true circumcision. Note the author of it: "The LORD thy God." He alone can deal effectually with our heart and take away its carnality and pollution. To make us love God with all our heart and soul is a miracle of grace which only the Holy Ghost can work. We must look to the LORD alone for this and never be satisfied with anything short of it. Note where this circumcision is wrought. It is not of the flesh but of the Spirit. It is the essential mark of the covenant of grace. Love to God is the indelible token of the chosen seed; by this secret seal the election of grace is certified to the believer. We must see to it that we trust in no outward ritual but are sealed in heart by the operation of the Holy Ghost. Note what the result is—"that thou mayest live." To be carnally minded is death. In the overcoming of the flesh, we find life and peace. If we mind the things of the Spirit, we shall live. Oh, that Jehovah, our God, may complete His gracious work upon our inner natures, that in the fullest and highest sense we may live unto the LORD.

Oct 13

If, and a Triple Promise

"If My people, which are called by My Name, shall humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:14).

Called by the name of the LORD, we are nevertheless erring men and women. What a mercy it is that our God is ready to forgive! Whenever we sin let us hasten to the mercy seat of our God, seeking pardon. We are to humble ourselves. Should we not be humbled by the fact that after receiving so much love we yet transgress? O LORD, we bow before Thee in the dust and own our grievous ingratitude. Oh, the infamy of sin! Oh, the sevenfold infamy of it in persons so favored as we have been! Next, we are to pray for mercy, for cleansing, for deliverance from the power of sin. O LORD, hear us even now, and shut not out our cry. In this prayer we are to seek the LORD's face. He has left us because of our faults, and we must entreat Him to return. O LORD, look on us in Thy Son Jesus, and smile upon Thy servants. With this must go our own turning from evil; God cannot turn to us unless we turn from sin. Then comes the triple promise of hearing, pardon, and healing. Our Father, grant us these at once, for our LORD Jesus Christ's sake.

Oct 14

Never Ashamed

"Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in Heaven" (Matthew 10:32).

Gracious promise! It is a great joy to me to confess my LORD. Whatever my faults may be, I am not ashamed of Jesus, nor do I fear to declare the doctrines of His cross. O LORD, I have not hid Thy righteousness within my heart. Sweet is the prospect which the text sets before me! Friends forsake and enemies exult, but the LORD does not disown His servant. Doubtless my LORD will own me even here and give me new tokens of His favorable regard. But there comes a day when I must stand before the great Father. What bliss to think that Jesus will confess me then! He will say, "This man truly trusted Me and was willing to be reproached for My name's sake; and therefore I acknowledge him as Mine." The other day a great man was made a knight, and the Queen handed him a jeweled garter; but what of that? It will be an honor beyond all honors for the LORD Jesus to confess us in the presence of the divine Majesty in the heavens. Never let me be ashamed to own my LORD. Never let me indulge a cowardly

silence or allow a fainthearted compromise. Shall I blush to own Him who promises to own me?

Oct 15

Sustained by Feeding

"As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by Me" (John 6:57).

We live by virtue of our union with the Son of God. As God-man Mediator, the LORD Jesus lives by the self-existent Father who has sent Him, and in the same manner we live by the Savior who has quickened us. He who is the source of our life is also the sustenance of it. Living is sustained by feeding. We must support the spiritual life by spiritual food, and that spiritual food is the LORD Jesus. Not His life, or death, or offices, or work, or word alone, but Himself, as including all these. On Jesus Himself we feed. This is set forth to us in the LORD's Supper, but it is actually enjoyed by us when we meditate upon our LORD, believe in Him with appropriating faith, take Him into ourselves by love, and assimilate Him by the power of the inner life. We know what it is to feed on Jesus, but we cannot speak it or write it. Our wisest course is to practice it and to do so more and more. We are entreated to eat abundantly, and it will be to our infinite profit to do so when Jesus is our meat and our drink. LORD, I thank Thee that this, which is a necessity of my new life, is also its greatest delight. So, I do at this hour feed on Thee.

Oct 16

One with Christ Jesus

"Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

Jesus has made the life of believers in Him as certain as His own. As sure as the Head lives the members live also. If Jesus has not risen from the dead, then are we dead in our sins; but since He has risen, all believers are risen in Him. His death has put away our transgressions and loosed the bonds which held us under the death sentence. His resurrection proves our justification: we are absolved, and mercy saith, "The LORD hath put away thy sin, thou shalt not die." Jesus has made the life of His people as eternal as His own. How can they die as long as He lives, seeing they are one with Him? Because He dieth no more, and death hath no more dominion over Him, so they shall no more return to the graves of their old sins but shall live unto the LORD in newness of life. O believer, when, under great temptation, thou fearest that thou shalt one day fall by the hand of the enemy, let this reassure thee. Thou shalt never lose thy spiritual life, for it is hid with Christ in God. Thou dost not doubt the immortality of thy LORD; therefore, do not think that He will let thee die, since thou art one with Him. The argument for thy life is His life, and of that thou canst have no fear; wherefore rest in thy living LORD.

Oct 17

Holy Fear

"He that feareth the Commandment shall be rewarded" (Proverbs 13:13).

Holy awe of God's Word is at a great discount. Men think themselves wiser than the Word of the LORD and sit in judgment upon it. "So did not I, because of the fear of God." We accept the inspired Book as infallible and prove our esteem by our obedience. We have no terror of the Word, but we have a filial awe of it. We are not in fear of its penalties because we have a fear of its commands. This holy fear of the commandment produces the restfulness of humility, which is far sweeter than the recklessness of pride. It becomes a guide to us in our movements: a drag when we are going downhill and a stimulus when we are climbing it. Preserved from evil and led into righteousness by our reverence of the command, we gain a quiet conscience, which is a well of wine; a sense of freedom from responsibility, which is as life from the dead; and a confidence of pleasing God, which is heaven below. The ungodly may ridicule our deep reverence for the Word of the LORD; but what of that?. The prize of our high calling is a sufficient consolation for us. The rewards of obedience make us scorn the scorning of the scorner.

Oct 18

Tears, Then Joyful Harvest

"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy" (Psalm 126:5).

Weeping times are suitable for sowing: we do not want the ground to be too dry. Seed steeped in the tears of earnest anxiety will come up all the sooner. The salt of prayerful tears will give the good seed a flavor which will preserve it from the worm: truth spoken in awful earnestness has a double life about it. Instead of stopping our sowing because of our weeping, let us redouble our efforts because the season is so propitious. Our heavenly seed could not fitly be sown laughing. Deep sorrow and concern for the souls of others are a far more fit accompaniment of godly teaching than anything like levity. We have heard of men who went to war with a light heart, but they were beaten; and it is mostly so with those who sow in the same style. Come, then, my heart, sow on in

thy weeping, for thou has the promise of a joyful harvest. Thou shalt reap. Thou, thyself, shalt see some results of thy labor. This shall come to thee in so large a measure as to give thee joy, which a poor, withered, and scanty harvest would not do. When thine eyes are dim with silver tears, think of the golden corn. Bear cheerfully the present toil and disappointment; for the harvest day will fully recompense thee.

Oct 19

Regulated Chastisement

"I will correct thee in measure" (Jeremiah 30:11).

To be left uncorrected would be a fatal sign: it would prove that the LORD had said, "He is given unto idols, let him alone." God grant that such may never be our portion! Uninterrupted prosperity is a thing to cause fear and trembling. As many as God tenderly loves He rebukes and chastens: those for whom He has no esteem He allows to fatten themselves without fear, like bullocks for the slaughter. It is in love that our heavenly Father uses the rod upon His children. Yet see, the correction is in measure": He gives us love without measure but chastisement "in measure." As under the old law no Israelite could receive more than the "forty stripes save one," which ensured careful counting and limited suffering; so is it with each afflicted member of the household of faith—every stroke is counted. It is the measure of wisdom, the measure of sympathy, the measure of love, by which our chastisement is regulated. Far be it from us to rebel against appointments so divine. LORD, if Thou standest by to measure the bitter drops into my cup, it is for me cheerfully to take that cup from Thy hand and drink according to Thy directions, saying, "Thy will be done."

Oct 20

From Every Sin

"He shall save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

LORD, save me from my sins. By the name of Jesus I am encouraged thus to pray. Save me from my past sins, that the habit of them may not hold me captive. Save me from my constitutional sins, that I may not be the slave of my own weaknesses. Save me from the sins which are continually under my eye that I may not lose my horror of them. Save me from secret sins; sins unperceived by me from my want of light. Save me from sudden and surprising sins: let me not be carried off my feet by a rush of temptation. Save me, LORD, from every sin. Let not any iniquity have dominion over me. Thou alone canst do this. I cannot snap my own chains or slay my own enemies. Thou knowest temptation, for Thou wast tempted. Thou knowest sin, for Thou didst bear the weight of it. Thou knowest how to succor me in my hour of conflict; Thou canst save me from sinning and save me when I have sinned. It is promised in Thy very name that Thou wilt do this, and I pray Thee let me this day verify the prophecy. Let me not give way to temper, or pride, or despondency, or any form of evil; but do Thou save me unto holiness of life, that the name of Jesus may be glorified in me abundantly.

Oct 21

God's Multiplication Table

"A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation: I the LORD will hasten it in his time" (Isaiah 60:22).

Works for the LORD often begin on a small scale, and they are none the worse for this. Feebleness educates faith, brings God near, and wins glory for His name. Prize promises of increase! Mustard seed is the smallest among seeds, and yet it becomes a treelike plant, with branches which lodge the birds of heaven. We may begin with one, and that "a little one," and yet it will "become a thousand." The LORD is great at the multiplication table. How often did He say to His lone servant, "I will multiply thee!" Trust in the LORD, ye ones and twos; for He will be in the midst of you if you are gathered in His name. "A small one." What can be more despicable in the eyes of those who count heads and weigh forces! Yet this is the nucleus of a great nation. Only one star shines out at first in the evening, but soon the sky is crowded with countless lights. Nor need we think the prospect of increase to be remote, for the promise is, "I Jehovah will hasten it in his time." There will be no premature haste, like that which we see at excited meetings; it will be all in due time, but yet there will be no delay. When the LORD hastens, His speed is glorious.

