

Faith's Checkbook by C. H. Spurgeon

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 personal testimony)

FAITH'S CHECKBOOK

by C H Spurgeon

Part 1	January - March
Part 2	April - June
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Jan 1

The Bible's First Promise

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

This is the first promise to fallen man. It contains the whole gospel and the essence of the covenant of grace. It has been in great measure fulfilled. The seed of the woman, even our LORD Jesus, was bruised in His heel, and a terrible bruising it was. How terrible will be the final bruising of the serpent's head! This was virtually done when Jesus took away sin, vanquished death, and broke the power of Satan; but it awaits a still fuller accomplishment at our LORD's second advent and in the Day of Judgment. To us the promise stands as a prophecy that we shall be afflicted by the powers of evil in our lower nature, and thus bruised in our heel; but we shall triumph in Christ, who sets His foot on the old serpent's head. Throughout this year we may have to learn the first part of this promise by experience, through the temptations of the devil and the unkindness of the ungodly, who are his seed. They may so bruise us that we may limp with our sore heel; but let us grasp the second part of the text, and we shall not be dismayed. By faith let us rejoice that we shall still reign in Christ Jesus, the woman's seed.

Jan 2

Conquest to Victory

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Romans 16:20).

This promise follows well upon that of yesterday. We are evidently to be conformed to our covenant Head, not only in His being bruised in His heel but in His conquest of the evil one. Even under our feet is the old dragon to be bruised. The Roman believers were grieved with strife in the church; but their God was "the God of peace" and gave them rest of soul. The archenemy tripped up the feet of the unwary and deceived the hearts of the simple; but he was to get the worst of it and to be trodden down by those whom he had troubled. This victory would not come to the people of God through their own skill or power; but God Himself would bruise Satan. Though it would be under their feet, yet the bruising would be of the LORD alone. Let us bravely tread upon the tempter! Not only inferior spirits but the prince of darkness himself must go down before us. In unquestioning confidence in God let us look for speedy victory. "Shortly." Happy word! Shortly we shall set our foot on the old serpent! What a joy to crush evil! What dishonor to Satan to have his head bruised by human feet! Let us by faith in Jesus tread the tempter down.

Jan 3

Rest on a Promise

"The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it" (Genesis 28:13).

No promise is of private interpretation: it belongs not to one saint but to all believers. If, my brother, thou canst in faith lie down upon a promise and take thy rest thereon, it is thine. Where Jacob "lighted" and tarried and rested, there he took possession. Stretching his weary length upon the ground, with the stones of that place for his pillows, he little fancied that he was thus entering into

ownership of the land; yet so it was. He saw in his dream that wondrous ladder which for all true believers unites earth and heaven, and surely where the foot of the ladder stood he must have a right to the soil, for other wise he could not reach the divine stair- way. All the promises of God are "Yea" and "Amen" in Christ Jesus, and as He is ours, every promise is ours if we will but lie down upon it in restful faith. Come, weary one, use thy LORD's words as thy pillows, Lie down in peace. Dream only of Him. Jesus is thy ladder of light. See the angels coming and going upon Him between thy soul and thy God, and be sure that the promise is thine own God-given portion and that it will not be robbery for thee to take it to thyself, as spoken specially to thee.

Jan 4

In Calm Repose

"I will make them to lie down safely" (Hosea 2:18).

Yes, the saints are to have peace. The passage from which this gracious word is taken speaks of peace "with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground." This is peace with earthly enemies, with mysterious evils, and with little annoyances! Any of these might keep us from lying down, but none of them shall do so. The LORD will quite destroy those things which threaten His people: "I will break the bow and the sword, and the battle out of the earth." Peace will be profound indeed when all the instruments of disquiet are broken to pieces. With this peace will come rest, "So he giveth his beloved sleep." Fully supplied and divinely quieted, believers lie down in calm repose. This rest will be a safe one. It is one thing to lie down but quite another "to lie down safely." We are brought to the land of promise, the house of the Father, the chamber of love, and the bosom of Christ: surely we may now "lie down safely." It is safer for a believer to lie down in peace than to sit up and worry. "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures," We never rest till the Comforter makes us lie down.

Jan 5 A Wonderful Guarantee

"I will strengthen thee" (Isaiah 41:10).

When called to serve or to suffer, we take stock of our strength, and we find it to be less than we thought and less than we need. But let not our heart sink within us while we have such a word as this to fall back upon, for it guarantees us all that we can possibly need. God has strength omnipotent; that strength He can communicate to us; and His promise is that He will do so. He will be the food of our souls and the health of our hearts; and thus He will give us strength. There is no telling how much power God can put into a man. When divine strength comes, human weakness is no more a hindrance. Do we not remember seasons of labor and trial in which we received such special strength that we wondered at ourselves? In the midst of danger we were calm, under bereavement we were resigned, in slander we were self-contained, and in sickness we were patient. The fact is that God gives unexpected strength when unusual trials come upon us, We rise out of our feeble selves. Cowards play the man, foolish ones have wisdom given them, and the silent receive in the self-same hour what they shall speak, My own weakness makes me shrink, but God's promise makes me brave. LORD, strengthen me "according to thy word."

Jan 6 Help from Without

"Yea, I will help thee" (Isaiah 41:10).

Yesterday's promise secured us strength for what we have to do, but this guarantees us aid in cases where we cannot act alone. The LORD says, "I will help thee." Strength within is supplemented by help without. God can raise us up allies in our warfare if so it seems good in His sight; and even if He does not send us human assistance, He Himself will be at our side, and this is better still. "Our August Ally" is better than legions of mortal helpers. His help is timely: He is a very present help in time of trouble. His help is very wise: He knows how to give each man help meet and fit for him. His help is most effectual, though vain is the help of man. His help is more than help, for He bears all the burden and supplies all the need. "The LORD is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me." Because He has already been our help, we feel confidence in Him for the present and the future. Our prayer is, "LORD, by thou my helper"; our experience is, "The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities"; our expectation is, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, whence cometh my help"; and our song soon will be, "Thou, LORD, hast holden me."

Jan 7 Always Growing

"Thou shalt see greater than these" (John 1:50).

This is spoken to a childlike believer, who was ready to accept Jesus as the Son of God, the King of Israel, upon one convincing piece of argument. Those who are willing to see shall see; it is because we shut our eyes that we become so sadly blind. We have seen much already. Great things and unsearchable has the LORD showed unto us, for which we praise His name; but there are greater truths in His Word, greater depths of experience, greater heights of fellow- ship, greater works of usefulness, greater discoveries of power, and love, and wisdom. These we are yet to see if we are willing to believe our LORD. The faculty of inventing false doctrine is ruinous, but power to see the truth is a blessing. Heaven shall be opened to us, the way thither shall be made clear

to us in the Son of Man, and the angelic commerce which goes on between the upper and the lower kingdoms shall be made more manifest to us. Let us keep our eyes open toward spiritual objects and expect to see more and more. Let us believe that our lives will not drivel down into nothing but that we shall be always on the growing hand, seeing greater and still greater things, till we behold the great God Himself and never again lose the sight of Him.

Jan 8 Purity of Heart and Life

"Blessed are the are pure in heart: for they shall see God" (Matthew 5:8).

Purity, even purity of heart, is the main thing to be aimed at. We need to be made clean within through the Spirit and the Word, and then we shall be clean without by consecration and obedience. There is a close connection between the affections and the understanding: if we love evil we cannot understand that which is good. If the heart is foul, the eye will be dim. How can those men see a holy God who love unholy things? What a privilege it is to see God here! A glimpse of Him is heaven below! In Christ Jesus the pure in heart behold the Father. We see Him, His truth, His love, His purpose, His sovereignty, His covenant character, yea, we see Himself in Christ. But this is only apprehended as sin is kept out of the heart. Only those who aim at godliness can cry, "Mine eyes are ever towards the LORD." The desire of Moses, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory," can only be fulfilled in us as we purify ourselves from all iniquity. We shall "see him as he is," and "every one that hath this hope in him purifieth himself." The enjoyment of present fellowship and the hope of the beatific vision are urgent motives for purity of heart and life. LORD, make us pure in heart that we may see Thee!

Jan 9 Gaining by Giving

"The liberal soul shall be made fat" (Proverbs 11:25).

If I desire to flourish in soul, I must not hoard up my stores but must distribute to the poor. To be close and niggardly is the world's way to prosperity, but it is not God's way, for He saith, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, and it tendeth to poverty." Faith's way of gaining is giving. I must try this again and again, and I may expect that as much of prosperity as will be good for me will come to me as a gracious reward for a liberal course of action. Of course, I may not be sure of growing rich. I shall be fat but not too fat. Too great riches might make me as unwieldy as corpulent persons usually are and cause me the dyspepsia of worldliness, and perhaps bring on a fatty degeneration of the heart. No, if I am fat enough to be healthy, I may well be satisfied; and if the LORD grants me a competence, I may be thoroughly content. But there is a mental and spiritual fatness which I would greatly covet, and this comes as the result of generous thoughts toward my God, His church, and my fellow men. Let me not stint, lest I starve my heart. Let me be bountiful and liberal, for so shall I be like my LORD. He gave Himself for me; shall I grudge Him anything?

Jan 10 Divine Recompense

"He that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Proverbs 11:25).

If I carefully consider others, God will consider me, and in some way or other He will recompense me. Let me consider the poor, and the LORD will consider me. Let me look after little children, and the LORD will treat me as His child. Let me feed His flock, and He will feed me. Let me water His garden, and He will make a watered garden of my soul. This is the LORD's own promise; be it mine to fulfill the condition and then to expect its fulfillment. I may care about myself till I grow morbid; I may watch over my own feelings till I feel nothing; and I may lament my own weakness till I grow almost too weak to lament. It will be far more profitable for me to become unselfish and out of love to my LORD Jesus begin to care for the souls of those around me. My tank is getting very low; no fresh rain comes to fill it; what shall I do? I will pull up the plug and let its contents run out to water the withering plants around me. What do I see? My cistern seems to fill as it flows. A secret spring is at work. While all was stagnant, the fresh spring was sealed; but as my stock flows out to water others the LORD thinketh upon me. Hallelujah!

Jan 11 Faith Sets the Bow

"And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud" (Genesis 9:14).

Just now clouds are plentiful enough, but we are not afraid that the world will be destroyed by a deluge. We see the rainbow often enough to prevent our having any such fears. The covenant which the LORD made with Noah stands fast, and we have no doubts about it. Why, then, should we think that the clouds of trouble, which now darken our sky, will end in our destruction? Let us dismiss such groundless and dishonoring fears. Faith always sees the bow of covenant promise whenever sense sees the cloud of affliction. God has a bow with which He might shoot out His arrows of destruction. But see, it is turned upward! It is a bow without an arrow or a string; it is a bow hung out for show, no longer used for war. It is a bow of many colors, expressing joy and delight, and not a bow blood-red with slaughter or black with anger. Let us be of good courage. Never does God so darken our sky as to leave His covenant without a witness, and even if He did, we would trust Him since He cannot change or lie or in any other way fail to keep His

covenant of peace. Until the waters go over the earth again, we shall have no reason for doubting our God.

Jan 12

"Loved unto the End"

"For the LORD will not cast off for ever" (Lamentations 3:31).