Oct 22

Plead His Own Promise

"Thou, O LORD God, hast spoken it: and with Thy blessing let the house of Thy servant be blessed for ever" (2 Samuel 7:29).

This is a promise pleaded, and so it yields double instruction to us. Anything which the LORD God has spoken we should receive as surely true and then plead it at the throne. Oh, how sweet to quote what our own God has spoken! How precious to use a "therefore," which the promise suggests, as David does in this verse! We do not pray because we doubt but because we believe.

To pray unbelievably is unbecoming in the LORD's children. No, LORD, we cannot doubt Thee: we are persuaded that every word of Thine is a sure foundation for the boldest expectation. We come to Thee and say, "Do as Thou hast said." Bless Thy servant's house. Heal our sick; save our hesitating ones; restore those who wander; confirm those who live in Thy fear. LORD, give us food and raiment according to Thy Word. Prosper our undertakings; especially succeed our endeavors to make known Thy gospel in our neighborhood. Make our servants Thy servants, our children Thy children. Let the blessing flow on to future generations, and as long as any of our race remains on earth may they remain true to Thee. O LORD God, "let the house of thy servant be blessed."

Oct 23

Harvest of Light, Gladness

"Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart" (Psalm 97:11).

Righteousness is often costly to the man who keeps to it at all hazards, but in the end it will bear its own expenses and return an infinite profit. A holy life is like sowing seed: much is going out, and apparently it is buried in the soil, never to be gathered up again. We are mistaken when we look for an immediate harvest; but the error is very natural, for it seems impossible to bury light. Yet light is "sown," says the text. It lies latent: none can see it; it is sown. We are quite sure that it must one day manifest itself. Full sure are we that the LORD has set a harvest for the sower of light, and they shall reap it, each man for himself. Then shall come their gladness. Sheaves of joy for seeds of light. Their heart was upright before the LORD, though men gave them no credit for it, but even censured them: they were righteous, though those about them denounced them as censorious. They had to wait, as husbandmen wait for the precious fruits of the earth: but the light was sown for them, and gladness was being prepared on their behalf by the LORD of the harvest. Courage, brothers! We need not be in a hurry. Let us in patience possess our souls, for soon shall our souls possess light and gladness.

Oct 24

Godly Stability

"And I will make thee unto this people a fenced brazen wall: and they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee to save thee and to deliver thee, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 15:20).

Stability in the fear and faith of God will make a man like a wall of brass, which no one can batter down or break. Only the LORD can make such; but we need such men in the church, and in the world, but specially in the pulpit. Against uncompromising men of truth this age of shams will fight tooth and nail. Nothing seems to offend Satan and his seed like decision. They attack holy firmness even as the Assyrians besieged fenced cities. The joy is that they cannot prevail against those whom God has made strong in His strength. Carried about with every wind of doctrine, others only need to be blown upon and away they go; but those who love the doctrines of grace, because they possess the grace of the doctrines, stand like rocks in the midst of raging seas. Whence this stability? "I am with thee, saith the LORD": that is the true answer. Jehovah will save and deliver faithful souls from all the assaults of the adversary. Hosts are against us, but the LORD of hosts is with us. We dare not budge an inch; for the LORD Himself holds us in our place, and there we will abide forever.

Oct 25

God First, Then Extras

"But seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

See how the Bible opens: "In the beginning God." Let your life open in the same way. Seek with your whole soul, first and foremost, the kingdom of God, as the place of your citizenship, and His righteousness as the character of your life. As for the rest, it will come from the LORD Himself without your being anxious concerning it. All that is needful for this life and godliness "shall be added unto you." What a promise this is! Food, raiment, home, and so forth, God undertakes to add to you while you seek Him. You mind His business, and He will mind yours. If you want paper and string, you get them given in when you buy more important goods; and just so all that we need of earthly things we shall have thrown in with the kingdom. He who is an heir of salvation shall not die of starvation; and he who clothes his soul with the righteousness of God cannot be left of the LORD with a naked body. Away with carping care. Set all your mind upon seeking the LORD. Covetousness is poverty, and anxiety is misery: trust in God is an estate, and likeness of God is a heavenly inheritance. LORD, I seek Thee; be found of me.

Oct 26

Because of Us

"For the elect's sake those days be shortened" (Matthew 24:22).

For the sake of His elect the LORD withholds many judgments and shortens others. In great tribulations the fire would devour all were it not that Out of regard to His elect the LORD damps the flame. Thus, while He saves His elect for the sake of Jesus, He also preserves the race for the sake of His chosen. What an honor is thus put upon saints! How diligently they ought to use their influence with their LORD! He will hear their prayers for sinners and bless their efforts for their salvation. He blesses believers that they may be a blessing to those who are in unbelief. Many a sinner lives because of the prayers of a mother, or wife, or daughter to whom the LORD has respect. Have we used aright the singular power with which the LORD entrusts us? Do we pray for our country, for other lands, and for the age? Do we, in times of war, famine, pestilence, stand out as intercessors, pleading that the days may be shortened? Do we lament before God the outbursts of infidelity, error, and licentiousness? Do we beseech our LORD Jesus to shorten the reign of sin by hastening His own glorious appearing? Let us get to our knees and never rest till Christ appeareth.

Oct 27

His Service, Face, Name

"His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their forehead" (Revelation 22:3-[note](#), Rev 22:4-[note](#)).

Three choice blessings will be ours in the gloryland. "His servants shall serve him." No other lords shall oppress us, no other service shall distress us. We shall serve Jesus always, perfectly, without weariness, and without error. This is heaven to a saint: in all things to serve the LORD Christ and to be owned by Him as His servant is our soul's high ambition for eternity. "And they shall see his face." This makes the service delightful: indeed, it is the present reward of service. We shall know our LORD, for we shall see Him as He is. To see the face of Jesus is the utmost favor that the most faithful servant of the LORD can ask. What more could Moses ask than-"Let me see thy face?" "And his name shall be in their foreheads." They gaze upon their LORD till His name is photographed upon their brows. They are acknowledged by Him, and they acknowledge Him. The secret mark of inward grace develops into the public sign-manual of confessed relationship. O LORD, give us these three things in their beginnings here that we may possess them in their fullness in Thine own abode of bliss!

Oct 28

Sins of Ignorance

"And it shall be forgiven them; for it is ignorance" (Numbers 15:25).

Because of our ignorance we are not fully aware of our sins of ignorance. Yet we may be sure they are many, in the form both of commission and omission. We may be doing in all sincerity, as a service to God, that which He has never commanded and can never accept. The LORD knows these sins of ignorance every one. This may well alarm us, since in justice He will require these trespasses at our hand; but on the other hand, faith spies comfort in this fact, for the LORD will see to it that stains unseen by us shall yet be washed away. He sees the sin that He may cease to see it by casting it behind His back. Our great comfort is that Jesus, the true priest, has made atonement for all the congregation of the children of Israel. That atonement secures the pardon of unknown sins. His precious blood cleanses us from all sin. Whether our eyes have seen it and wept over it or not, God has seen it, Christ has atoned for it, the Spirit bears witness to the pardon of it, and so we have a threefold peace. O my Father, I praise Thy divine knowledge, which not only perceives my iniquities but provides an atonement which delivers me from the guilt of them, even before I know that I am guilty.

Oct 29

Maintain the Difference

"And I will put a division between My people and thy people: tomorrow shall this sign be" (Exodus 8:23).

Pharaoh has a people, and the LORD has a people. These may dwell together and seem to fare alike, but there is a division between them, and the LORD will make it apparent. Not forever shall one event happen alike to all, but there shall be great difference between the men of the world and the people of Jehovah's choice. This may happen in the time of judgments, when the LORD becomes the sanctuary of His saints. It is very conspicuous in the conversion of believers when their sin is put away, while unbelievers remain under condemnation. From that moment they become a distinct race, come under a new discipline, and enjoy new blessings. Their homes, henceforth, are free from the grievous swarms of evils which defile and torment the Egyptians. They are kept from the pollution of lust, the bite of care, the corruption of falsehood, and the cruel torment of hatred, which devour many families. Rest assured, tried believer, that though you have your troubles you are saved from swarms of worse ones, which infest the homes and hearts of the servants of the world's prince. The LORD has put a division; see to it that you keep up the division in Spirit, aim, character, and company.

Oct 30

Thorough Cleansing

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you" (Ezekiel 36:25).

What an exceeding joy is this! He who has purified us with the blood of Jesus will also cleanse us by the water of the Holy Spirit. God hath said it, and so it must be, "Ye shall be clean." LORD, we feel and mourn our uncleanness, and it is cheering to be assured by Thine own mouth that we shall be clean. Oh, that Thou wouldst make a speedy work of it! He will deliver us from our worst sins. The uprisings of unbelief and the deceitful lusts which war against the soul, the vile thoughts of pride, and the suggestions of Satan to blaspheme the sacred name--all these shall be so purged away as never to return. He will also cleanse us from all our idols, whether of gold or of clay: our impure loves and our excessive love of that which in itself is pure. That which we have idolized shall either be broken from us or we shall be broken off from it. It is God who speaks of what He Himself will do. Therefore is this word established and sure, and we may boldly look for that which it guarantees to us. Cleansing is a covenant blessing, and the covenant is ordered in all things and sure.

Oct 31

Immortal Till Work Done

"I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the LORD" (Psalm 118:17).

A fair assurance this! It was no doubt based upon a promise, inwardly whispered in the psalmist's heart, which he seized upon and enjoyed. Is my case like that of David? Am I depressed because the enemy affronts me? Are there multitudes against me and few on my side? Does unbelief bid me lie down and die in despair--a defeated, dishonored man? Do my enemies begin to dig my grave? What then? Shall I yield to the whisper of fear, and give up the battle, and with it give up all hope? Far from it. There is life in me yet: "I shall not die." Vigor will return and remove my weakness: "I shall live." The LORD lives, and I shall live also. My mouth shall again be opened: "I shall declare the works of Jehovah." Yes, and I shall speak of the present trouble as another instance of the wonder-working faithfulness and love of the LORD my God. Those who would gladly measure me for my coffin had better wait a bit, for "the LORD hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death." Glory be to His name forever! I am immortal till my work is done. Till the LORD wills it, no vault can close upon me.

Nov 1

Perfection and Preservation

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

What will He do? He will sanctify us wholly. See the previous verse. He will carry on the work of purification till we are perfect in every part. He will preserve our "whole spirit, and soul, and body, blameless unto the coming of our LORD Jesus Christ." He will not allow us to fall from grace, nor come under the dominion of sin. What great favors are these! Well may we adore the giver of such unspeakable gifts. Who will do this? The LORD who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light, out of death in sin into eternal life in Christ Jesus. Only He can do this: such perfection and preservation can only come from the God of all grace. Why will He do it? Because He is "faithful"--faithful to His own promise which is pledged to save the believer; faithful to His Son, whose reward it is that His people shall be presented to Him faultless, faithful to the work which He has commenced in us by our effectual calling. It is not their own faithfulness but the LORD's own faithfulness on which the saints rely. Come, my soul, here is a grand feast to begin a dull month with. There may be fogs without, but there should be sunshine within.

Nov 2

Heavenly Wealth

"No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Psalm 84:11).

Many pleasing things the LORD may withhold but "no good thing." He is the best judge of what is good for us. Some things are assuredly good, and these we may have for the asking through Jesus Christ our LORD. Holiness is a good thing, and this He will work in us freely. Victory over evil tendencies, strong tempers, and evil habits He will gladly grant, and we ought not to remain without it. Full assurance He will bestow, and near communion with Himself, and access into all truth, and boldness with prevalence at the mercy seat. If we have not these, it is from want of faith to receive and not from any unwillingness of God to give. A calm, a heavenly frame, great patience, and fervent love--all these will He give to holy diligence. But note well that we must "walk uprightly." There must be no cross purposes and crooked dealings; no hypocrisy nor deceit. If we walk foully God cannot give us favors, for

that would be a premium upon sin. The way of uprightness is the way of heavenly wealth-wealth so large as to include every good thing. What a promise to plead in prayer! Let us get to our knees.

Nov 3

In God's Time

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:3).

Mercy may seem slow, but it is sure. The LORD in unfailing wisdom has appointed a time for the outgoings of His gracious power, and God's time is the best time. We are in a hurry; the vision of the blessings excites our desire and hastens our longings; but the LORD will keep His appointments. He never is before His time; He never is behind. God's word is here spoken of as a living thing which will speak and will come. It is never a dead letter, as we are tempted to fear when we have long watched for its fulfillment. The living word is on the way from the living God, and though it may seem to linger, it is not in reality doing so. God's train is not behind time. It is only a matter of patience, and we shall soon see for ourselves the faithfulness of the LORD. No promise of His shall fail; "it will not lie." No promise of His will be lost in silence; "it shall speak." What comfort it will speak to the believing ear! No promise of His shall need to be renewed like a bill which could not be paid on the day in which it fell due-"it will not tarry." Come, my soul, canst thou not wait for thy God? Rest in Him and be still in unutterable peacefulness.

Nov 4

You Make the Trenches

"And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts" (2 Kings 3:16-17).

Three armies were perishing of thirst, and the LORD interposed. Although He sent neither cloud nor rain, yet He supplied an abundance of water. He is not dependent upon ordinary methods but can surprise His people with novelties of wisdom and power. Thus are we made to see more of God than ordinary processes could have revealed. Although the LORD may not appear for us in the way we expect, or desire, or suppose, yet He will in some way or other provide for us. It is a great blessing for us to be raised above looking to secondary causes so that we may gaze into the face of the great First Cause. Have we this day grace enough to make trenches into which the divine blessing may flow? Alas! We too often fail in the exhibition of true and practical faith. Let us this day be on the outlook for answers to prayer. As the child who went to a meeting to pray for rain took an umbrella with her, so let us truly and practically expect the LORD to bless us. Let us make the valley full of ditches and expect to see them all filled.

Nov 5

What Is Painful Will End

"I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before Me, and the souls; which I have made" (Isaiah 57:16).

Our heavenly Father seeks our instruction, not our destruction. His contention with us has a kind intention toward us. He will not be always in arms against us. We think the LORD is long in His chastisements, but that is because we are short in our patience. His compassion endureth forever, but not His contention. The night may drag its weary length along, but it must in the end give place to cheerful day. As contention is only for a season, so the wrath which leads to it is only for a small moment. The LORD loves His chosen too well to be always angry with them. If He were to deal with us always as He does sometimes, we should faint outright and go down hopelessly to the gates of death. Courage, dear heart! The LORD will soon end His chiding. Bear up, for the LORD will bear you up and bear you through. He who made you knows how frail you are and how little you can bear. He will handle tenderly that which He has fashioned so delicately. Therefore, be not afraid because of the painful present, for it hastens to a happy future. He that smote you will heal you; His little wrath shall be followed by great mercies.

Nov 6

Delight and Desires

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Psalm 37:4).

Delight in God has a transforming power and lifts a man above the gross desire of our fallen nature. Delight in Jehovah is not only sweet in itself, but it sweetens the whole soul, till the longings of the heart become such that the LORD can safely promise to fulfill them. Is not that a grand delight which molds our desires till they are like the desires of God? Our foolish way is to desire and then set to work to compass what we desire. We do not go to work in God's way, which is to seek Him first and then expect all things to

be added unto us. If we will let our heart be filled with God till it runs over with delight, then the LORD Himself will take care that we shall not want any good thing. Instead of going abroad for joys let us stay at home with God and drink waters out of our own fountain. He can do for us far more than all our friends. It is better to be content with God alone than to go about fretting and pining for the paltry trifles of time and sense. For a while we may have disappointments; but if these bring us nearer to the LORD, they are things to be prized exceedingly, for they will in the end secure to us the fulfillment of all our right desires.

Nov 7

True Humility Rewarded

"He that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:14).

It ought not to be difficult for us to humble ourselves, for what have we to be proud of? We ought to take the lowest place without being told to do so. If we are sensible and honest, we shall be little in our own eyes. Especially before the LORD in prayer we shall shrink to nothing. There we cannot speak of merit, for we have none; our one and only appeal must be to mercy: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Here is a cheering word from the throne. We shall be exalted by the LORD if we humble ourselves. For us the way upward is downhill. When we are stripped of self we are clothed with humility, and this is the best of wear. The LORD will exalt us in peace and happiness of mind; He will exalt us into knowledge of His Word and fellowship with Himself; He will exalt us in the enjoyment of sure pardon and justification. The LORD puts His honors upon those who can wear them to the honor of the Giver. He gives usefulness, acceptance, and influence to those who will not be puffed up by them but will be abased by a sense of greater responsibility. Neither God nor man will care to lift up a man who lifts up himself; but both God and good men unite to honor modest worth. O LORD, sink me in self that I may rise in Thee.

Nov 8

The Magnitude of Grace

"My grace is sufficient for thee; for My strength is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Our weakness should be prized as making room for divine strength. We might never have known the power of grace if we had not felt the weakness of nature. Blessed be the LORD for the thorn in the flesh, and the messenger of Satan, when they drive us to the strength of God. This is a precious word from our LORD's own lip. It has made the writer laugh for joy. God's grace enough for me! I should think it is. Is not the sky enough for the bird and the ocean enough for the fish? The All-Sufficient is sufficient for my largest want. He who is sufficient for earth and heaven is certainly able to meet the case of one poor worm like me. Let us, then, fall back upon our God and His grace. If He does not remove our grief, He will enable us to bear it. His strength shall be poured into us till the worm shall thresh the mountains, and a nothing shall be victor over all the high and mighty ones. It is better for us to have God's strength than our own; for if we were a thousand times as strong as we are, it would amount to nothing in the face of the enemy; and if we could be weaker than we are, which is scarcely possible, yet we could do all things through Christ.

Nov 9

Necessary Knowledge

"Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are My people, saith the LORD God" (Ezekiel 34:30).

To be the LORD's own people is a choice blessing, but to know that we are such is a comfortable blessing. It is one thing to hope that God is with us and another thing to know that He is so. Faith saves us, but assurance satisfies us. We take God to be our God when we believe in Him; but we get the joy of Him when we know that He is ours and that we are His. No believer should be content with hoping and trusting; he should ask the LORD to lead him on to full assurance, so that matters of hope may become matters of certainty. It is when we enjoy covenant blessings and see our LORD Jesus raised up for us as a plant of renown that we come to a clear knowledge of the favor of God toward us. Not by law, but by grace do we learn that we are the LORD's people. Let us always turn our eyes in the direction of free grace. Assurance of faith can never come by the works of the law. It is an evangelical virtue and can only reach us in a gospel way. Let us not look within. Let us look to the LORD alone. As we see Jesus we shall see our salvation. LORD, send us such a flood-tide of Thy love that we shall be washed beyond the mire of doubt and fear.

Nov 10

Walk Without Stumbling

"He will not suffer thy foot to be moved" (Psalm 121:3).

If the LORD will not suffer it, neither men nor devils can do it. How greatly would they rejoice if they could give us a disgraceful fall,

drive us from our position, and bury us out of memory! They could do this to their heart's content were it not for one hindrance, and only one: the LORD will not suffer it; and if He does not suffer it, we shall not suffer it. The way of life is like traveling among the Alps. Along the mountain path one is constantly exposed to the slipping of the foot. Where the way is high the head is apt to swim, and then the feet soon slide; there are spots which are smooth as glass and others that are rough with loose stones, and in either of these a fall is hard to avoid. He who throughout life is enabled to keep himself upright and to walk without stumbling has the best of reasons for gratitude. What with pitfalls and snares, weak knees, weary feet, and subtle enemies, no child of God would stand fast for an hour were it not for the faithful love which will not suffer his foot to be moved.

Amidst a thousand snares I stand

Upheld and guarded by thy hand;

That hand unseen shall hold me still,

And lead me to thy holy hill.