He may cast away for a season but not forever. A woman may leave off her ornaments for a few days, but she will not forget them or throw them upon the dunghill. It is not like the LORD to cast off those whom He loves, for "having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Some talk of our being in grace and out of it, as if we were like rabbits that run in and out of their burrows; but, indeed, it is not so. The LORD's love is a far more serious and abiding matter than this. He chose us from eternity, and He will love us throughout eternity. He loved us so as to die for us, and we may therefore be sure that His love will never die. His honor is so wrapped up in the salvation of the believer that He can no more cast him off than He can cast off His own robes of office as King of glory. No, no! The LORD Jesus, as a Head, never casts off His members; as a Husband, He never casts off His bride. Did you think you were cast off? Why did you think so evil of the LORD who has betrothed you to Himself? Cast off such thoughts, and never let them lodge in your soul again. "The LORD hath not cast away his people which he foreknew" (Romans 11:2). "He hateth putting away" (Malachi 2:16).

Jan 13

Never Cast Out

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

Is there any instance of our LORD's casting out a coming one? If there be so, we would like to know of it; but there has been none, and there never will be. Among the lost souls in hell there is not one that can say, "I went to Jesus, and He refused me." It is not possible that you or I should be the first to whom Jesus shall break His word. Let us not entertain so dark a suspicion. Suppose we go to Jesus now about the evils of today. Oh, this we may be sure -- He will not refuse us audience or cast us out. Those of us who have often been and those who have never gone before -- let us go together, and we shall see that He will not shut the door of His grace in the face of any one of us. "This man receiveth sinners," but He repulses none. We come to Him in weakness and sin, with trembling faith, and small knowledge, and slender hope; but He does not cast us out. We come by prayer, and that prayer broken; with confession, and that confession faulty; with praise, and that praise far short of His merits; but yet He receives us. We come diseased, polluted, worn out, and worthless; but He doth in no wise cast us out. Let us come again today to Him who never casts us out.

Jan 14

Rest Is a Gift

"Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

We who are saved find rest in Jesus. Those who are not saved will receive rest if they come to Him, for here He promises to "give" it. Nothing can be freer than a gift; let us gladly accept what He gladly gives. You are not to buy it, nor to borrow it, but to receive it as a gift (Jn 1:12, 13). You labor under the lash of ambition, covetousness, lust, or anxiety: He will set you free from this iron bondage and give you rest. You are "laden," yes, "heavy laden" with sin, fear, care, remorse, fear of death; but if you come to Him He will unload you (Jn 8:36). He carried the crushing mass of our sin that we might no longer carry it (Ro 6:11-note). He made Himself the great Burden-bearer (1Pe 2:24-note), that every laden one might cease from bowing down under the enormous pressure. Jesus gives rest. It is so. Will you believe it? (Jn 8:24) Will you put it to the test? Will you do so at once? (Acts 16:31) Come to Jesus by quitting every other hope, by thinking of Him, believing God's testimony about Him, and trusting everything with Him (Jn 10:37, 38). If you thus come to Him the rest which He will give you will be deep, safe, holy, and everlasting. He gives a rest which develops into heaven, and He gives it this day to all who come to Him.

Jan 15

Made Rich by Faith

"For the needy shall not always be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever" (Psalm 9:18-note).

Poverty is a hard heritage; but those who trust in the LORD (Pr 3:5, 6) are made rich by faith (cp Jas 2:5). They know that they are not forgotten of God, and though it may seem that they are overlooked in His providential distribution of good things, they look for a time when all this shall be righted (cp Ps 73:12, 13 contrast Ps 73:16, 17!-note). Lazarus will not always lie among the dogs at the rich man's gate but he will have his recompense in Abraham's bosom (Lk 16:19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26). Even now the LORD

remembers His poor but precious sons, "I am poor and needy; yet the LORD thinketh upon me," (Ps 40:17KJV-[note](#), cp Ps 70:5KJV-[note](#), Ps 86:1KJV-[note](#)) said one of old, and it is even so.

The godly poor have great expectations.

They expect the LORD to provide them all things necessary for this life and godliness (2Pe 1:3[note](#)); they expect to see things working for their good (Ro 8:28-[note](#)); they expect to have all the closer fellowship with their LORD, who had not where to lay His head (Mt 8:20); they expect His second advent and to share its glory (1Jn 3:2-[note](#), 1Jn 3:3-[note](#)). This expectation cannot perish, for it is laid up in Christ Jesus (1Pe 1:4-[note](#)), who liveth forever (Is 57:15), and because He lives, it shall live also (2Co 13:4). The poor saint singeth many a song which the rich sinner cannot understand (1Co 2:14). Wherefore, let us, when we have short commons below, think of the royal table above (Ps 23:5-[note](#))

Jan 16

Even the Faintest Call

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shalt be delivered" (Joel 12:32).

Why do I not call on His name? Why do I run to this neighbor and that when God is so near and will hear my faintest call? Why do I sit down and devise schemes and invent plans! Why not at once roll myself and my burden upon the LORD? Straightforward is the best runner -- why do I not run at once to the living God? In vain shall I look for deliverance anywhere else; but with God I shall find it; for here I have His royal "**shall**" to make it sure. I need not ask whether I may call on Him or not, for that word **whosoever** is a very wide and comprehensive one. **Whosoever** means me, for it means anybody and everybody who calls upon God. I will therefore follow the leading of the text and at once call upon the glorious LORD who has made so large a promise. My case is urgent, and I do not see how I am to be delivered; but this is no business of mine. He who makes the promise will find out ways and means of keeping it. It is mine to obey His commands; it is not mine to direct His counsels. I am His servant, not His solicitor. I call upon Him, and He will deliver me.

Jan 17

A Man Without Fear

"And He said, Certainly I will be with thee" (Exodus 3:12).

Of course, if the LORD sent Moses on an errand, He would not let him go alone. The tremendous risk which it would involve and the great power it would require would render it ridiculous for God to send a poor lone Hebrew to confront the mightiest king in all the world and then leave him to himself. It could not be imagined that a wise God would match poor Moses with Pharaoh and the enormous forces of Egypt. Hence He says, "Certainly I will be with thee," as if it were out of the question that He would send him alone. In my case, also, the same rule will hold good. If I go upon the LORD's errand with a simple reliance upon His power and a single eye to His glory, it is certain that He will be with me. His sending me binds Him to back me up. Is not this enough? What more can I want? If all the angels and arch-angels were with me. I might fail; but if He is with me, I must succeed. Only let me take care that I act worthily toward this promise. Let me not go timidly, halfheartedly, carelessly, presumptuously. What manner of person ought he to be who has God with him! In such company it behoveth me to play the man and, like Moses, go in unto Pharaoh without fear.

Jan 18

Christ and His Children

"When Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed" (Isaiah 53:10).

Our LORD Jesus has not died in vain. His death was sacrificial: He died as our substitute, because death was the penalty of our sins. Because His substitution was accepted of God, He has saved those for whom He made His soul a sacrifice. By death He became like the corn of wheat which bringeth forth much fruit. There must be a succession of children unto Jesus; He is "the Father of the everlasting age." He shall say, "Behold, I and the children whom Thou hast given me." A man is honored in his sons, and Jesus hath His quiver full of these arrows of the mighty. A man is represented in his children, and so is the Christ in Christians. In his seed a man's life seems to be prolonged and extended; and so is the life of Jesus continued in believers. Jesus lives, for He sees His seed. He fixes His eye on us, He delights in us, He recognizes us as the fruit of His soul travail. Let us be glad that our LORD does not fail to enjoy the result of His dread sacrifice, and that He will never cease to feast His eyes upon the harvest of His death. Those eyes which once wept for us are now viewing us with pleasure. Yes, He looks upon those who are looking unto Him. Our eyes meet! What a joy is this!

Jan 19

Mouth Confession; Heart Belief

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved" (see note Romans 10:9).

There must be confession with the mouth. Have I made it? Have I openly avowed my faith in Jesus as the Savior whom God has raised from the dead, and have I done it in God's way! Let me honestly answer this question. There must also be belief with the heart. Do I sincerely believe in the risen LORD Jesus? Do I trust in Him as my sole hope of salvation? Is this trust from my heart? Let me answer as before God. If I can truly claim that I have both confessed Christ and believed in Him, then I am saved. The text does not say it may be so, but it is plain as a pikestaff and clear as the sun in the heavens: "Thou shalt be saved." As a believer and a confessor, I may lay my hand on this promise and plead it before the LORD God at this moment, and throughout life, and in the hour of death, and at the Day of Judgment. I must be saved from the guilt of sin, the power of sin, the punishment of sin, and ultimately from the very being of sin. God hath said it -- "Thou shalt be saved." I believe it. I shall be saved. I am saved. Glory be to God forever and ever!

Jan 20

The Overcomer

"To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree Of Life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God" (see note [Revelation 2:7](#))

No man may turn his back in the day of battle or refuse to go to the holy war. We must fight if we would reign, and we must carry on the warfare till we overcome every enemy, or else this promise is not for us, since it is only for "him that overcometh." We are to overcome the false prophets who have come into the world and all the evils which accompany their teaching. We are to overcome our own faintness of heart and tendency to decline from our first love. Read the whole of the Spirit's word to the church at Ephesus. If by grace we win the day, as we shall if we truly follow our conquering Leader, then we shall be admitted to the very center of the paradise of God and shall be permitted to pass by the cherub and his flaming sword and come to that guarded tree, whereof if a man eat, he shall live forever. We shall thus escape that endless death which is the doom of sin and gain that everlasting life which is the seal of innocence, the outgrowth of immortal principles of Godlike holiness. Come, my heart, pluck up courage! To flee the conflict will be to lose the joys of the new and better Eden; to fight unto victory is to walk with God in paradise.

Jan 21

God's Enemies Shall Bow

"The Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD" (Exodus 7:5).

The ungodly world is hard to teach. Egypt does not know Jehovah and therefore dares to set up its idols and even ventures to ask, "Who is the LORD?" Yet the LORD means to break proud hearts, whether they will or not. When His judgments thunder over their heads, darken their skies, destroy their harvests, and slay their sons, they begin to discern somewhat of Jehovah's power. There will yet be such things done in the earth as shall bring skeptics to their knees. Let us not be dismayed because of their blasphemies, for the LORD can take care of His own name, and He will do so in a very effectual manner. The salvation of His own people was another potent means of making Egypt know that the God of Israel was Jehovah, the living and true God. No Israelite died by any one of the ten plagues. None of the chosen seed were drowned in the Red Sea. Even so, the salvation of the elect and the sure glorification of all true believers will make the most obstinate of God's enemies acknowledge that Jehovah, He is the God. Oh, that His convincing power would go forth by His Holy Spirit in the preaching of the gospel, till all nations shall bow at the name of Jesus and call Him LORD!

Jan 22

Christian Liberty

"Blessed is he that considers the poor (NAS = helpless): the LORD will deliver him in time of trouble" (Psalm 41:1 - [Spurgeon's Note](#))

To think about the poor and let them lie on our hearts is a Christian man's duty; for Jesus put them with us and near us when He said, "The poor ye have always with you." (Mt 26:11) Many give their money to the poor in a hurry, without thought; and many more give nothing at all. This precious promise belongs to those who "**consider**" (Ed: Hebrew verb sakal = to act with insight, to be prudent, to give insight, to ponder, to understand, to act prudently, to act with devotion, relates to knowing the reason for something) the poor, look into their case, devise plans for their benefit, and considerately carry them out.

We can do more by care than by cash,

and most with two together.

To those who consider the poor, the LORD promises His own consideration in times of distress. He will bring us out of trouble if we help others when they are in trouble. We shall receive very singular providential help if the LORD sees that we try to provide for others.

We shall have a time of trouble, however generous we may be; but if we are charitable, we may put in a claim for peculiar deliverance, and the LORD will not deny His own word and bond.