Nov 11

The LORD's Free Men

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

Sin will reign if it can: it cannot be satisfied with any place below the throne of the heart. We sometimes fear that it will conquer us, and then we cry unto the LORD, "Let not any iniquity have dominion over me. This is His comforting answer: "Sin shall not have dominion over you. " It may assail you and even wound you, but it shall never establish sovereignty over you. If we were under the law, our sin would gather strength and hold us under its power; for it is the punishment of sin that a man comes under the power of sin. As we are under the covenant of grace, we are secured against departing from the living God by the sure declaration of the covenant. Grace is promised to us by which we are restored from our wanderings, cleansed from our impurities, and set free from the chains of habit. We must lie down in despair and be "content to serve the Egyptians" if we were still as slaves working for eternal life; but since we are the LORD's free men, we take courage to fight with our corruptions and temptations, being assured that sin shall never bring us under its sway again. God Himself giveth us the victory through our LORD Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Nov 12

Sanctified Souls Are Satisfied

"My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 31:14).

Note the "My" which comes twice: "My people shall be satisfied with My goodness." The kind of people who are satisfied with God are marked out as God's own. He is pleased with them, for they are pleased with Him. They call Him their God, and He calls them His people; He is satisfied to take them for a portion, and they are satisfied with Him for their portion. There is a mutual communion of delight between God's Israel and Israel's God. These people are satisfied. This is a grand thing. Very few of the sons of men are ever satisfied, let their lot be what it may; they have swallowed the horse-leech, and it continually cries, "Give! give!" Only sanctified souls are satisfied souls. God Himself must both convert us and content us. It is no wonder that the LORD's people should be satisfied with the goodness of their LORD. Here is goodness without mixture, bounty without stint, mercy without chiding, love without change, favor without reserve. If God's goodness does not satisfy us, what will? What! are we still groaning? Surely there is a wrong desire within if it be one which God's goodness does not satisfy. LORD, I am satisfied. Blessed be Thy name.

Nov 13

The Unfailing Watch

"Behold, He that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep" (Psalm 121:4).

Jehovah is "the Keeper of Israel." No form of unconsciousness ever steals over Him, neither the deeper slumber nor the slighter sleep. He never fails to watch the house and the heart of His people. This is a sufficient reason for our resting in perfect peace. Alexander said that he slept because his friend Parmenio watched; much more may we sleep because our God is our guard. "Behold" is here set up to call our attention to the cheering truth. Israel, when he had a stone for his pillow, fell asleep; but His God was awake and came in vision to His servant. When we lie defenseless, Jehovah Himself will cover our head. The LORD keeps His people as a rich man keeps his treasure, as a captain keeps a city with a garrison, as a sentry keeps watch over his sovereign. None can harm those who are in such keeping. Let me put my soul into His dear hands. He never forgets us, never ceases actively to care for us, never finds Himself unable to preserve us. O my LORD, keep me, lest I wander and fall and perish. Keep me, that I

may keep Thy commandments. By Thine unslumbering care prevent my sleeping like the sluggard and perishing like those who sleep the sleep of death.

Nov 14

The Name to Use

"If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it" (John 14:14).

What a wide promise! Anything! Whether large or small, all my needs are covered by that word anything. Come, my soul, be free at the mercy seat, and hear thy LORD saying to thee, "Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it." What a wise promise! We are always to ask in the name of Jesus. While this encourages us, it also honors Him. This is a constant plea. Occasionally every other plea is darkened, especially such as we could draw from our own relation to God or our experience of His grace; but at such times the name of Jesus is as mighty at the throne as ever, and we may plead it with full assurance. What an instructive prayer! I may not ask for anything to which I cannot put Christ's hand and seal. I dare not use my LORD's name to a selfish or willful petition. I may only use my LORD's name to prayers which He would Himself pray if He were in my case. It is a high privilege to be authorized to ask in the name of Jesus as if Jesus Himself asked; but our love to Him will never allow us to set that name where He would not have set it. Am I asking for that which Jesus approves? Dare I put His seal to my prayer? Then I have that which I seek of the Father.

Nov 15

Limitless Riches

"My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

Paul's God is our God and will supply all our need. Paul felt sure of this in reference to the Philippians, and we feel sure of it as to ourselves. God will do it, for it is like Him: He loves us, He delights to bless us, and it will glorify Him to do so. His pity, His power, His love, His faithfulness, all work together that we be not famished. What a measure doth the LORD go by: "According to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." The riches of His grace are large, but what shall we say of the riches of His glory? His "riches of glory by Christ Jesus"-who shall form an estimate of this? According to this immeasurable measure will God fill up the immense abyss of our necessities. He makes the LORD Jesus the receptacle and the channel of His fullness, and then He imparts to us His wealth of love in its highest form. Hallelujah! The writer knows what it is to be tried in the work of the LORD. Fidelity has been recompensed with anger, and liberal givers have stopped their subscriptions; but he whom they sought to oppress has not been one penny the ~ nay, rather he has been the richer; for this promise has been true, "My God shall supply all your need." God's supplies are surer than any bank.

Nov 16

Weapons Doomed to Fail

"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn" (Isaiah 54:17).

There is great clatter in the forges and smithies of the enemy. They are I making weapons wherewith to smite the saints. They could not even do as much as this if the LORD of saints did not allow them; for He has created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire. But see how busily they labor! How many swords and spears they fashion! It matters nothing, for on the blade of every weapon you may read this inscription: It shall not Prosper. But now listen to another noise: it is the strife of tongues. Tongues are more terrible instruments than can be made with hammers and anvils, and the evil which they inflict cuts deeper and spreads wider. What will become of us now? Slander, falsehood, insinuation, ridicule-these are poisoned arrows; how can we meet them? The LORD God promises us that, if we cannot silence them, we shall, at least, escape from being ruined by them. They condemn us for the moment, but we shall condemn them at last and forever. The mouth of them that speak lies shall be stopped, and their falsehoods shall be turned to the honor of those good men who suffered by them.

Nov 17

God Never Forsakes

"For the LORD will not cast off Hhis people, neither will He forsake His inheritance" (Psalm 94:14).

No, nor will He cast even so much as one of them. Man has his castoffs, but God has none; for His choice is unchangeable, and His love is everlasting. None can find out a single person whom God has forsaken after having revealed Himself savingly to him. This grand truth is mentioned in the psalm to cheer the heart of the afflicted. The LORD chastens His own; but He never forsakes them. The result of the double work of the law and the rod is our instruction, and the fruit of that instruction is a quieting of spirit, a

sobriety of mind, out of which comes rest. The ungodly are let alone till the pit is digged into which they will fall and be taken; but the godly are sent to school to be prepared for their glorious destiny hereafter. Judgment will return and finish its work upon the rebels, but it will equally return to vindicate the sincere and godly. Hence we may bear the rod of chastisement with calm submission; it means not anger, but love.

God may chasten and correct,

But He never can neglect;

May in faithfulness reprove,

But He ne'er can cease to love.

Nov 18

Clearly Supernatural

"In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem: and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them" (Zechariah 12:8).

One of the best methods of the LORD's defending His people is to make them strong in inward might. Men are better than walls, and faith is stronger than castles. The LORD can take the feeblest among us and make him like David, the champion of Israel. LORD, do this with me! Infuse Thy power into me, and fill me with sacred courage that I may face the giant with sling and stone, confident in God. The LORD can make His greatest champions far mightier than they are: David can be as God, as the angel of Jehovah. This would be a marvelous development, but it is possible, or it would not be spoken of. O LORD, work with the best of our leaders! Show us what Thou art able to do--namely, to raise Thy faithful servants to a height of grace and holiness which shall be clearly supernatural! LORD, dwell in Thy saints, and they shall be as God; put Thy might into them, and they shall be as the living creatures who dwell in the presence of Jehovah. Fulfill this promise to Thine entire church in this our day, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Nov 19

From Obedience to Blessing

"From this day will I bless you" (Haggai 2:19).

Future things are hidden from us. Yet here is a glass in which we may see the unborn years. The LORD says, "From this day will I bless you." It is worthwhile to note the day which is referred to in this promise. There had been failure of crops, blasting, and mildew, and all because of the people's sin. Now, the LORD saw these chastened ones commencing to obey His word and build His temple, and therefore He says, "From the day that the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid, consider. From this day will I bless you." If we have lived in any sin, and the Spirit leads us to purge ourselves of it, we may reckon upon the blessing of the LORD. His smile, His Spirit, His grace, His fuller revelation of His truth will all prove to us an enlarged blessing. We may fall into greater opposition from man because of our faithfulness, but we shall rise to closer dealings with the LORD our God and a clearer sight of our acceptance in Him. LORD, I am resolved to be more true to Thee and more exact in my following of Thy doctrine and Thy precept; and I pray Thee, therefore, by Christ Jesus, to increase the blessedness of my daily life henceforth and forever.

Nov 20

Hunger Satisfied

"For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psalm 107:9).

It is well to have longings, and the more intense they are the better. The LORD will satisfy soul-longings, however great and all-absorbing they may be. Let us greatly long, for God will greatly give. We are never in a right state of mind when we are contented with ourselves and are free from longings. Desires for more grace and groanings which cannot be uttered are growing pains, and we should wish to feel them more and more. Blessed Spirit, make us sigh and cry after better things and for more of the best things! Hunger is by no means a pleasant sensation. Yet blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. Such persons shall not only have their hunger relieved with a little food, but they shall be filled. They shall not be filled with any sort of rough stuff, but their diet shall be worthy of their good LORD, for they shall be filled with goodness by Jehovah Himself. Come, let us not fret because we long and hunger, but let us hear the voice of the psalmist as he also longs and hungers to see God magnified. "Oh, that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men."

Nov 21

The Outward, Upward Look

"Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22).