Miserly curmudgeons may help themselves, but considerate and generous believers the LORD will help. As you have done unto others, so will the LORD do unto you. Empty your pockets.

Jan 23

A Completed Sacrifice

"And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering: and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him" (Leviticus 1:4).

If by that laying on of his hand the bullock became the offerer's sacrifice, how much more shall Jesus become ours by the laying on of the hand of faith? My faith doth lay her hand On that dear head of Thine, While like a penitent I stand, And there confess my sin. If a bullock could be accepted for him to make atonement for him, how much more shall the LORD Jesus be our full and all-sufficient propitiation? Some quarrel with the great truth of substitution; but as for us, it is our hope, our joy, our boast, our all. Jesus is accepted for us to make atonement for us, and we are "accepted in the Beloved." Let the reader take care at once to lay his hand on the LORD's completed sacrifice, that by accepting it he may obtain the benefit of it. If he has done so once, let him do it again. If he has never done so, let him put out his hand without a moment's delay. Jesus is yours now if you will have Him. Lean on Him -- lean hard on Him -- and He is yours beyond all question; you are reconciled to God, your sins are blotted out, and you are the LORD's.

Jan 24

Care of Our Feet

"He will keep the feet of His saints" (1 Samuel 2:9).

The way is slippery and our feet are feeble, but the LORD will keep our feet. If we give ourselves up by obedient faith to be His holy ones, He will Himself be our guardian. Not only will He charge His angels to keep us, but He Himself will preserve our goings. He will keep our feet from falling so that we do not defile our garments, wound our souls, and cause the enemy to blaspheme. He will keep our feet from wandering so that we do not go into paths of error, or ways of folly, or courses of the world's custom. He will keep our feet from swelling through weariness, or blistering because of the roughness and length of the way. He will keep our feet from wounding: our shoes shall be iron and brass so that even though we tread on the edge of the sword, or on deadly serpents, we shall not bleed or be poisoned. He will also pluck our feet out of the net. We shall not be entangled by the deceit of our malicious and crafty foes. With such a promise as this, let us run without weariness and walk without fear. He who keeps our feet will do it effectually.

Jan 25

He Acts on Honest Confession

"He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light" (Job 33:27-28).

This is a word of truth, gathered from the experience of a man of God, and it is tantamount to a promise. What the LORD has done, and is doing, He will continue to do while the world standeth. The LORD will receive into His bosom all who come to Him with a sincere confession of their sin; in fact, He is always on the lookout to discover any that are in trouble because of their faults. Can we not endorse the language here used? Have we not sinned, sinned personally so as to say, "I have sinned"? Sinned willfully, having perverted that which is right? Sinned so as to discover that there is no profit in it but an eternal loss? Let us, then, go to God with this honest acknowledgment. He asks no more. We can do no less. Let us plead His promise in the name of Jesus. He will deliver us from the pit of hell which yawns for us; He will grant us life and light. Why should we despair? Why should we even doubt? The LORD does not mock humble souls. He means what He says. The guilty can be forgiven. Those who deserve execution can receive free pardon. LORD, we confess, and we pray Thee to forgive!

Jan 26

God Routs Fear

"Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel" (Numbers 23:23).

How this should cut up root and branch all silly, superstitious fears! Even if there were any truth in witchcraft and omens, they could not affect the people of the LORD. Those whom God blessed, devils cannot curse. Ungodly men, like Balaam, may cunningly plot the overthrow of the LORD's Israel; but with all their secrecy and policy they are doomed to fail. Their powder is damp; the edge of their sword is blunted. They gather together; but as the LORD is not with them, they gather together in vain. We may sit still and let them weave their nets, for we shall not be taken in them. Though they call in the aid of Beelzebub and employ all his serpentine craft, it will avail them nothing: the spells will not work, the divination will deceive them. What a blessing this is! How it quiets the heart! God's Jacobs wrestle with God, but none shall wrestle with them and prevail. God's Israels have to prevail against them. We need not fear the fiend himself, nor any of those secret enemies whose words are full of deceit and whose plans are deep and unfathomable. They cannot hurt those who trust in the living God. We defy the devil and all his legions.

Jan 27

Precious Repentance

"And there shall ye remember your ways, and all your doings, wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all your evils that ye hate committed" (Ezekiel 20:43).

When we are accepted of the LORD and are standing in the place of favor, and peace, and safety, then we are led to repent of all our failures and miscarriages toward our gracious God. So precious is repentance that we may call it a diamond of the first water, and this is sweetly promised to the people of God as one most sanctifying result of salvation. He who accepts repentance also gives repentance; and He gives it not out of "the bitter box" but from among those "wafers made with honey" on which He feeds His people. A sense of blood-bought pardon and of undeserved mercy is the best means of dissolving a heart of stone. Are we feeling hard? Let us think of covenant love, and then we shall leave sin, lament sin, and loathe sin; yea, we shall loathe ourselves for sinning against such infinite love. Let us come to God with this promise of penitence and ask Him to help us to remember, and repent, and regret, and re- turn. Oh, that we could enjoy the meltings of holy sorrow! What a relief would a flood of tears be! LORD, smite the rock, or speak to the rock, and cause the waters to flow!

Jan 28

Tears Shall Cease

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 21:4).

Yes, we shall come to this if we are believers. Sorrow shalt cease, and tears shall be wiped away. This is the world of weeping, but it passes away. There shall be a new heaven and a new earth, so says the first verse of this chapter; and therefore there will be nothing to weep over concerning the Fall and its consequent miseries. Read the second verse and note how it speaks of the bride and her marriage. The Lamb's wedding is a time for boundless pleasure, and tears would be out of place. The third verse says that God Himself will dwell among men; and surely at His right hand there are pleasures forevermore, and tears can no longer flow. What will our state be when there will be no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain? This will be more glorious than we can as yet imagine. O eyes that are red with weeping, cease your scalding flow, for in a little while ye shall know no more tears! None can wipe tears away like the God of love, but He is coming to do it. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Come, LORD, and tarry not; for now both men and women must weep!

Jan 29

Obedience Brings Blessing

"Observe and hear all these words, which I command thee, that it may go well with thee, and with thy children after thee for ever, when thou doest that which is good and right in the sight of the LORD thy God" (Deuteronomy 12:28).

Though salvation is not by the works of the law, yet the blessings which are promised to obedience are not denied to the faithful servants of God. The curses our LORD took away when He was made a curse for us, but no clause of blessing has been abrogated. We are to note and listen to the revealed will of the LORD, giving our attention not to portions of it but to "all these words." There must be no picking and choosing but an impartial respect to all that God has commanded. This is the road of blessedness for the Father and for His children. The LORD's blessing is upon His chosen to the third and fourth generation. If they walk uprightly before Him, He will make all men know that they are a seed which the LORD has blessed. No blessing can come to us or ours through dishonesty or double dealing. The ways of worldly conformity and unholiness cannot bring good to us or ours. It will go well with us when we go well before God. If integrity does not make us prosper, knavery will not. That which gives pleasure to God will bring pleasure to us.

Jan 30

A Heavenly Escort

"And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest" (Genesis 28:15).

Do we need journeying mercies? Here are choice ones -- God's presence and preservation, In all places we need both of these, and in all places we shall have them if we go at the call of duty, and not merely according to our own fancy. Why should we look upon removal to another country as a sorrowful necessity when it is laid upon us by the divine will? In all lands the believer is equally a pilgrim and a stranger; and yet in every region the LORD is His dwelling place, even as He has been to His saints in all generations. We may miss the protection of an earthly monarch, but when God says, "I will keep thee," we are in no real danger. This is a blessed passport for a traveler and a heavenly escort for an emigrant. Jacob had never left his father's room before; he had been a mother's boy and not an adventurer like his brother. Yet he went abroad, and God went with him. He had little luggage and no attendants; yet no prince ever journeyed with a nobler bodyguard. Even while he slept in the open field, angels watched over him, and the LORD God spoke to him. If the LORD bids us go, let us say with our LORD Jesus, "Arise, let us go hence."

Jan 31

God Always Hears

"My God will hear me" (Micah 7:7).

Friends may be unfaithful, but the LORD will not turn away from the gracious soul; on the contrary, He will hear all its desires. The prophet says, "Keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. A man's enemies are the men of his own house." This is a wretched state of affairs; but even in such a case the Best Friend remains true, and we may tell Him all our grief. Our wisdom is to look unto the LORD and not to quarrel with men or women. If our loving appeals are disregarded by our relatives, let us wait upon the God of our salvation, for He will hear us- He will hear us all the more because of the unkindness and oppression of others, and we shall soon have reason to cry, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy!" Because God is the living God, He can hear; because He is a loving God, He will hear; because He is our covenant God, He has bound Himself to hear us. If we can each one speak of Him as "My God," we may with absolute certainty say, "My God will hear me." Come, then, O bleeding heart, and let thy sorrows tell themselves out to the LORD thy God! I will bow the knee in secret and inwardly whisper, "My God will hear me."

Feb 1

Never Despair

"But unto you that fear My Name shall the Sun Of Righteousness arise with healing in His wings" (Malachi 4.2).

Fulfilled once in the first advent of our glorious LORD, and yet to have a fuller accomplishment in His second advent, this gracious word is also for daily use. Is it dark with the reader? Does the night deepen into a denser blackness? Still let us not despair: the sun will yet rise. When the night is darkest, dawn is nearest. The sun which will arise is of no common sort. It is the Sun -- the Sun of Righteousness, whose every ray is holiness. He who comes to cheer us, comes in the way of justice as well as of mercy, comes to violate no law even to save us. Jesus as much displays the holiness of God as His love. Our deliverance, when it comes, will be safe because righteous. Our one point of inquiry should be -- "Do we fear the name of the LORD? Do we reverence the living God and walk in His ways?" Then for us the night must be short; and when the morning cometh, all the sickness and sorrow of our soul will be over forever. Light, warmth, joy, and clearness of vision will come, and healing of every disease and distress will follow after. Has Jesus risen upon us? Let us sit in the sun. Has He hidden His face? Let us wait for His rising. He will shine forth as surely as the sun.

Feb 2

Grow Up

"And ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall" (Malachi 4:2).

Yes, when the sun shines, the sick quit their chambers and walk abroad to breathe the fresh air. When the sun brings spring and summer, the cattle quit their stalls and seek pasture on the higher Alps. Even thus, when we have conscious fellowship with our LORD, we leave the stall of despondency and walk abroad in the fields of holy confidence. We ascend to the mountains of joy and feed on sweet pasturage which grows nearer heaven than the provender of carnal men. To "go forth" and to "grow up" is a double promise. O my soul, be thou eager to enjoy both blessings! Why shouldst thou be a prisoner? Arise, and walk at liberty. Jesus saith that His sheep shall go in and out and find pasture; go forth, then, and feed in the rich meadows of boundless love. Why remain a babe in grace? Grow up. Young calves grow fast, especially if they are stall fed; and thou hast the choice care of thy Redeemer.

Grow, then, in grace and in knowledge of thy LORD and Savior, Be neither straitened nor stunted. The Sun of Righteousness has risen upon thee Answer to His beams as the buds to the natural sun. Open thine heart; expand and grow up into Him in all things.