This is a promise of promises. It lies at the foundation of our spiritual life. Salvation comes through a look at Him who is "a just God and a Saviour." How simple is the direction! "Look unto me." How reasonable is the requirement! Surely the creature should look to the Creator. We have looked elsewhere long enough; it is time that we look alone to Him who invites our expectation and promises to give us His salvation. Only a look! Will we not look at once? We are to bring nothing in ourselves but to look outward and upward to our LORD on His throne, whither He has gone up from the cross. A look requires no preparation, no violent effort: it needs neither wit nor wisdom, wealth nor strength. All that we need is in the LORD our God, and if we look to Him for everything, that everything shall be ours, and we shall be saved. Come, far-off ones, look hither! Ye ends of the earth, turn your eyes this way! As from the furthest regions men may see the sun and enjoy his light, so you who lie in death's borders at the very gates of hell may by a look receive the light of God, the life of heaven, the salvation of the LORD Jesus Christ, who is God and therefore able to save.

Nov 22

No Condemnation

"In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve" (Jeremiah 50:20).

A glorious word indeed! What a perfect pardon is here promised to the sinful nations of Israel and Judah! Sin is to be so removed that it shall not be found, so blotted out that there shall be none. Glory be unto the God of pardons! Satan seeks out sins wherewith to accuse us, our enemies seek them that they may lay them to our charge, and our own conscience seeks them even with a morbid eagerness. But when the LORD applies the precious blood of Jesus, we fear no form of search, for "there shall be none"; "they shall not be found." The LORD hath caused the sins of His people to cease to be: He hath finished transgression and made an end of sin. The sacrifice of Jesus has cast our sins into the depths of the sea. This makes us dance for joy. The reason for the obliteration of sin lies in the fact that Jehovah Himself pardons His chosen ones. His word of grace is not only royal but divine. He speaks absolution, and we are absolved. He applies the atonement, and from that hour His people are beyond all fear of condemnation. Blessed be the name of the sin-annihilating God!

Nov 23

Acquiring Perseverance

"The LORD thy God will put out those nations before thee by little and little" (Deuteronomy 7:22).

We are not to expect to win victories for the LORD Jesus by a single blow. Evil principles and practices die hard. In some places it takes years of labor to drive out even one of the many vices which defile the inhabitants. We must carry on the war with all our might, even when favored with little manifest success. Our business in this world is to conquer it for Jesus. We are not to make compromises but to exterminate evils. We are not to seek popularity but to wage unceasing war with iniquity. Infidelity, popery, drink, impurity, oppression, worldliness, error; these are all to be "put out." The LORD our God can alone accomplish this. He works by His faithful servants, and blessed be His name. He promises that He will so work. "Jehovah thy God will put out those nations before thee." This He will do by degrees that we may learn perseverance, may increase in faith, may earnestly watch, and may avoid carnal security. Let us thank God for a little success and pray for more. Let us never sheathe the sword till the whole land is won for Jesus. Courage, my heart! Go on little by little, for many littles will make a great whole.

Nov 24

Pardon and Forgiveness

"He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger for ever" (Psalm 103:9).

He will chide sometimes, or He would not be a wise Father for such poor, erring children as we are. His chiding is very painful to those who are true, because they feel how sadly they deserve it and how wrong it is on their part to grieve Him. We know what this chiding means, and we bow before the LORD, mourning that we should cause Him to be angry with us. But what a comfort we find in these lines! "Not always" will He chide. If we repent and turn to Him with hearts broken for sin and broken from sin, He will smile upon us at once. It is no pleasure to Him to turn a frowning face toward those whom He loves with all His heart: it is His joy that our joy should be full. Come, let us seek His face. There is no reason for despair, nor even for despondency. Let us love a chiding God, and before long we shall sing, "Thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." Be gone, ye dark forebodings, ye ravens of the soul! Come in, ye humble hopes and grateful memories, ye doves of the heart! He who pardoned us long ago as a judge will

again forgive us as a father, and we shall rejoice in His sweet, unchanging love.

Nov 25

Mountains Turned to Plains

"Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain; and he shall bring forth the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it" (Zechariah 4:7).

At this hour a mountain of difficulty, distress, or necessity may be in our way, and natural reason sees no path over it, or through it, or round it. Let faith come in, and straightway the mountain disappears and becomes a plain. But faith must first hear the word of the LORD--"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the LORD of hosts." This grand truth is a prime necessity for meeting the insurmountable trials of life. I see that I can do nothing and that all reliance on man is vanity. "Not by might." I see that no visible means can be relied on, but the force is in the invisible Spirit. God alone must work, and men and means must be nothing accounted of. If it be so that the Almighty God takes up the concerns of His people, then great mountains are nothing. He can remove worlds as boys toss balls about or drive them with their foot. This power He can lend to me. If the LORD bids me move an Alp I can do it through His name. It may be a great mountain, but even before my feebleness it shall become a plain; for the LORD hath said it. What can I be afraid of with God on my side?

Nov 26

Heavenly Alchemy

"Your sorrow shall be turned into joy" (John 16:20).

Their particular sorrow was the death and absence of their LORD, and it was turned into joy when He rose from the dead and showed Himself in their midst. All the sorrows of saints shall be thus transmuted, even the worst of them, which look as if they must forever remain fountains of bitterness. Then the more sorrow, the more joy. If we have loads of sorrow, then the LORD's power will turn them into tons of joy. Then the bitterer the trouble the sweeter the pleasure: the swinging of the pendulum far to the left will cause it to go all the farther to the right. The remembrance of the grief shall heighten the flavor of the delight: we shall set the one in contrast with the other, and the brilliance of the diamond shall be the more clearly seen because of the black foil behind it. Come, my heart, cheer up! In a little while I shall be as glad as I am now gloomy. Jesus tells me that by a heavenly alchemy my sorrow shall be turned into joy. I do not see how it is to be, but I believe it, and I begin to sing by way of anticipation. This depression of spirit is not for long; I shall soon be up among the happy ones who praise the LORD day and night, and there I shall sing of the mercy which delivered me out of great afflictions.

Nov 27

Rest in All Thy Goings

"And He said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest" (Exodus 33:14).

Precious promise! LORD, enable me to appropriate it as all my own. We must go at certain times from our abode, for here we have no continuing city. It often happens that when we feel most at home in a place, we are suddenly called away from it. Here is the antidote for this ill. The LORD Himself will keep us company. His presence, which includes His favor, His fellowship, His care, and His power, shall be ever with us in every one of our marchings. This means far more than it says; for, in fact, it means all things. If we have God present with us, we have possession of heaven and earth. Go with me, LORD, and then command me where Thou wilt! But we hope to find a place of rest. The text promises it. We are to have rest of God's own giving, making, and preserving. His presence will cause us to rest even when we are on the march, yea, even in the midst of battle. Rest! Thrice blessed word. Can it ever be enjoyed by mortals? Yes, there is the promise, and by faith we plead it. Rest comes from the Comforter, from the Prince of Peace, and from the glorious Father who rested on the seventh day from all His works. To be with God is to rest in the most emphatic sense.

Nov 28

Doing what God Can Bless

"The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto" (Deuteronomy 28:8).

If we obey the LORD our God He will bless that which He gives us. Riches are no curse when blessed of the LORD. When men have more than they require for their immediate need and begin to lay up in storehouses, the dry rot of covetousness or the blight of hard-heartedness is apt to follow the accumulation; but with God's blessing it is not so. Prudence arranges the saving, liberality

directs the spending, gratitude maintains consecration, and praise sweetens enjoyment. It is a great mercy to have God's blessing in one's iron safe and on one's banking account. What a favor is made ours by the last clause! "The LORD shall bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand unto." We would not put our hand to anything upon which we dare not ask God's blessing, neither would we go about it without prayer and faith. But what a privilege to be able to look for the LORD's help in every enterprise! Some talk of a lucky man: the blessing of the LORD is better than luck. The patronage of the great is nothing to the favor of God. Self-reliance is all very well; but the LORD's blessing is infinitely more than all the fruit of talent, genius, or tact.

Nov 29

Know How to Wait

"He that believeth shall not make haste" (Isaiah 28:16).

He shall make haste to keep the LORD's commandments; but he shall not make haste in any impatient or improper sense. He shall not haste to run away, for he shall not be overcome with the fear which causes panic. When others are flying hither and thither as if their wits had failed them, the believer shall be quiet, calm, and deliberate, and so shall be able to act wisely in the hour of trial. He shall not haste in his expectations, craving his good things at once and on the spot, but he will wait God's time. Some are in a desperate hurry to have the bird in the hand, for they regard the LORD's promise as a bird in the bush, not likely to be theirs. Believers know how to wait. . He shall not haste by plunging into wrong or questionable action. Unbelief must be doing something, and thus it works its own undoing; but faith makes no more haste than good speed, and thus it is not forced to go back sorrowfully by the way which it followed heedlessly. How is it with me? Am I believing, and am I therefore keeping to the believer's peace, which is walking with God? Peace, fluttering spirit! Oh, rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him! Heart, see that thou do this at once!

Nov 30

God Is in the Front Line

"The LORD, He it is that doth go before thee; He will be with thee, He will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed" (Deuteronomy 31:8).

In the presence of a great work or a great warfare, here is a text which should help us to buckle on our harness. If Jehovah Himself goes before us, it must be safe to follow. Who can obstruct our progress if the LORD Himself is in the van? Come, brother soldiers, let us make a prompt advance! Why do we hesitate to pass on to victory? Nor is the LORD before us only; He is with us. Above, beneath, around, within is the omnipotent, omnipresent One. In all time, even to eternity, He will be with us even as He has been. How this should nerve our arm! Dash at it boldly, ye soldiers of the cross, for the LORD of hosts is with us! Being before us and with us, He will never withdraw His help. He cannot fail in Himself, and He will not fail toward us. He will continue to help us according to our need, even to the end. As He cannot fail us, so He will not forsake us. He will always be both able and willing to grant us strength and succor till fighting days are gone. Let us not fear nor be dismayed; for the LORD of hosts will go down to the battle with us, will bear the brunt of the fight, and give us the victory.

Dec 1

True Walking Posture

"He that walketh uprightly walketh surely" (Proverbs 10:9).