Feb 3

He Freely Gives

"He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

If this is not a promise in form, it is in fact. Indeed, it is more than one promise, it is a conglomerate of promises. It is a mass of rubies, and emeralds, and diamonds, with a nugget of gold for their setting. It is a question which can never be answered so as to cause us any anxiety of heart. What can the LORD deny us after giving us Jesus? If we need all things in heaven and earth, He will grant them to us: for if there had been a limit anywhere, He would have kept back His own Son. What do I want today? I have only to ask for it. I may seek earnestly, but not as if I had to use pressure and extort an unwilling gift from the LORD's hand; for He will give freely. Of His own He gave us His own Son. Certainly no one would have proposed such a gift to Him. No one would have ventured to ask for it. It would have been too presumptuous. He freely gave His Only-begotten, and, O my soul, canst thou not trust thy heavenly Father to give thee anything, to give thee everything? Thy poor prayer would have no force with Omnipotence if force were needed; but His love, like a spring, rises of itself and overflows for the supply of all thy needs.

Feb 4

He Will Return

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18).

He left us, and yet we are not left orphans. He is our comfort, and He is gone; but we are not comfortless. Our comfort is that He will come to us, and this is consolation enough to sustain us through His prolonged absence. Jesus is already on His way: He says, "I come quickly": He rides posthaste toward us. He says, "I will come": and none can prevent His coming, or put it back for a quarter of an hour. He specially says, "I will come to you"; and so He will. His coming is specially to and for His own people. This is meant to be their present comfort while they mourn that the Bridegroom doth not yet appear. When we lose the joyful sense of His presence we mourn, but we may not sorrow as if there were no hope. Our LORD in a little wrath has hid Himself from us for a moment, but He will return in full favor. He leaves us in a sense, but only in a sense. When He withdraws, He leaves a pledge behind that He will return. O LORD, come quickly! There is no life in this earthly existence if Thou be gone. We sigh for the return of Thy sweet smile. When wilt Thou come unto us? We are sure Thou wilt appear; but be Thou like a roe, or a young hart. Make no tarrying, O our God!

Feb 5

Justice Satisfied

"When I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus 12:13).

My own sight of the precious blood is for my comfort; but it is the LORD's sight of it which secures my safety. Even when I am unable to behold it, the LORD looks at it and passes over me because of it. If I am not so much at ease as I ought to be, because my faith is dim, yet I am equally safe because the LORD's eye is not dim, and He sees the blood of the great Sacrifice with steady gaze. What a joy is this! The LORD sees the deep inner meaning, the infinite fullness of all that is meant by the death of His dear Son. He sees it with restful memory of justice satisfied and all His matchless attributes glorified. He beheld creation in its progress and said, "It is very good"; but what does He say of redemption in its completeness? What does He say of the obedience even unto death of His well-beloved Son? None can tell His delight in Jesus, His rest in the sweet savor which Jesus presented when He offered Himself without spot unto God. Now rest we in calm security. We have God's sacrifice and God's Word to create in us a sense of perfect security. He will, He must, pass over us, because He spared not our glorious Substitute. Justice joins hands with love to provide everlasting salvation for all the blood-besprinkled.

Feb 6

Blessing in the City

"If thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, blessed shalt thou be in the city" (Deuteronomy 28:2-3).

The city is full of care, and he who has to go there from day to day finds it to be a place of great wear and tear. It is full of noise, and stir, and bustle, and sore travail; many are its temptations, losses, and worries. But to go there with the divine blessing takes off the edge of its difficulty; to remain there with that blessing is to find pleasure in its duties and strength equal to its demands. A blessing in the city may not make us great, but it will keep us good; it may not make us rich, but it will preserve us honest. Whether we are

porters, or clerks, or managers, or merchants, or magistrates, the city will afford us opportunities for usefulness. It is good fishing where there are shoals of fish, and it is hopeful to work for our LORD amid the thronging crowds. We might prefer the quiet of a country life; but if called to town, we may certainly prefer it because there is room for our energies. Today let us expect good things because of this promise, and let our care be to have an open ear to the voice of the LORD and a ready hand to execute His bidding. Obedience brings the blessing. "In keeping his commandments there is great reward."

Feb 7

Return from Backsliding

"If thou return to the Almighty, thou shalt be built up" (Job 22:23).

Eliphaz, in this utterance, spoke a great truth, which is the summary of many an inspired Scripture. Reader, has sin pulled you down? Have you become like a ruin? Has the hand of the LORD gone out against you so that in estate you are impoverished and in spirit you are broken down? Was it your own folly which brought upon you all this dilapidation? Then the first thing to be done is to return to the LORD. With deep repentance and sincere faith find your way back from your backsliding. It is your duty, for you have turned away from Him whom you professed to serve. It is your wisdom, for you cannot strive against Him and prosper. It is your immediate necessity, for what He has done is nothing compared to what He may do in the way of chastisement, since He is Almighty to punish. See what a promise invites you! You shall be "built up." None but the Almighty can set up the fallen pillars and restore the tottering walls of your condition; but He can and He will do it if you return to Him. Do not delay. Your crushed mind may quite fail you if you go on to rebel; but hearty confession will ease you, and humble faith will console you. Do this, and all will be well.

Feb 8

Joyful Security

"I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10).

Fear of falling is wholesome. To be venturesome is no sign of wisdom. Times come to us when we feel that we must go down unless we have a very special support. Here we have it. God's right hand is a grand thing to lean upon. Mind, it is not only His hand, though it keepeth heaven and earth in their places, but His right hand: His power united with skill, His power where it is most dexterous. Nay, this is not all; it is written, "I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." That hand which He uses to maintain His holiness and to execute His royal sentences -- this shall be stretched out to hold up His trusting ones. Fearful is our danger, but joyful is our security. The man whom God upholds, devils cannot throw down. Weak may be our feet, but almighty is God's right hand. Rough may be the road, but Omnipotence is our upholding. We may boldly go forward. We shall not fall. Let us lean continually where all things lean. God will not withdraw His strength, for His righteousness is there as well. He will be faithful to His promise, and faithful to His Son, and therefore faithful to us. How happy we ought to be! Are we not so?

Feb 9

The Dross Purged

"And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on My Name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is My people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God" (Zechariah 13:9).

Grace transmutes us into precious metal, and then the fire and the furnace follows as a necessary consequence. Do we start at this? Would we sooner be accounted worthless, that we might enjoy repose, like the stones of the field! This would be to choose the viler part -- like Esau, to take the pottage and give up the covenant portion. No, LORD; we will gladly be cast into the furnace rather than be cast out from Thy presence! The fire only refines; it does not destroy. We are to be brought through the fire, not left in it. The LORD values His people as silver, and therefore He is at pains to purge away their dross. If we are wise, we shall rather welcome the refining process than decline it. Our prayer will be that our alloy may be taken from us rather than that we should be withdrawn from the crucible. O LORD, Thou triest us indeed! We are ready to melt under the fierceness of the flame. Still, this is Thy way, and Thy way is the best. Sustain us under the trial and complete the process of our purifying, and we will be Thine forever and ever.

Feb 10

A Constant Witness

"For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard" (Acts 22:15).

Paul was chosen to see and hear the LORD speaking to him out of heaven. This divine election was a high privilege for himself; but it was not intended to end with him; it was meant to have an influence upon others, yea, upon all men. It is to Paul that Europe owes the gospel at this hour. It is ours in our measure to be witnesses of that which the LORD has revealed to us, and it is at our peril that

we hide the precious revelation. First, we must see and hear, or we shall have nothing to tell; but when we have done so, we must be eager to bear our testimony. It must be personal: "Thou shalt be." It must be for Christ: "Thou shalt be his witness." It must be constant and all absorbing; we are to be this above all other things and to the exclusion of many other matters. Our witness must not be to a select few who will cheerfully receive us but to "all men" -- to all whom we can reach, young or old, rich or poor, good or bad. We must never be silent like those who are possessed by a dumb spirit; for the text before us is a command, and a promise, and we must not miss it -- "Thou shalt be his witness." "Ye are my witnesses, saith the LORD."

Feb 11

Are the Children In?

"I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed, and My blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3).

Our dear children have not the Spirit of God by nature, as we plainly see. We see much in them which makes us fear as to their future, and this drives us to agonizing prayer. When a son becomes specially perverse, we cry with Abraham, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" We would sooner see our daughters Hannahs than empresses. This verse should greatly encourage us. It follows upon the words, "Fear not, O Jacob, my servant," and it may well banish our fears. The LORD will give His Spirit; will give it plentifully, pouring it out; will give it effectually, so that it shall be a real and eternal blessing. Under this divine outpouring our children shall come forward, and "one shall say, I am the LORD's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." This is one of those promises concerning which the LORD will be inquired of. Should we not, at set times, in a distinct manner, pray for our offspring? We cannot give them new hearts, but the Holy Spirit can; and He is easily to be entreated of. The great Father takes pleasure in the prayers of fathers and mothers. Have we any dear ones outside of the ark? Let us not rest till they are shut in with us by the LORD's own hand.

Feb 12

God Delights to Give

"And the LORD said unto Abraham, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward, for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Genesis 13:14-15).

A special blessing for a memorable occasion. Abram had settled a family dispute. He had said, "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me, for we be brethren"; and hence he received the blessing which belongs to peacemakers. The LORD and giver of peace delights to manifest His grace to those who seek peace and pursue it. If we desire closer communion with God, we must keep closer to the ways of peace. Abram had behaved very generously to his kinsman, giving him his choice of the land. If we deny ourselves for peace's sake, the LORD will more than make it up to us. As far as the patriarch can see, he can claim, and we may do the like by faith. Abram had to wait for the actual possession, but the LORD entailed the land upon him and his posterity. Boundless blessings belong to us by covenant gift. All things are ours. When we please the LORD, He makes us to look everywhere and see all things our own, whether things present or things to come, all are ours, and we are Christ's, and Christ is God's.

Feb 13

Blessed in the Field

"Blessed shalt thou be in the field" (Deuteronomy 28:3).

So was Isaac blessed when he walked therein at eventide to meditate. How often has the LORD met us when we have been alone! The hedges and the trees can bear witness to our joy. We look for such blessedness again. So was Boaz blessed when he reaped his harvest, and his workmen met him with benedictions. May the LORD prosper all who drive the plow! Every farmer may urge this promise with God, if indeed he obeys the voice of the LORD God. We go to the field to labor as father Adam did; and since the curse fell on the soil through the sin of Adam the first, it is a great comfort to find a blessing through Adam the second. We go to the field for exercise, and we are happy in the belief that the LORD will bless that exercise and give us health, which we will use to His glory. We go to the field to study nature, and there is nothing in a knowledge of the visible creation which may not be sanctified to the highest uses by the divine benediction. We have at last to go to the field to bury our dead; yea, others will in their turn take us to God's acre in the field. But we are blessed, whether weeping at the tomb or sleeping in it.

Feb 14

Mercy to the Undeserving

"He that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about" (Psalm 32:10).

O fair reward of trust! My LORD, grant it me to the full! The truster above all men feels himself to be a sinner; and lo, mercy is prepared for him: he knows himself to have no deservings, but mercy comes in and keeps house for him on a liberal scale. O LORD, give me this mercy, even as I trust in Thee! Observe, my soul, what a bodyguard thou hast! As a prince is compassed about with soldiery, so art thou compassed about with mercy. Before and behind, and on all sides, ride these mounted guards of grace. We dwell in the center of the system of mercy, for we dwell in Christ Jesus. O my soul, what an atmosphere dost thou breathe! As the air surrounds thee, even so does the mercy of thy LORD. To the wicked there are many sorrows, but to thee there are so many mercies that thy sorrows are not worth mentioning. David says, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." In obedience to this precept my heart shall triumph in God, and I will tell out my gladness. As Thou hast compassed me with mercy, I will also compass Thine altars, O my God, with songs of thanksgiving!

Feb 15

Ever Mindful

"The LORD hath been mindful of us: He will bless us" (Psalm 115:12).

I can set my seal to that first sentence. Cannot you? Yes, Jehovah has thought of us, provided for us, comforted us, delivered us, and guided us. In all the movements of His providence He has been mindful of us, never overlooking our mean affairs. His mind has been full of us -- that is the other form of the word mindful. This has been the case all along and without a single break. At special times, however, we have more distinctly seen this mindfulness, and we would recall them at this hour with overflowing gratitude. Yes, yes, "the LORD hath been mindful of us." The next sentence is a logical inference from the former one. Since God is unchangeable, He will continue to be mindful of us in the future as He has been in the past; and His mindfulness is tantamount to blessing us. But we have here not only the conclusion of reason but the declaration of inspiration; we have it on the Holy Ghost's authority -- "He will bless us." This means great things and unsearchable. The very indistinctness of the promise indicates its infinite reach. He will bless us after His own divine manner, and that forever and ever, Therefore, let us each say, "Bless the LORD, O my soul!"

Feb 16

You Deal with God

"I will not execute the fierceness of Mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim: for I am God, and not man" (Hosea 11:9).

The LORD thus makes known His sparing mercies. It may be that the reader is now under heavy displeasure, and everything threatens his speedy doom. Let the text hold him up from despair. The LORD now invites you to consider your ways and confess your sins. If He had been man, He would long ago have cut you off. If He were now to act after the manner of men, it would be a word and a blow and then there would be an end of you: but it is not so, for "as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are his ways above your ways." You rightly judge that He is angry, but He keepeth not His anger forever: if you turn from sin to Jesus, God will turn from wrath. Because God is God, and not man, there is still forgiveness for you, even though you may be steeped up to your throat in iniquity. You have a God to deal with and not a hard man, or even a merely just man. No human being could have patience with you. You would have wearied out an angel, as you have wearied your sorrowing Father; but God is longsuffering. Come and try Him at once. Confess, believe, and turn from your evil way, and you shall be saved.

Feb 17

God Can Make You Strong

"Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weak: for your work shall be rewarded" (2 Chronicles 15:7).

God had done great things for King Asa and Judah, but yet they were a feeble folk. Their feet were very tottering in the ways of the LORD, and their hearts very hesitating, so that they had to be warned that the LORD would be with them while they were with Him, but that if they forsook Him He would leave them. They were also reminded of the sister kingdom, how ill it fared in its rebellion and how the LORD was gracious to it when repentance was shown. The LORD's design was to confirm them in His way and make them strong in righteousness. So ought it to be with us. God deserves to be served with all the energy of which we are capable. If the service of God is worth anything, it is worth everything. We shall find our best reward in the LORD's work if we do it with determined diligence. Our labor is not in vain in the LORD, and we know it. Halfhearted work will bring no reward; but when we throw our whole soul into the cause, we shall see prosperity. This text was sent to the author of these notes in a day of terrible storm, and it suggested to him to put on all steam, with the assurance of reaching port in safety with a glorious freight.

Feb 18

God Will Answer

"He will fulfill the desire of them that fear Him: He also will hear their cry, and will save them" (Psalm 145:19).

His own Spirit has wrought this desire in us, and therefore He will answer it. It is His own life within which prompts the cry, and therefore He will hear it. Those who fear Him are men under the holiest influence, and, therefore, their desire is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Like Daniel, they are men of desires, and the LORD will cause them to realize their aspirations. Holy desires are grace in the blade, and the heavenly Husbandman will cultivate them till they come to the full corn in the ear. God-fearing men desire to be holy, to be useful, to be a blessing to others, and so to honor their LORD. They desire supplies for their need, help under burdens, guidance in perplexity, deliverance in distress; and sometimes this desire is so strong and their case so pressing that they cry out in agony like little children in pain, and then the LORD works most comprehensively and does all that is needful according to this Word -- "and will save them." Yes, if we fear God, we have nothing else to fear; if we cry to the LORD, our salvation is certain. Let the reader lay this text on his tongue and keep it in his mouth all the day, and it will be to him as "a wafer made with honey."

Feb 19

Better Farther On

"Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more" (Nahum 1:12).

There is a limit to affliction. God sends it, and God removes it. Do you sigh and say, "When will the end be?" Remember that our griefs will surely and finally end when this poor earthly life is over, Let us quietly wait and patiently endure the will of the LORD till He cometh. Meanwhile, our Father in heaven takes away the rod when His design in using it is fully served. When He has whipped away our folly, there will be no more strokes. Or, if the affliction is sent for testing us, that our graces may glorify God, it will end when the LORD has made us bear witness to His praise. We would not wish the affliction to depart till God has gotten out of us all the honor which we can possibly yield Him. There may today be "a great calm." Who knows how soon those raging billows will give place to a sea of glass, and the sea birds sit on the gentle waves? After long tribulation the Reel is hung up, and the wheat rests in the garner. We may, before many hours are past, be just as happy as now we are sorrowful. It is not hard for the LORD to turn night into day. He that sends the clouds can as easily clear the skies. Let us be of good cheer. It is better on before. Let us sing hallelujah by anticipation.

Feb 20

Continual Guidance

"The LORD shall guide thee continually" (Isaiah 58:11).

What aileth thee? Hast thou lost thy way? Art thou entangled in a dark wood and canst thou not find thy paths? Stand still, and see the salvation of God. He knows the way, and He will direct thee in it if thou cry unto Him. Every day brings its own perplexity. How sweet to feel that the guidance of the LORD is continual! If we choose our own way or consult with flesh and blood we cast out the LORD's guidance; but if we abstain from self-will, then He will direct every step of our road, every hour of the day, and every day of the year, and every year of our life. If we will but be guided, we shall be guided. If we will commit our way unto the LORD, He will direct our course so that we shall not lose ourselves. But note to whom this promise is made. Read the previous verse: "If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry." We must feel for others and give them, not a few dry crusts, but such things as we ourselves would wish to receive. If we show a tender care for our fellow-creatures in the hour of their need, then will the LORD attend to our necessities and make Himself our continual Guide. Jesus is the Leader, not of misers, nor of those who oppress the poor, but of the kind and tenderhearted. Such persons are pilgrims who shall never miss their way.

Feb 21

Blessing on Littleness

"He will bless them that fear the LORD, both small and great" (Psalm 115:13).

This is a word of cheer to those who are of humble station and mean estate. Our God has a very gracious consideration for those of small property, small talent, small influence, small weight. God careth for the small things in creation and even regards sparrows in their lighting upon the ground. Nothing is small to God, for He makes use of insignificant agents for the accomplishment of His purposes. Let the least among men seek of God a blessing upon his littleness, and he shall find his contracted sphere to be a happy one. Among those who fear the LORD there are little and great. Some are babes, and others are giants. But these are all blessed. Little faith is blessed faith. Trembling hope is blessed hope. Every grace of the Holy Spirit, even though it be only in the bud, bears a blessing within it. Moreover, the LORD Jesus bought both the small and the great with the same precious blood, and He has engaged to preserve the lambs as well as the full-grown sheep. No mother overlooks her child because it is little; nay, the smaller it is, the more tenderly does she nurse it. If there be any preference with the LORD, He does not arrange them as "great and small"

but as "small and great."

Feb 22

Past Deliverance Begets Faith

"David said moreover, The LORD that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, He will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine" (1 Samuel 17:37).

This is not a promise if we consider only the words, but it is truly so as to its sense; for David spoke a word which the LORD endorsed by making it true. He argued from past deliverance's that he should receive help in a new danger. In Jesus all the promises are "Yea" and "Amen" to the glory of God by us, and so the LORD's former dealings with His believing people will be repeated. Come, then, let us recall the LORD's former lovingkindness. We could not have hoped to be delivered aforetime by our own strength; yet the LORD delivered us. Will He not again save us? We are sure He will. As David ran to meet his foe, so will we. The LORD has been with us, He is with us, and He has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," Why do we tremble? Was the past a dream? Think of the dead bear and lion. Who is this Philistine? True, he is not quite the same, and is neither bear nor lion; but then God is the same, and His honor is as much concerned in the one case as in the other. He did not save us from the beasts of the forest to let a giant kill us. Let us be of good courage.

Feb 23

Unbroken Fellowship Essential

"If ye abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

Of necessity we must be in Christ to live unto Him, and we must abide in Him to be able to claim the largesse of this promise from Him. To abide in Jesus is never to quit Him for another love or another object, but to remain in living, loving, conscious, willing union with Him. The branch is not only ever near the stem but ever receiving life and fruitfulness from it. All true believers abide in Christ in a sense; but there is a higher meaning, and this we must know before we can gain unlimited power at the throne. "Ask what ye will" is for Enoch's who walk with God, for John's who lie in the LORD's bosom, for those whose union with Christ leads to constant communion. The heart must remain in love, the mind must be rooted in faith, the hope must be cemented to the Word, the whole man must be joined unto the LORD, or else it would be dangerous to trust us with power in prayer. The carte blanche can only be given to one whose very life is, "Not I, but Christ liveth in me." O you who break your fellowship, what power you lose! If you would be mighty in your pleadings, the LORD Himself must abide in you, and you in Him.

Feb 24

Hear So as to Be Heard

"If ye abide in Me, and My Words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

Note well that we must hear Jesus speak if we expect Him to hear us speak. If we have no ear for Christ, He will have no ear for us. In proportion as we hear we shall be heard. Moreover, what is heard must remain, must live in us, and must abide in our character as a force and a power. We must receive the truths which Jesus taught, the precepts which He issued, and the movements of His Spirit within us; or we shall have no power at the Mercy Seat. Suppose our LORD's words to be received and to abide in us, what a boundless field of privilege is opened up to us! We are to have our will in prayer, because we have already surrendered our will to the LORD's command. Thus are Elijah's trained to handle the keys of heaven and lock or loose the clouds. One such man is worth a thousand common Christians. Do we humbly desire to be intercessors for the church and the world, and like Luther to be able to have what we will of the LORD? Then we must bow our ear to the voice of the Well-beloved, treasure up His words, and carefully obey them. He has need to "hearken diligently" who would pray effectually.

Feb 25

Set Apart

"Ye shall be named the priests of the LORD" (Isaiah 61:6).

This literal promise to Israel belongs spiritually to the seed after the Spirit, namely, to all believers. If we live up to our privileges, we shall live unto God so clearly and distinctly that men shall see that we are set apart for holy service and shall name us the priests of the LORD. We may work or trade as others do, and yet we may be solely and wholly the ministering servants of God. Our one occupation shall be to present the perpetual sacrifice of prayer, and praise, and testimony, and self-consecration to the living God by Jesus Christ. This being our one aim, we may leave distracting concerns to those who have no higher calling. "Let the dead bury their dead." It is written, "Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of the alien shall be your plowmen and your vine-

dressers," They may manage politics, puzzle out financial problems, discuss science, and settle the last new quibbles of criticism; but we will give ourselves unto such service as becomes those who, like the LORD Jesus, are ordained to a perpetual priesthood. Accepting this honorable promise as involving a sacred duty, let us put on the vestments of holiness and minister before the LORD all day long.

Feb 26

Truth Established

"The lip of Truth shall be established for ever; but a lying tongue is but for a moment" (Proverbs 12:19).