His walk may be slow, but it is sure. He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent nor sure; but steady perseverance in integrity, if it does not bring riches, will certainly bring peace. In doing that which is just and right, we are like one walking upon a rock, for we have confidence that every step we take is upon solid and safe ground. On the other hand, the utmost success through questionable transactions must always be hollow and treacherous, and the man who has gained it must always be afraid that a day of reckoning will come, and then his gains will condemn him. Let us stick to truth and righteousness. By God's grace let us imitate our LORD and Master, in whose mouth no deceit was ever found. Let us not be afraid of being poor, nor of being treated with contempt. Never, on any account whatever, let us do that which our conscience cannot justify. If we lose inward peace, we lose more than a fortune can buy. If we keep in the LORD's own way and never sin against our conscience, our way is sure against all comers. Who is he that can harm us if we be followers of that which is good? We may be thought fools by fools if we are firm in our integrity; but in the place where judgment is infallible we shall be approved.

Dec 2

Our Holiest Example

"I have set the LORD always before me: because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved" (Psalm 16:8).

This is the way to live. With God always before us, we shall have the noblest companionship, the holiest example, the sweetest consolation, and the mightiest influence. This must be a resolute act of the mind. "I have set," and it must be maintained as a set and settled thing. Always to have an eye to the LORD's eye and an ear for the LORD's voice--this is the right state for the godly man. His God is near him, filling the horizon of his vision, leading the way of his life, and furnishing the theme of his meditation. What vanities we should avoid, what sins we should overcome, what virtues we should exhibit, what joys we should experience if we did indeed set the LORD always before us! Why not? This is the way to be safe. The LORD being ever in our minds, we come to feel safety and certainty because of His being so near. He is at our right hand to guide and aid us; and hence we are not moved by fear, nor force, nor fraud, nor fickleness. When God stands at a man's right hand, that man is himself sure to stand. Come on, then, ye foemen of the truth! Rush against me like a furious tempest, if ye will. God upholds me. God abides with me. Whom shall I fear?

Dec 3

Peace Whatever Exposure

"I will make them a Covenant Of Peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods" (Ezekiel 34:25).

It is the height of grace that Jehovah should be in covenant with man, a feeble, sinful, and dying creature. Yet the LORD has solemnly entered into a faithful compact with us, and from that covenant He will never turn aside. In virtue of this covenant we are safe. As lions and wolves are driven off by shepherds, so shall all noxious influences be chased away. The LORD will give us rest from disturbers and destroyers; the evil beasts shall cease out of the land. O LORD, make this Thy promise good even now! The LORD's people are to enjoy security in places of the greatest exposure: wilderness and woods are to be as pastures and folds to the flock of Christ. If the LORD does not change the place for the better, He will make us the better in the place. The wilderness is not a place to dwell in, but the LORD can make it so; in the woods one feels hound to watch rather than to sleep, and yet the LORD giveth His beloved sleep even there. Nothing without or within should cause any fear to the child of God. By faith the wilderness can become the suburbs of heaven and the woods the vestibule of glory.

Dec 4

Covered and Protected

"He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His Truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Psalm 91:4).

A condescending simile indeed! Just as a hen protects her brood and allows them to nestle under her wings, so will the LORD defend His people and permit them to hide away in Him. Have we not seen the little chicks peeping out from under the mother's feathers? Have we not heard their little cry of contented joy? In this way let us shelter ourselves in our God and feel overflowing peace in knowing that He is guarding us. While the LORD covers us, we trust. It would be strange if we did not. How can we distrust when Jehovah Himself becomes house and home, refuge and rest to us? This done, we go out to war in His name and enjoy the same guardian care. We need shield and buckler, and when we implicitly trust God, even as the chick trusts the hen, we find His truth arming us from head to foot. The LORD cannot lie; He must be faithful to His people; His promise must stand. This sure truth is all the shield we need. Behind it we defy the fiery darts of the enemy. Come, my soul, hide under those great wings, lose thyself among those soft feathers! How happy thou art!

Dec 5

High Places of Defense

"He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure" (Isaiah 33:16).

The man to whom God has given grace to be of blameless life dwells in perfect security. He dwells on high, above the world, Out of gunshot of the enemy, and near to heaven. He has high aims and motives, and he finds high comforts and company. He rejoices in the mountains of eternal love, wherein he has his abode. He is defended by munitions of stupendous rock. The firmest things in the universe are the promises and purposes of the unchanging God, and these are the safeguard of the obedient believer. He is provided for by this great promise: "Bread shall be given him." As the enemy cannot climb the fort, nor break down the rampart, so the fortress cannot be captured by siege and famine. The LORD, who rained manna in the wilderness, will keep His people in good store even when they are surrounded by those who would starve them. But what if water should fail? That cannot be. "His waters shall be sure." There is a never-failing well within the impregnable fortress. The LORD sees that nothing is wanting. None can touch the citizen of the true Zion. However fierce the enemy, the LORD will preserve His chosen.

Dec 6

"Through," Not Engulfed

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee" (Isaiah 43:2).

Bridge there is none: we must go through the waters and feel the rush of the rivers. The presence of God in the flood is better than a ferryboat. Tried we must be, but triumphant we shall be; for Jehovah Himself, who is mightier than many waters, shall be with us. Whenever else He may be away from His people, the LORD will surely be with them in difficulties and dangers. The sorrows of life may rise to an extraordinary height, but the LORD is equal to every occasion. The enemies of God can put in our way dangers of their own making, namely, persecutions and cruel mockings, which are like a burning, fiery furnace. What then? We shall walk through the fires. God being with us, we shall not be burned; nay, not even the smell of fire shall remain upon us. Oh, the wonderful security of the heaven-born and heaven-bound pilgrim! Floods cannot drown him, nor fires burn him. Thy presence, O LORD, is the protection of Thy saints from the varied perils of the road. Behold, in faith I commit myself unto Thee, and my spirit enters into rest.

Dec 7

Gift of Strength; Peace to Bless

"The LORD will give strength unto His people; the LORD will bless His people with peace" (Psalm 29:11).

David had just heard the voice of the LORD in a thunderstorm and had seen His power in the hurricane whose path he had described; and now, in the cool calm after the storm, that overwhelming power by which heaven and earth are shaken is promised to be the strength of the chosen. He who wings the unerring bolt will give to His redeemed the wings of eagles; He who shakes the earth with His voice will terrify the enemies of His saints and give His children peace. Why are we weak when we have divine strength to flee to? Why are we troubled when the LORD's own peace is ours? Jesus, the mighty God, is our strength; let us put Him on and go forth to our service. Jesus, our blessed LORD, is also our peace; let us repose in Him this day and end our fears. What a blessing to have Him for our strength and peace both now and forever! That same God who rides upon the storm in days of tempest will also rule the hurricane of our tribulation and send us, before long, days of peace. We shall have strength for storms and songs for fair weather. Let us begin to sing at once unto God, our strength and our peace. Away, dark thoughts! Up, faith and hope!

Dec 8

Following Leads to Honor

"If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor" (John 12:26).

The highest service is imitation. If I would be Christ's servant I must be His follower. To do as Jesus did is the surest way of bringing honor to His name. Let me mind this every day. If I imitate Jesus I shall have His company: if I am like Him I shall be with Him. In due time He will take me up to dwell with Him above, if, meanwhile, I have striven to follow Him here below. After His suffering our LORD came to His throne, and even so, after we have suffered a while with Him here below, we also shall arrive in glory. The issue of our LORD's life shall be the issue of ours: if we are with Him in His humiliation we shall be with Him in His glory. Come, my soul, pluck up courage and put down thy feet in the blood-marked footprints which thy LORD has left thee. Let me not fail to note that the Father will honor those who follow His Son. If He sees me true to Jesus, He will put marks of favor and honor upon me for His Son's sake. No honor can be like this. Princes and emperors bestow the mere shadows of honor; the substance of glory comes from the Father. Wherefore, my soul, cling thou to thy LORD Jesus more closely than ever.

Dec 9

The "All" of Belief

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth" (Mark 9:23).

Our unbelief is the greatest hindrance in our way; in fact, there is no other real difficulty as to our spiritual progress and prosperity. The LORD can do everything; but when He makes a rule that according to our faith so shall it be unto us, our unbelief ties the hands of His omnipotence. Yes, the confederacies of evil shall be scattered if we can but believe. Despised truth shall lift its head if we will but have confidence in the God of truth. We can bear our load of trouble or pass uninjured through the waves of distress if we can gird our loins with the girdle of peace, that girdle which is buckled on by the hands of trust. What can we not believe? Is everything possible except believing in God? Yet He is always true; why do we not believe in Him? He is always faithful to His word; why can we not trust Him? When we are in a right state of heart, faith costs no effort: it is then as natural for us to rely upon God as for a child to trust his father. The worst of it is that we can believe God about everything except the present pressing trial. This is

folly. Come, my soul, shake off such sinfulness, and trust thy God with the load, the labor, the longing of this present. This done, all is done.

Dec 10

God Is Our Ally

"But if thou shalt indeed obey His voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries" (Exodus 23:22).

The LORD Christ in the midst of His people is to be acknowledged and obeyed. He is the vice-regent of God and speaks in the Father's name, and it is ours implicitly and immediately to do as He commands. We shall lose the promise if we disregard the precept. To full obedience how large the blessing! The LORD enters into a league with His people, offensive and defensive. He will bless those who bless us and curse those who curse us. God will go heart and soul with His people and enter in deepest sympathy into their position. What a protection this affords us! We need not concern ourselves about our adversaries when we are assured that they have become the adversaries of God. If Jehovah has taken up our quarrel, we may leave the foemen in His hands. So far as our own interest is concerned we have no enemies; but for the cause of truth and righteousness we take up arms and go forth to conflict. In this sacred war we are allied with the eternal God, and if we carefully obey the law of our LORD Jesus, He is engaged to put forth all His power on our behalf. Wherefore we fear no man.

Dec 11

Trust and Do; Do and Trust

"Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed" (Psalm 37:3).

Trust and do are words which go well together, in the order in which the Holy Spirit has placed them. We should have faith, and that faith should work. Trust in God sets us upon holy doing: we trust God for good, and then we do good. We do not sit still because we trust, but we arouse ourselves and expect the LORD to work through us and by us. It is not ours to worry and do evil but to trust and do good. We neither trust without doing nor do without trusting. Adversaries would root us out if they could; but by trusting and doing we dwell in the land. We will not go into Egypt, but we will remain in Immanuel's land-the providence of God, the Canaan of covenant love. We are not so easily to be got rid of as the LORD's enemies suppose. They cannot thrust us Out nor stamp us out: where God has given us a name and a place, there we abide. But what about the supply of our necessities? The LORD has put a "verily" into this promise. As sure as God is true, His people shall be fed. It is theirs to trust and to do, and it is the LORD's to do according to their trust. If not fed by ravens, or fed by an Obadiah, or fed by a widow, yet they shall be fed somehow. Away, ye fears!

Dec 12

A Quiet Heart

"In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (Isaiah 30:15).

It is always weakness to be fretting and worrying, questioning and mis-trusting. What can we do if we wear ourselves to skin and bone? Can we gain anything by fearing and fuming? Do we not unfit ourselves for action and unhinge our minds for wise decision? We are sinking by our struggles when we might float by faith. Oh, for grace to be quiet! Why run from house to house to repeat the weary story which makes us more and more heart-sick as we tell it? Why even stay at home to cry out in agony because of wretched forebodings which may never be fulfilled? It would be well to keep a quiet tongue, but it would be far better if we had a quiet heart. Oh, to be still and know that Jehovah is God! Oh, for grace to be confident in God! The holy One of Israel must defend and deliver His own. He cannot run back from His solemn declarations. We may make sure that every word of His will stand though the mountains should depart. He deserves to be confided in; and if we would display confidence and consequent quietness, we might be as happy as the spirits before the throne. Come, my soul, return unto thy rest, and lean thy head upon the bosom of the LORD Jesus.

Dec 13

Evening Brightens into Day

"It shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light" (Zechariah 14:7).

It is a surprise that it should be so; for all things threaten that at evening time it shall be dark. God is wont to work in a way so much above our fears and beyond our hopes that we are greatly amazed and are led to praise His sovereign grace. No, it shall not be with us as our hearts are prophesying: the dark will not deepen into midnight, but it will on a sudden brighten into day. Never let us

despair. In the worst times let us trust in the LORD who turneth the darkness of the shadow of death into the morning. When the tale of bricks is doubled Moses appears, and when tribulation abounds it is nearest its end. This promise should assist our patience. The light may not fully come till our hopes are quite spent by waiting all day to no purpose. To the wicked the sun goes down while it is yet day: to the righteous the sun rises when it is almost night. May we not with patience wait for that heavenly light, which may be long in coming but is sure to prove itself well worth waiting for? Come, my soul, take up thy parable and sing unto Him who will bless thee in life and in death, in a manner surpassing all that nature has ever seen when at its best.

Dec 14

Nothing Old

"And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

Glory be to His name! All things need making new, for they are sadly battered and worn by sin. It is time that the old vesture was rolled up and laid aside, and that creation put on her Sunday suit. But no one else can make all things new except the LORD who made them at the first; for it needs as much power to make out of evil as to make out of nothing. Our LORD Jesus has undertaken the task, and He is fully competent for the performance of it. Already he has commenced His labor, and for centuries He has persevered in making new the hearts of men and the order of society. By and by He will make new the whole constitution of human government, and human nature shall be changed by His grace; and there shall come a day when the body shall be made new and raised like unto His glorious body. What a joy to belong to a kingdom in which everything is being made new by the power of its King! We are not dying out: we are hastening on to a more glorious life. Despite the opposition of the powers of evil, our glorious LORD Jesus is accomplishing His purpose and making us, and all things about us, "new" and as full of beauty as when they first came from the hand of the LORD.

Dec 15

World Concord

"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah 2:4).

Oh, that these happy times were come! At present the nations are heavily armed and are inventing weapons more and more terrible, as if the chief end of man could only be answered by destroying myriads of his fellows. Yet peace will prevail one day; yes, and so prevail that the instruments of destruction shall be beaten into other shapes and used for better purposes. How will this come about? By trade? By civilization? By arbitration? We do not believe it. Past experience forbids our trusting to means so feeble. Peace will be established only by the reign of the Prince of Peace. He must teach the people by His Spirit, renew their hearts by His grace, and reign over them by His supreme power, and then will they cease to wound and kill. Man is a monster when once his blood is up, and only the LORD Jesus can turn this lion into a lamb. By changing man's heart, his bloodthirsty passions are removed. Let every reader of this book of promises offer special prayer today to the LORD and Giver of Peace that He would speedily put an end to war and establish concord over the whole world.

Dec 16

Divine Expulsion

"Thou shalt drive out the Canaanites, though they have iron chariots, and though they be strong" (Joshua 17:18).

It is a great encouragement to valor to be assured of victory, for then a man goes forth to war in confidence and ventures where else he had been afraid to go. Our warfare is with evil within us and around us, and we ought to be persuaded that we are able to get the victory and that we shall do so in the name of the LORD Jesus. We are not riding for a fall, but to win; and win we shall. The grace of God in its omnipotence is put forth for the overflow of evil in every form: hence the certainty of triumph. Certain of our sins find chariots of iron in our constitution, our former habits, our associations, and our occupations. Nevertheless we must overcome them. They are very strong, and in reference to them we are very weak; yet in the name of God we must master them, and we will. If one sin has dominion of us we are not the LORD's free men. A man who is held by only one chain is still a captive. There is no going to heaven with one sin ruling within us, for of the saints it is said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Up, then, and slay every Canaanite, and break to shivers every chariot of iron! The LORD of hosts is with us, and who shall resist His sin-destroying power?

Dec 17

Nearest and Dearest Fellowship

"So shall we ever be with the LORD" (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

While we are here the LORD is with us, and when we are called away we are with Him. There is no dividing the saint from His Savior. They are one, and they always must be one: Jesus cannot be without His own people, for He would be a Head without a body. Whether caught up into the air, or resting in paradise, or sojourning here, we are with Jesus; and who shall separate us from Him? What a joy is this! Our supreme honor, rest, comfort, delight, is to be with the LORD. We cannot conceive of anything which can surpass or even equal this divine society. By holy fellowship we must be with Him in His humiliation, rejection, and travail, and then we shall be with Him in His glory. Before long we shall be with Him in His rest and in His royalty, in His expectation and in His manifestation. We shall fare as He fares and triumph as He triumphs. O my LORD, if I am to be forever with Thee, I have a destiny incomparable. I will not envy an archangel. To be forever with the LORD is my idea of heaven at its best. Not the harps of gold, nor the crowns unfading, nor the light unclouded is glory to me; but Jesus, Jesus Himself, and myself forever with Him in nearest and dearest fellowship.

Dec 18

Defended and Covered

"As birds flying, so will the LORD of hosts defend Jerusalem" (Isaiah 31:5).

With hurrying wing the mother bird hastens up to the protection of her young. She wastes no time upon the road when coming to supply them with food or guard them from danger. Thus as an eagle's wings will the LORD come for the defense of His chosen; yea, He will ride upon the wings of the wind. With outspread wing the mother covers her little ones in the nest. She hides them away by interposing her own body. The hen yields her own warmth to her chicks and makes her wings a house, in which they dwell at home. Thus doth Jehovah Himself become the protection of His elect. He Himself is their refuge, their abode, their all. As birds flying and birds covering (for the word means both), so will the LORD be unto us: and this He will be repeatedly and successfully. We shall be defended and preserved from all evil: the LORD who likens Himself to birds will not be like them in their feebleness, for He is Jehovah of hosts. Let this be our comfort, that almighty love will be swift to succor and sure to cover. The wing of God is more quick and more tender than the wing of a bird, and we will put our trust under its shadow henceforth and forever.

Dec 19

Afflictions, But No Broken Bones

"He keepeth all His bones; not one of them is broken" (Psalm 34:20).

This promise by the context is referred to the much afflicted righteous man: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of them all." He may suffer skin wounds and flesh wounds, but no great harm shall be done; "not a bone of him shall be broken." This is great comfort to a tried child of God, and comfort which I dare accept; for up to this hour I have suffered no real damage from my many afflictions. I have neither lost faith, nor hope, nor love. Nay so far from losing these bones of character, they have gained in strength and energy. I have more knowledge, more experience, more patience, more stability than I had before the trials came. Not even my joy has been destroyed. Many a bruise have I had by sickness, bereavement, depression, slander, and opposition; but the bruise has healed, and there has been no compound fracture of a bone, not even a simple one. The reason is not far to seek. If we trust in the LORD, He keeps all our bones; and if He keeps them, we may be sure that not one of them is broken. Come, my heart, do not sorrow. Thou art smarting, but there are no bones broken. Endure hardness and bid defiance to fear.

Dec 20

Men as Men; God as God

"I, even I, am He that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass; and forgettest the LORD thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth; and hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?" (Isaiah 51:12,13).

Let the text itself be taken as the portion for today. There is no need to enlarge upon it. Trembling one, read it, believe it, feed on it, and plead it before the LORD. He whom you fear is only a man after all; while He who promises to comfort you is God, your Maker, and the creator of heaven and earth. Infinite comfort more than covers a very limited danger. "Where is the fury of the oppressor?" It is in the LORD's hand. It is only the fury of a dying creature; fury which will end as soon as the breath is gone from the nostril. Why, then, should we stand in awe of one who is as frail as ourselves? Let us not dishonor our God by making a god of puny man. We can make an idol of a man by rendering to him excessive fear as well as by paying him inordinate love. Let us treat men as men, and God as God; and then we shall go calmly on in the path of duty, fearing the LORD and fearing nobody else.

Dec 21

From Anger to Love

"He will turn again, He will have compassion upon us; He will subdue our iniquities; and Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea" (Micah 7:19).