Truth wears well. Time tests it, but it right well endures the trial. R; then, I have spoken the truth and have for the present to suffer for it, I must be content to wait. If also I believe the truth of God and endeavor to declare it, I may meet with much opposition, but I need not fear, for ultimately the truth must prevail. What a poor thing is the temporary triumph of falsehood! "A lying lip is but for a moment!" It is a mere gourd which comes up in a night and perishes in a night; and the greater its development the more manifest its decay. On the other hand, how worthy of an immortal being is the avowal and defense of that truth which can never change; the everlasting gospel, which is established in the immutable truth of an unchanging God! An old proverb saith, "He that speaks truth shames the devil." Assuredly he that speaks the truth of God will put to shame all the devils in hell and confound all the seed of the serpent which now hiss out their falsehoods. O my heart, take care that thou be in all things on the side of truth, both in small things and great; but specially, on the side of Him by whom grace and truth have come among men!

Feb 27

Unstaggering Trustfulness

"He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD" (Psalm 112:7).

Suspense is dreadful. When we have no news from home, we are apt to grow anxious, and we cannot be persuaded that "no news is good news." Faith is the cure for this condition of sadness; the LORD by His Spirit settles the mind in holy serenity, and all fear is gone as to the future as well as the present. The fixedness of heart spoken of by the psalmist is to be diligently sought after. It is not believing this or that promise of the LORD, but the general condition of unstaggering trustfulness in our God, the confidence which we have in Him that He will neither do us ill Himself nor suffer anyone else to harm us. This constant confidence meets the unknown as well as the known of life. Let the morrow be what it may, our God is the God of tomorrow. Whatever events may have happened, which to us are unknown, our Jehovah is God of the unknown as well as of the known. We are determined to trust the LORD, come what may. If the very worst should happen, our God is still the greatest and best. Therefore will we not fear though the postman's knock should startle us or a telegram wake us at midnight. The LORD liveth, and what can His children fears.

Feb 28

Real Estate in Heaven

"Knowing in yourselves that ye have in Heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Hebrews 10:34).

This is well. Our substance here is very unsubstantial; there is no substance in it. But God has given us a promise of real estate in the gloryland, and that promise comes to our hearts with such full assurance of its certainty that we know in ourselves that we have an enduring substance there. Yes, "we have" it even now. They say, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush," but we have our bird in the bush and in the hand, too. Heaven is even now our own. We have the title deed of it, we have the earnest of it, we have the firstfruits of it. We have heaven in price, in promise, and in principle; this we know not only by the hearing of the ear but "in ourselves." Should not the thought of the better substance on the other side of Jordan reconcile us to present losses? Our spending money we may lose, but our treasure is safe. We have lost the shadows, but the substance remains, for our Savior lives, and the place which He has prepared for us abides. There is a better land, a better substance, a better promise; and all this comes to us by a better covenant; wherefore, let us be in better spirits, and say unto the LORD, "Every day will I bless thee; and praise thy name for ever and ever."

Feb 29

What Follows Us

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life" (Psalm 23:6).

A devout poet sings:

LORD, when Thou

Puttest in my time a day,
as Thou dost now,
Unknown in other years, grant, I entreat,
Such grace illumine it, that whate'er its phase
It add to holiness, and lengthen praise!

This day comes but once in four years... Up till now goodness and mercy, like two guards, have followed us from day to day, bringing up the rear even as grace leads the van; and as this out-of-the-way day is one of the days of our life, the two guardian angels will be with us today also. Goodness to supply our needs and mercy to blot out our sins -- these twain shall attend our every step this day and every day till days shall be no more. Wherefore, let us serve the LORD on this peculiar day with special consecration of heart and sing His praises with more zest and sweetness than ever. Could we not today make an unusual offering to the cause of God or to the poor? By inventiveness of love let us make this twenty-ninth of February a day to be remembered forever.

March 1

Joy for the Cast-Out

"Hear the Word of the LORD, ye that tremble at His guard; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My Name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed" (Isaiah 66:5).

Possibly this text may not apply to one in a thousand of the readers of this little book of promises; but the LORD cheers that one in such words as these. Let us pray for all such as are cast out wrongfully by the society which they love. May the LORD appear to their joy! The text applies to truly gracious men who tremble at the word of the LORD. These were hated of their brethren and at length cast out because of their fidelity and their holiness. This must have been very bitter to them; and all the more so because their casting out was done in the name of religion, and professedly with the view of glorifying God. How much is done for the devil in the name of God! The use of the name of Jehovah to add venom to the bite of the old serpent is an instance of his subtlety. The appearing of the LORD for them is the hope of His persecuted people. He appears as the advocate and defender of His elect; and when He does so it means a clear deliverance for the God-fearing and shame for their oppressors. O LORD, fulfill this word to those whom men are deriding!

March 2

Giving Without a Whisper

"But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in, secret Himself shall regard thee openly" (Matthew 6:3-4).

No promise is made to those who give to the poor to be seen of men. They have their reward at once and cannot expect to be paid twice. Let us hide away our charity -- yes, hide it even from ourselves. Give so often and so much as a matter of course that you no more take note that you have helped the poor than that you have eaten your regular meals. Do your alms without even whispering to yourself, How generous I am! Do not thus attempt to reward yourself. Leave the matter with God, who never fails to see, to record, and to reward. Blessed is the man who is busy in secret with his kindness: he finds a special joy in his unknown benevolences. This is the bread, which eaten by stealth, is sweeter than the banquets of kings. How can I indulge myself today with this delightful luxury? Let me have a real feast of tenderness and flow of soul. Here and hereafter the LORD Himself will personally see to the rewarding of the secret giver of alms. This will be in His own way and time; and He will choose the very best. How much this promise means it will need eternity to reveal.

March 3

Not Left to Perish

"For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither will Thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (Psalm 16:10).

This word has its proper fulfillment in the LORD Jesus; but it applies also, with a variation, to all who are in Him. Our soul shall not be left in the separate state, and our body, though it see corruption, shall rise again. The general meaning, rather than the specific application, is that to which we would call our readers' thoughts at this particular time. We may descend in spirit very low till we seem to be plunged in the abyss of hell; but we shall not be left there. We may appear to be at death's door in heart, and soul, and consciousness; but we cannot remain there. Our inward death as to joy and hope may proceed very far; but it cannot run on to its

full consequences, so as to reach the utter corruption of black despair, We may go very low, but not lower than the LORD permits; we may stay in the lowest dungeon of doubt for a while, but we shall not perish there. The star of hope is still in the sky when the night is blackest. The LORD will not forget us and hand us over to the enemy. Let us rest in hope, We have to deal with One whose mercy endureth forever. Surely, out of death, and darkness, and despair we shall yet arise to life, light, and liberty.

March 4

Honor God

"Them that honor Me I will honor" (1 Samuel 2:30).

Do I make the honor of God the great object of my life and the rule of my conduct? If so, He will honor me. I may for a while receive no honor from man, but God will Himself put honor upon me in the most effectual manner. In the end it will be found the surest way to honor to be willing to be put to shame for conscience' sake. Eli had not honored the LORD by ruling his household well, and his sons had not honored the LORD by behavior worthy of their sacred office, and therefore the LORD did not honor them but took the high priesthood out of their family and made young Samuel to be ruler in the land instead of any of their tine. If I would have my family ennobled, I must honor the LORD in all things. God may allow the wicked to win worldly honors; but the dignity which He Himself gives, even glory, honor, and immortality, He reserves for those who by holy obedience take care to honor Him. What can I do this day to honor the LORD? I will promote His glory by my spoken testimony and by my practical obedience, I will also honor Him with my substance and by offering to Him some special service. Let me sit down and think how I can honor Him, since He will honor me.

March 5

Home Blessings

"He blesseth the habitation of the just" (Proverbs 3:33).

He fears the LORD, and therefore he comes under the divine protection even as to the roof which covers himself and his family. His home is an abode of love, a school of holy training, and a place of heavenly light. In it there is a family altar where the name of the LORD is daily had (held) in reverence. Therefore the LORD blesses his habitation. It may be a humble cottage or a lordly mansion; but the LORD's blessing comes because of the character of the inhabitant and not because of the size of the dwelling. That house is most blest in which the master and mistress are Godfearing people; but a son or daughter or even a servant may bring a blessing on a whole household. The LORD often preserves, prospers, and provides for a family for the sake of one or two in it, who are "just" persons in His esteem, because His grace has made them so. Beloved, let us have Jesus for our constant guest even as the sisters of Bethany had, and then we shall be blessed indeed. Let us look to it that in all things we are just -- in our trade, in our judgment of others, in our treatment of neighbors, and in our own personal character. A just God cannot bless unjust transactions.

March 6

Guardian of the Fatherless

"In Thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (Hosea 14:3).

This is an excellent reason for casting away all other confidences and relying upon the LORD alone. When a child is left without its natural protector, our God steps in and becomes his guardian: so also when a man has lost every object of dependence, he may cast himself upon the living God and find in Him all that he needs. Orphans are cast upon the fatherhood of God, and He provides for them. The writer of these pages knows what it is to hang on the bare arm of God, and he bears his willing witness that no trust is so well warranted by facts, or so sure to be rewarded by results, as trust in the invisible but ever-living God. Some children who have fathers are not much the better off because of them, but the fatherless with God are rich. Better have God and no other friend than all the patrons on the earth and no God. To be bereaved of the creature is painful, but so long as the LORD remains the fountain of mercy to us, we are not truly orphaned. Let fatherless children plead the gracious word for this morning, and let all who have been bereaved of visible support do the same, LORD, let me find mercy in Thee! The more needy and helpless I am, the more confidently do I appeal to Thy loving heart.

March 7

From Fetters Free

"The LORD looseth the prisoner" (Psalm 146:7).

He has done it. Remember Joseph, Israel in Egypt, Manasseh, Jeremiah, Peter, and many others. He can do it still. He breaks the bars of brass with a word and snaps the fetters of iron with a look. He is doing it. In a thousand places troubled ones are coming

forth to light and enlargement. Jesus still proclaims the opening of the prison to them that are bound. At this moment doors are flying back and fetters are dropping to the ground. He will delight to set you free, dear friend, if at this time you are mourning because of sorrow, doubt, and fear. It will be joy to Jesus to give you liberty. It will give Him as great a pleasure to loose you as it will be a pleasure to you to be loosed. No, you have not to snap the iron hand: the LORD Himself will do it. Only trust Him, and He will be your Emancipator. Believe in Him in spite of the stone walls or the manacles of iron. Satan cannot hold you, sin cannot enchain you, even despair cannot bind you if you will now believe in the LORD Jesus, in the freeness of His grace, and the fullness of His power to save. Defy the enemy, and let the word now before you be your song of deliverance; "Jehovah looseth the prisoners."

March 8

Our Substance Blessed

"Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store" (Deuteronomy 28:5).

Obedience brings a blessing on all the provisions which our industry earns for us. That which comes in and goes out at once, like fruit in the basket which is for immediate use, shall be blest; and that which is laid by with us for a longer season shall equally receive a blessing. Perhaps ours is a hand-basket portion. We have a little for breakfast and a scanty bite for dinner in a basket when we go out to do our work in the morning. This is well, for the blessing of God is promised to the basket. If we live born hand to mouth, getting each day's supply in the day, we are as well off as Israel; for when the LORD entertained His favored people He only gave them a day's manna at a time. What more did they need? What more do we need? But if we have a store, how much we need the LORD to bless it! For there is the care of getting, the care of keeping, the care of managing, the care of using; and, unless the LORD bless it, these cares will eat into our hearts till our goods become our gods and our cares prove cankers. O LORD, bless our substance. Enable us to use it for Thy glory, Help us to keep worldly things in their proper places, and never may our savings endanger the saving of our souls.