God never turns from His love, but He soon turns from His wrath. His love to His chosen is according to His nature; His anger is only according to His office. He loves because He is love; He frowns because it is necessary for our good. He will come back to the place in which His heart rests, namely, His love to His own, and then He will take pity upon our griefs and end them. What a choice promise is this--"He will subdue our iniquities"! He will conquer them. They cry to enslave us, but the LORD will give us victory over them by His own right hand. Like the Canaanites, they shall be beaten, put under the yoke, and ultimately slain. As for the guilt of our sins, how gloriously is that removed! "All their sins"--yes, the whole host of them; "thou wilt cast"--only an almighty arm could perform such a wonder; "into the depths of the sea"--where Pharaoh and his chariots went down. Not into the shallows out of which they might be washed up by the tide, but into the "depths" shall our sins be hurled. They are all gone. They sank into the bottom like a stone. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Dec 22

Immediately Present

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble" (Psalm 46:1).

A help that is not present when we need it is of small value. The anchor which is left at home is of no use to the seaman in the hour of storm; the money which he used to have is of no worth to the debtor when a writ is out against him. Very few earthly helps could be called "very present": they are usually far in the seeking, far in the using, and farther still when once used. But as for the LORD our God, He is present when we seek Him, present when we need Him, and present when we have already enjoyed His aid. He is more than "present," He is very present. More present than the nearest friend can be, for He is in us in our trouble; more present than we are to ourselves, for sometimes we lack presence of mind. He is always present, effectually present, sympathetically present, altogether present. He is present now if this is a gloomy season. Let us rest ourselves upon Him. He is our refuge, let us hide in Him; He is our strength, let us array ourselves with Him; He is our help, let us lean upon Him; He is our very present help, let us repose in Him now. We need not have a moment's care or an instant's fear. "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Dec 23

Precious Things

"And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the LORD be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath" (Deuteronomy 33:13).

We may be rich in such things as Joseph obtained, and we may have them in a higher sense. Oh, for "the precious things of heaven"! Power with God and the manifestation of power from God are most precious. We would enjoy the peace of God, the joy of the LORD, the glory of our God. The benediction of the three divine Persons in love, and grace, and fellowship we prize beyond the most fine gold. The things of earth are as nothing in preciousness compared with the things in heaven. "The dew." How precious is this! How we pray and praise when we have the dew! What refreshing, what growth, what perfume, what life there is in us when the dew is about! Above all things else, as plants of the LORD's own right hand planting, we need the dew of His Holy Spirit. "The deep that coucheth beneath." Surely this refers to that unseen ocean underground which supplies all the fresh springs which make glad the earth. Oh, to tap the eternal fountains! This is an unspeakable boon; let no believer rest till he possesses it. The all-sufficiency of Jehovah is ours forever. Let us resort to it now.

Dec 24

Over Jordan with Singing

"Thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee" (Deuteronomy 33:29).

That archenemy, the devil, is a liar from the beginning; but he is so very plausible that, like mother Eve, we are led to believe him. Yet in our experience we shall prove him a liar. He says that we shall fall from grace, dishonor our profession, and perish with the doom of apostates; but, trusting in the LORD Jesus, we shall hold on our way and prove that Jesus loses none whom His Father gave Him. He tells us that our bread will fail, and we shall starve with our children; yet the Feeder of the ravens has not forgotten us yet, and He will never do so, but will prepare us a table in the presence of our enemies. He whispers that the LORD will not deliver

us Out of the trial which is looming in the distance, and he threatens that the last ounce will break the camel's back. What a liar he is! For the LORD will never leave us or forsake us. "Let him deliver him now!" cries the false fiend: but the LORD will silence him by coming to our rescue. He takes great delight in telling us that death will prove too much for us. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" But there also he shall prove a liar unto us, and we shall pass through the river singing psalms of glory.

Dec 25

He Came; He Is Coming

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

Many are celebrating our LORD's first coming this day; let us turn our thoughts to the promise of His second coming. This is as sure as the first advent and derives a great measure of its certainty from it. He who came as a lowly man to serve will assuredly come to take the reward of His service. He who came to suffer will not be slow in coming to reign. This is our glorious hope, for we shall share His joy. Today we are in our concealment and humiliation, even as He was while here below; but when He cometh it will be our manifestation, even as it will be His revelation. Dead saints shall live at His appearing. The slandered and despised shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Then shall the saints appear as kings and priests, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. The long rest and inconceivable splendor of the millennial reign will be an abundant recompense for the ages of witnessing and warring. Oh, that the LORD would come! He is coming! He is on the road and traveling quickly. The sound of His approach should be as music to our hearts! Ring out, ye bells of hope!

Dec 26

God Only, You Can Trust

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended" (Matthew 26:33).

Why," cries one, "this is no promise of God." Just so, but it was a promise of man, and therefore it came to nothing. Peter thought that he was saying what he should assuredly carry out; but a promise which has no better foundation than a human resolve will fall to the ground. No sooner did temptations arise than Peter denied his Master and used oaths to confirm his denial. What is man's word? An earthen pot broken with a stroke. What is your own resolve? A blossom, which, with God's care, may come to fruit, but which, left to itself, will fall to the ground with the first wind that moves the bough. On man's word hang only what it will bear. On thine own resolve depend not at all. On the promise of thy God hang time and eternity, this world and the next, thine all and the all of all thy beloved ones. This volume is a checkbook for believers, and this page is meant as a warning as to what bank they draw upon and whose signature they accept. Rely upon Jesus without limit. Trust not thyself nor any horn of woman, beyond due bounds; but trust thou only and wholly in the LORD.

Dec 27

His Kindness and Covenant

"For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but My kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the Covenant of My Peace be removed, saith the LORD that hath mercy on thee" (Isaiah 54:10).

One of the most delightful qualities of divine love is its abiding character. The pillars of the earth may be moved out of their places, but the kindness and the covenant of our merciful Jehovah never depart from His people. Row happy my soul feels in a firm belief of this inspired declaration! The year is almost over, and the years of my life are growing few, but time does not change my LORD. New lamps are taking the place of the old; perpetual change is on all things, but our LORD is the same. Force over turns the hills, but no conceivable power can affect the eternal God. Nothing in the past, the present, or the future can cause Jehovah to be unkind to me. My soul, rest in the eternal kindness of the LORD, who treats thee as one near of kin. Remember also the everlasting covenant. God is ever mindful of it--see that thou art mindful of it too. In Christ Jesus the glorious God has pledged Himself to thee to be thy God and to hold thee as one of His people. Kindness and covenant--dwell on these words as sure and lasting things which eternity itself shall not take from thee.

Dec 28

Absolute Assurance

"He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

Several times in the Scriptures the LORD hath said this. He has often repeated it to make our assurance doubly sure. Let us never

harbor a doubt about it. In itself the promise is specially emphatic. In the Greek it has five negatives, each one definitely shutting out the possibility of the LORD's ever leaving one of His people so that he can justly feel forsaken of his God. This priceless Scripture does not promise us exemption from trouble, but it does secure us against desertion. We may be called to traverse strange ways, but we shall always have our LORD's company, assistance, and provision. We need not covet money, for we shall always have our God, and God is better than gold; His favor is better than fortune. We ought surely to be content with such things as we have, for he who has God has more than all the world besides. What can we have beyond the Infinite? What more can we desire than almighty Goodness. Come, my heart; if God says He will never leave thee nor forsake thee, be thou much in prayer for grace that thou mayest never leave thy LORD, nor even for a moment forsake His ways.

Dec 29

He Will Carry Us Home

"And even to your old age I am He; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Isaiah 46:4).

The year is very old, and here is a promise for our aged friends; yes, and for us all, as age creeps over us. Let us live long enough, and we shall all have hoar hairs; therefore we may as well enjoy this promise by the foresight of faith. When we grow old our God will still be the I AM, abiding evermore the same. Hoar hairs tell of our decay, but He decayeth not. When we cannot carry a burden and can hardly carry ourselves, the LORD will carry us. Even as in our young days He carried us like lambs in His bosom, so will He in our years of infirmity He made us, and He will care for us. When we become a burden to our friends and a burden to ourselves, the LORD will not shake us off, but the rather He will take us up and carry and deliver us more fully than ever. In many cases the LORD give His servants a long and calm evening. They worked hard all day and wore themselves out in their Master's service, and so He said to them, "Now rest in anticipation of that eternal Sabbath which I have prepared for you." Let us not dread old age. Let us grow old graciously since the LORD Himself is with us in fullness of grace.

Dec 30

Loved to Perfection

"Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13:1).

This fact is essentially a promise; for what our LORD was He is, and what He was to those with whom He lived on earth, He will be to all His beloved so long as the moon endureth. "Having loved": here was the wonder! That He should ever have loved men at all is the marvel. What was there in His poor disciples that He should love them? What is there in me? But when He has once begun to love, it is His nature to continue to do so. Love made the saints "his own"--what a choice title! He purchased them with blood, and they became His treasure. Being His own, He will not lose them. Being His beloved, He will not cease to love them. My soul, He will not cease to love thee! The text is well as it stands: "to the end." Even till His death the ruling passion of love to His own reigned in His sacred bosom. It means also to the uttermost. He could not love them more: He gave Himself for them. Some read it, to perfection. Truly He lavished upon them a perfect love, in which there was no flaw nor failure, no unwisdom, no unfaithfulness. Such is the love of Jesus to each one of His people. Let us sing to our Well-beloved a song.

Dec 31

No Stranger in Heaven

"Thou shalt guide me with Thy Counsel, and afterward receive me to glory" (Psalm 73:24).

From day to day and from year to year my faith believes in the wisdom and love of God, and I know that I shall not believe in vain. No good word of His has ever failed, and I am sure that none shall ever fall to the ground. I put myself into His hand for guidance. I know not the way that I should choose: the LORD shall choose mine inheritance for me. I need counsel and advice; for my duties are intricate, and my condition is involved... The counsel of the infallible God I seek in preference to my own judgment or the advice of friends... Soon the end will come: a few more years and I must depart out of this world unto the Father. My LORD will be near my bed. He will meet me at heaven's gate: He will welcome me to the gloryland. I shall not be a stranger in heaven: my own God and Father will receive me to its endless bliss.

Glory be to Him who

Will guide me here,

And receive me hereafter. Amen.

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