March 9

Prayer for Peace

"And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the LORD for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace" (Jeremiah 29:7).

The principle involved in this text would suggest to all of us who are the LORD's strangers and foreigners that we should be desirous to promote the peace and prosperity of the people among whom we dwell. Specially should our nation and our city be blest by our constant intercession. An earnest prayer for your country and other countries is well becoming in the mouth of every believer. Eagerly let us pray for the great boon of peace, both at home and abroad. If strife should cause bloodshed in our streets, or if foreign battle should slay our brave soldiers, we should all bewail the calamity; let us therefore pray for peace and diligently promote those principles by which the classes at home and the races abroad may be bound together in bonds of amity.

March 10

Walk in Light

"I am come a Light into the world, that whosoever believeth on Me should not abide in darkness" (John 12:46).

This world is dark as midnight; Jesus has come that by faith we may have light and may no longer sit in the gloom which covers all the rest of mankind. Whosoever is a very wide term: it means you and me. If we trust in Jesus we shall no more sit in the dark shadow of death but shall enter into the warm light of a day which shall never end. Why do we not come out into the light at once? A cloud may sometimes hover over us, but we shall not abide in darkness if we believe in Jesus. He has come to give us broad daylight. Shall He come in vain? If we have faith we have the privilege of sunlight: let us enjoy it. From the night of natural depravity, of ignorance, of doubt, of despair, of sin, of dread, Jesus has come to set us free; and all believers shall know that He no more comes in vain than the sun rises and fails to scatter his heat and light. Shake off thy depression, dear brother. Abide not in the dark, but abide in the light. In Jesus is thy hope, thy joy, thy heaven, Look to Him, to Him only, and thou shalt rejoice as the birds rejoice at sunrise and as the angels rejoice before the throne.

March 11

Whose Battle?

"And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD's, and He will give you into our hands" (1 Samuel 17:47).

Let this point be settled, that the battle is the LORD's, and we may be quite sure of the victory, and of the victory in such a way as

will best of all display the power of God. The LORD is too much forgotten by all men, yea, even by the assemblies of Israel; and when there is an opportunity to make men see that the great First Cause can achieve His purposes without the power of man, it is a priceless occasion which should be well employed. Even Israel looks too much to sword and spear. It is a grand thing to have no sword in the hand of David, and yet for David to know that his God will overthrow a whole army of aliens. If we are indeed contending for truth and righteousness, let us not tarry till we have talent, or wealth, or any other form of visible power at our disposal; but with such stones as we find in the brook, and with our own usual sling, let us run to meet the enemy. If it were our own battle we might not be confident; but if we are standing up for Jesus and warring in His strength alone, who can withstand us? Without a trace of hesitancy let us face the Philistines; for the LORD of hosts is with us, and who can be against us?

March 12

Going Out with Joy

"And of Zebulun he said, Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out" (Deuteronomy 33:18).

The blessings of the tribes are ours; for we are the true Israel who worship God in the spirit and have no confidence in the flesh. Zebulun is to rejoice because Jehovah will bless his "going out"; we also see a promise for ourselves lying latent in this benediction. When we go out we will look out for occasions of joy. We go out to travel, and the providence of God is our convoy. We go out to emigrate, and the LORD is with us both on land and sea. We go out as missionaries, and Jesus saith, "Lo, I am with you unto the end of the world." We go out day by day to labor, and we may do so with pleasure, for God will be with us from morn till eve. A fear sometimes creeps over us when starting, for we know not what we may meet with; but this blessing may serve us right well as a word of good cheer. As we pack up for moving, let us put this verse into our traveling trunk; let us drop it into our hearts and keep it there; yea, let us lay it on our tongue to make us sing. Let us weigh anchor with a song, or jump into the carriage with a psalm. Let us belong to the rejoicing tribe and in our every movement praise the LORD with joyful hearts.

March 13

Despise Not Thy Youth

"Then said I, Ah, LORD God! behold I cannot speak; for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak" (Jeremiah 1:6-7).

Jeremiah was young and felt a natural shrinking when sent upon a great errand by the LORD; but He who sent him would not have him say, "I am a child." What he was in himself must not be mentioned but lost in the consideration that he was chosen to speak for God. He had not to think out and invent a message nor to choose an audience: he was to speak what God commanded and speak where God sent him, and this he would be enabled to do in strength not his own. Is it not so with some young preacher or teacher who may read these lines? God knows how young you are and how slender are your knowledge and experience; but if He chooses to send you, it is not for you to shrink from the heavenly call. God will magnify Himself in our feebleness. If you were as old as Methuselah, how much would your years help you? If you were as wise as Solomon, you might be equally as willful as he. Keep you to your message, and it will be your wisdom; follow your marching orders, and they will be your discretion.

March 14

Tender Comfort

"As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you" (Isaiah 66:13).

A mother's comfort! Ah, this is tenderness itself. How she enters into her child's grief! How she presses him to her bosom and tries to take all his sorrow into her own heart! He can tell her all, and she will sympathize as nobody else can. Of all comforters the child loves best his mother, and even full-grown men have found it so. Does Jehovah condescend to act the mother's part? This is goodness indeed. We readily perceive how He is a father; but will He be as a mother also? Does not this invite us to holy familiarity, to unreserved confidence, to sacred rest? When God Himself becomes "the Comforter," no anguish can long abide. Let us tell out our trouble, even though sobs and sighs should become our readiest utterance. He will not despise us for our tears; our mother did not. He will consider our weakness as she did, and He will put away our faults, only in a surer, safer way than our mother could do. We will not try to bear our grief alone; that would be unkind to one so gentle and so kind. Let us begin the day with our loving God, and wherefore should we not finish it in the same company, since mothers weary not of their children?

March 15

God is a Sanctuary

"Therefore say, Thus saith the LORD God; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a Little Sanctuary in the countries where they shall come" (Ezekiel 11:16).

Banished from the public means of grace, we are not removed from the grace of the means. The LORD who places His people where they feel as exiles will Himself be with them and be to them all that they could have had at home, in the place of their solemn assemblies. Take this to yourselves, O ye who are called to wander! God is to His people a place of refuge. They find sanctuary with Him from every adversary, He is their place of worship, too. He is with them as with Jacob when he slept in the open field, and rising, said, "Surely God was in this place," To them also He will be a sanctuary of quite, like the Holy of Holies, which was the noiseless abode of the Eternal. They shall be quiet from fear of evil. God Himself, in Christ Jesus, is the sanctuary of mercy. The Ark of the Covenant is the LORD Jesus, and Aaron's rod, the pot of manna, the tables of the law, all are in Christ our sanctuary. In God we find the shrine of holiness and of communion. What more do we need? O LORD, fulfill this promise and be ever to us as a little sanctuary!

March 16

To Others an "Ensample"

"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in Me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you" (Philippians 4:9).

It is well when a man can with advantage be so minutely copied as Paul might have been. Oh, for grace to imitate him this day and every day! Should we, through divine grace, carry into practice the Pauline teaching, we may claim the promise which is now open before us; and what a promise it is! God, who loves peace, makes peace, and breathes peace, will be with us. "Peace be with you" is a sweet benediction; but for the God of peace to be with us is far more. Thus we have the fountain as well as the streams, the sun as well as his beams. If the God of peace be with us, we shall enjoy the peace of God which passeth all understanding, even though outward circumstances should threaten to disturb. If men quarrel, we shall be sure to be peacemakers, if the Maker of peace be with us. It is in the way of truth that real peace is found. If we quit the faith or leave the path of righteousness under the notion of promoting peace, we shall be greatly mistaken. First pure, then peaceable, is the order of wisdom and of fact. Let us keep to Paul's line, and we shall have the God of peace with us as He was with the apostle.

March 17

Fear to Fear

"Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 1:8).

Whenever fear comes in and makes us falter, we are in danger of falling into sin. Conceit is to be dreaded, but so is cowardice. "Dare to be a Daniel." Our great Captain should be served by brave soldiers. What a reason for bravery is here! God is with those who are with Him. God will never be away when the hour of struggle comes. Do they threaten you? Who are you that you should be afraid of a man that shall die? Will you lose your situation? Your God whom you serve will find bread and water for His servants. Can you not trust Him? Do they pour ridicule upon you? Will this break your bones or your heart? Bear it for Christ's sake, and even rejoice because of it. God is with the true, the just, the holy, to deliver them; and He will deliver you. Remember how Daniel came out of the lions' den and the three holy children out of the furnace. Yours is not so desperate a case as theirs; but if it were, the LORD would bear you through and make you more than a conqueror. Fear to fear. Be afraid to be afraid. Your worst enemy is within your own bosom. Get to your knees and cry for help, and then rise up saying, "I will trust, and not be afraid."

March 18

Continue Upright

"The prayer of the upright is His delight" (Proverbs 15:8).

This is as good as a promise, for it declares a present fact, which will be the same throughout all ages. God takes great pleasure in the prayers of upright men; He even calls them His delight. Our first concern is to be upright. Neither bending this way nor that, continue upright; not crooked with policy, nor prostrate by yielding to evil, be you upright in strict integrity and straightforwardness. If we begin to shuffle and shift, we shall be left to shift for ourselves. If we try crooked ways, we shall find that we cannot pray, and if we pretend to do so, we shall find our prayers shut out of heaven. Are we acting in a straight line and thus following out the LORD's revealed will? Then let us pray much and pray in faith. If our prayer is God's delight, let us not stint Him in that which gives Him pleasure. He does not consider the grammar of it, nor the metaphysics of it, nor the rhetoric of it; in all these men might despise it. He, as a Father, takes pleasure in the lisping of His own babes, the stammerings of His newborn sons and daughters. Should we not delight in prayer since the LORD delights in it? Let us make errands to the throne. The LORD finds us enough reasons for prayer, and we ought to thank Him that it is so.

March 19

Becoming Fit for Glory

"The LORD will give grace and glory" (Psalm 84:11).

Grace is what we need just now, and it is to be had freely. What can be freer than a gift? Today we shall receive sustaining, strengthening, sanctifying, satisfying grace. He has given daily grace until now, and as for the future, that grace is still sufficient. If we have but little grace the fault most lie in ourselves; for the LORD is not straitened, neither is He slow to bestow it in abundance. We may ask for as much as we will and never fear a refusal. He giveth liberally and upbraideth not. The LORD may not give gold, but He will give grace: He may not give gain, but He will give grace. He will certainly send us trial, but He will give grace in proportion thereto. We may be called to labor and to suffer, but with the call there will come all the grace required; What an "end" is that in the text -- "and glory!" We do not need glory yet, and we are not yet fit for it; but we shall have it in due order. After we have eaten the bread of grace, we shall drink the wine of glory. We must go through the holy, which is grace, to the holiest of all, which is glory. These words and glory are enough to make a man dance for joy. A little while -- a little while, and then glory forever!

March 20

Divine Provision

"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Matthew 6:30)

Clothes are expensive, and poor believers may be led into anxiety as to where their next suit will come from. The soles are thin; how shall we get new shoes? See how our thoughtful LORD has provided against this care. Our heavenly Father clothes the grass of the field with a splendor such as Solomon could not equal: will He not clothe His own children? We are sure He will. There may be many a patch and a darn, but raiment we shall have. A poor minister found his clothes nearly threadbare, and so far gone that they would hardly hold together; but as a servant of the LORD he expected his Master to find him his livery. It so happened that the writer on a visit to a friend had the loan of the good man's pulpit, and it came into his mind to make a collection for him, and there was his suit. Many other cases we have seen in which those who had served the LORD have found Him considerate of their wardrobe. He who made man so that when he had sinned he needed garments, also in mercy supplied him with them; and those which the LORD gave to our first parents were far better than those they made for themselves.

March 21

Avoid That Slip

"Then shalt thou walk in thy way of safety, and thy foot shall not stumble" (Proverbs 3:23).

That is to say, if we follow the ways of wisdom and holiness we shall be preserved in them. He who travels by daylight along the highway is under some protection. There is a way for every man, namely, his own proper calling in life, and if we devoutly walk therein in the fear of God He will preserve us from evil. We may not travel luxuriously, but we shall walk safely. We may not be able to run like young men, but we shall be able to walk like good men. Our greatest danger lies in ourselves: our feeble foot is so sadly apt to stumble. Let us ask for more moral strength that our tendency to slip may be overcome. Some stumble because they do not see the stone in the way: divine grace enables us to perceive sin and so to avoid it. Let us plead this promise and trust in Him who upholds His chosen. Alas! Our worst peril is our own carelessness, but against this the LORD Jesus has put us on our guard, saying, "Watch and pray." Oh, for grace to walk this day without a single stumble! It is not enough that we do not actually fall; our cry should be that we may not make the smallest slip with out feet but may at the last adore Him "who is able to keep us from stumbling."

March 22

Grace for the Humble

"He giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6).

Humble hearts seek grace, and therefore they get it. Humble hearts yield to the sweet influences of grace, and so it is bestowed on them more and more largely. Humble hearts lie in the valleys where streams of grace are flowing, and hence they drink of them, Humble hearts are grateful for grace and give the LORD the glory of it, and hence it is consistent with His honor to give it to them. Come, dear reader, take a lowly place. Be little in thine own esteem, that the LORD may make much of thee. Perhaps the sigh breaks out, "I fear I am not humble." It may be that this is the language of true humility. Some are proud of being humble, and this is one of the very worst sorts of pride. We are needy, helpless, undeserving, hell-deserving creatures, and if we are not humble we ought to be. Let us humble ourselves because of our sins against humility, and then the LORD will give us to taste of His favor. It is grace which makes us humble, and grace which finds in this humility an opportunity for pouring in more grace. Let us go down that

we may rise. Let us be poor in spirit that God may make us rich. Let us be humble that we may not need to be humbled but may be exalted by the grace of God.

March 23

A Sure Guide

"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not" (Isaiah 42:16).

Think of the infinitely glorious Jehovah acting as a Guide to the blind! What boundless condescension does this imply! A blind man cannot find a way which he does not know. Even when he knows the road, it is hard for him to traverse it; but a road which he has not known is quite out of the question for his unguided feet. Now, we are by nature blind as to the way of salvation, and yet the LORD leads us into it and brings us to Himself, and then opens our eyes. As to the future, we are all of us blind and cannot see an hour before us; but the LORD Jesus will lead us even to our journey's end. Blessed be His name! We cannot guess in which way deliverance can possibly come to us, but the LORD knows, and He will lead us till we shall have escaped every danger. Happy are those who place their hand in that of the great Guide and leave their way and themselves entirely with Him. He will bring them all the way; and when He has brought them home to glory and has opened their eyes to see the way by which He has led them, what a song of gratitude will they sing unto their great Benefactor! LORD, lead Thy poor blind child this day, for I know not my way!

March 24

Established and Kept

"But the LORD is faithful, who shall establish you, and keep you from evil" (2 Thessalonians 3:3).

Men are often as devoid of reason as of faith. There are with us still "unreasonable and wicked men." There is no use in arguing with them or trying to be at peace with them: they are false at heart and deceitful in speech. Well, what of this? Shall we worry ourselves with them? No; let us turn to the LORD, for He is faithful. No promise from His Word will ever be broken. He is neither unreasonable in His demands upon us nor unfaithful to our claims upon Him. We have a faithful God. Be this our joy. He will establish us so that wicked men shall not cause our downfall, and He will keep us so that none of the evils which now assail us shall really do us damage. What a blessing for us that we need not contend with men but are allowed to shelter ourselves in the LORD Jesus, who is in truest sympathy with us. There is one true heart, one faithful mind, one never changing love; there let us repose. The LORD will fulfill the purpose of His grace to us, His servants, and we need not allow a shadow of a fear to fall upon our spirits. Not all that men or devils can do can hinder us of the divine protection and provision. This day let us pray the LORD to establish and keep us.

March 25

Refreshing Sleep

"When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid. yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet" (Proverbs 3:24).

Is the reader likely to be confined for a while to the bed by sickness! Let him go upstairs without distress with this promise upon his heart "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid." When we go to bed at night, let this word smooth our pillow. We cannot guard ourselves in sleep, but the LORD will keep us through the night. Those who lie down under the protection of the LORD are as secure as kings and queens in their palaces, and a great deal more so. If with our lying down there is a laying down of all cares and ambitions, we shall get refreshment out of our beds such as the anxious and covetous never find in theirs. Ill dreams shall be banished, or even if they come, we shall wipe out the impression of them, knowing that they are only dreams. If we sleep thus we shall do well. How sweetly Peter slept when even the angel's light did not wake him, and he needed a hard jog in the side to wake him up. And yet he was sentenced to die on the morrow. Thus have martyrs slept before their burning. "So he giveth his beloved sleep." To have sweet sleep we must have sweet lives, sweet tempers, sweet meditations, and sweet love.

March 26

The Care of the Poor

"The LORD will strengthen Him upon the bed of languishing" (Psalm 41:3).

Remember that this is a promise to the man who considers the poor. Are you one of these? Then take home the text. See how in the hour of sickness the God of the poor will bless the man who cares for the poor! The everlasting arms shall stay up his soul as friendly hands and downy pillows stay up the body of the sick. How tender and sympathizing is this image; how near it brings our God to our infirmities and sicknesses! Whoever heard this of the old heathen Jove, or of the gods of India or China! This is language peculiar to the God of Israel; He it is who deigns to become nurse and attendant upon good men. If He smites with one hand, He sustains with the other. Oh, it is blessed fainting when one falls upon the LORD's own bosom and is born thereon! Grace is the best

of restoratives; divine love is the safest stimulant for the languishing patient; it makes the soul strong as a giant, even when the bones are breaking through the skin. No physician like the LORD, no tonic like His promise, no wine like His love. If the reader has failed in his duty to the poor, let him see what he is losing and at once become their friend and helper.

March 27

Drawing Near to God

"Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8).

The nearer we come to God, the more graciously will He reveal Himself to us. When the prodigal comes to his father, his father runs to meet him. When the wandering dove returns to the ark, Noah puts out his hand to pull her in unto him, When the tender wife seeks her husband's society, he comes to her on wings of love. Come then, dear friend, let us draw nigh to God who so graciously awaits us, yea, comes to meet us. Did you ever notice that passage in Isaiah 58:9? There the LORD seems to put Himself at the disposal of His people, saying to them, "Here I am." As much as to say -- "What have you to say to me? What can I do for you? I am waiting to bless you." How can we hesitate to draw near? God is nigh to forgive, to bless, to comfort, to help, to quicken, to deliver. Let it be the main point with us to get near to God. This done, all is done. If we draw near to others, they may before long grow weary of us and leave us; but if we seek the LORD alone, no change will come over His mind, but He will continue to come nearer and yet nearer to us by fuller and more joyful fellowship.

March 28

Lead the Way

"The LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail" (Deuteronomy 28:13).

If we obey the LORD, He will compel our adversaries to see that His blessing rests upon us. Though this be a promise of the law, yet it stands good to the people of God; for Jesus has removed the curse, but He has established the blessing. It is for saints to lead the way among men by holy influence: they are not to be the tail, to be dragged hither and thither by others. We must not yield to the spirit of the age, but compel the age to do homage to Christ. If the LORD be with us, we shall not crave toleration for religion, but we shall seek to seat it on the throne of society. Has not the LORD Jesus made His people priests? Surely they are to teach and must not be learners from the philosophies of unbelievers. Are we not in Christ made kings to reign upon the earth? How, then can we be the servants of custom, the slaves of human opinion? Have you, dear friend, taken up your true position for Jesus? Too many are silent because diffident, if not cowardly. Should we allow the name of the LORD Jesus to be kept in the background? Should our religion drag along as a tails? Should it not rather lead the way and be the ruling force with ourselves and others?

March 29

Dauntless Faith

"I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee" (Acts 18:10).

So long as the LORD had work for Paul to do in Corinth, the fury of the mob was restrained. The Jews opposed themselves and blasphemed; but they could neither stop the preaching of the gospel nor the conversion of the hearers. God has power over the most violent minds. He makes the wrath of man to praise Him when it breaks forth, but He still more displays His goodness when He restrains it; and He can restrain it. "By the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone, till thy people pass over, O LORD." Do not, therefore, feel any fear of man when you know that you are doing your duty. Go straight on, as Jesus would have done, and those who oppose shall be as a bruised reed and as smoking flax. Many a time men have had cause to fear because they were themselves afraid; but a dauntless faith in God brushes fear aside like the cobwebs in a giant's path. No man can harm us unless the LORD permits. He who makes the devil himself to flee at a word can certainly control the devil's agents. Maybe they are already more afraid of you than you are of them. Therefore, go forward, and where you looked to meet with foes you will find friends.

March 30

Prayer, Thanksgiving, Praise

"Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

No care but all prayer. No anxiety but much joyful communion with God. Carry your desires to the LORD of your life, the guardian of your soul. Go to Him with two portions of prayer and one of fragrant praise. Do not pray doubtfully but thankfully. Consider that you have your petitions, and therefore thank God for His grace. He is giving you grace; give Him thanks, Hide nothing. Allow no want to lie rankling in your bosom; "make known your requests." Run not to man. Go only to your God, the Father of Jesus, who loves you in

Him. This shall bring you God's own peace. You shall not be able to understand the peace which you shall enjoy. It will enfold you in its infinite embrace. Heart and mind through Christ Jesus shall be steeped in a sea of rest. Come life or death, poverty, pain, slander, you shall dwell in Jesus above every rolling wind or darkening cloud. Will you not obey this dear command? Yes, LORD, I do believe thee; but, I beseech thee, help mine unbelief.

March 31

Presence of Mind

"Be not afraid of sudden fear, neither of the desolation of the wicked, when it cometh. For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken" (Proverbs 3;25-26).

When God is abroad in judgments, He would not have His people alarmed. He has not come forth to harm but to defend the righteous. He would have them manifest courage. We who enjoy the presence of God ought to display presence of mind. Since the LORD Himself may suddenly come, we ought not to be surprised at anything sudden. Serenity under the rush and roar of unexpected evils is a precious gift of divine love. The LORD would have His chosen display discrimination so that they may see that the desolation of the wicked is not a real calamity to the universe. Sin alone is evil; the punishment which follows thereupon is as a preserving salt to keep society from putrefying. We should be far more shocked at the sin which deserves hell than at the hell which comes out of sin. So, too, should the LORD's people exhibit great quietness of spirit. Satan and his serpent seed are full of all subtlety; but those who walk with God shall not be taken in their deceitful snares. Go on, believer in Jesus, and let the LORD be thy confidence.

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LINKS BELOW HAVE BEEN MOVED

OLD LINK	NEW LINK
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July 20 Looking for Him (Hebrews 9:28).	Click
July 23 Absolutely No Remembrance (Hebrews 10:17)	Click
July 28 Bow Down; Be Lifted Up (1 Peter 5:6).	Click
August 31 Divine, Ever-Living, Unchanging (1 Peter 1:25).	Click
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