

What Saith the Scripture?

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C. H. Spurgeon's Faith's Checkbook

A Daily Devotional

for the month of

DECEMBER

December 1

True Walking Posture

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

His walk may be slow, but it is sure. He that hasteth to be rich shall not be innocent nor sure; but steady perseverance in integrity, if it does not bring riches, will certainly bring peace. In doing that which is just and right, we are like one walking upon a rock, for we have confidence that every step we take is upon solid and safe ground. On the other hand, the utmost success through questionable transactions must always be hollow and treacherous, and the man who has gained it must always be afraid that a day of reckoning will come, and then his gains will condemn him.

Let us stick to truth and righteousness. By God's grace let us imitate our LORD and Master, in whose mouth no deceit was ever found. Let us not be afraid of being poor, nor of being treated with contempt. Never, on any account whatever, let us do that which our conscience cannot justify. If we lose inward peace, we lose more than a fortune can buy. If we keep in the LORD's own way and never sin against our conscience, our way is sure against all comers. Who is he that can harm us if we be followers of that which is good? We may be thought fools by fools if we are firm in our integrity; but in the place where judgment is infallible we shall be approved.

December 2

Our Holiest Example

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

This is the way to live. With God always before us, we shall have the noblest companionship, the

holiest example, the sweetest consolation, and the mightiest influence. This must be a resolute act of the mind. "I have set," and it must be maintained as a set and settled thing. Always to have an eye to the LORD's eye and an ear for the LORD's voice--this is the right state for the godly man. His God is near him, filling the horizon of his vision, leading the way of his life, and furnishing the theme of his meditation. What vanities we should avoid, what sins we should overcome, what virtues we should exhibit, what joys we should experience if we did indeed set the LORD always before us! Why not?

This is the way to be safe. The LORD being ever in our minds, we come to feel safety and certainty because of His being so near. He is at our right hand to guide and aid us; and hence we are not moved by fear, nor force, nor fraud, nor fickleness. When God stands at a man's right hand, that man is himself sure to stand. Come on, then, ye foemen of the truth! Rush against me like a furious tempest, if ye will. God upholds me. God abides with me. Whom shall I fear?

December 3

Peace Whatever Exposure

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

It is the height of grace that Jehovah should be in covenant with man, a feeble, sinful, and dying creature. Yet the LORD has solemnly entered into a faithful compact with us, and from that covenant He will never turn aside. In virtue of this covenant we are safe. As lions and wolves are driven off by shepherds, so shall all noxious influences be chased away. The LORD will give us rest from disturbers and destroyers; the evil beasts shall cease out of the land. O LORD, make this Thy promise good even now!

The LORD's people are to enjoy security in places of the greatest exposure: wilderness and woods are to be as pastures and folds to the flock of Christ. If the LORD does not change the place for the better, He will make us the better in the place. The wilderness is not a place to dwell in, but the LORD can make it so; in the woods one feels bound to watch rather than to sleep, and yet the LORD giveth His beloved sleep even there. Nothing without or within should cause any fear to the child of God. By faith the wilderness can become the suburbs of heaven and the woods the vestibule of glory.

December 4

Covered and Protected

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

A condescending simile indeed! Just as a hen protects her brood and allows them to nestle under her wings, so will the LORD defend His people and permit them to hide away in Him. Have we not seen

the little chicks peeping out from under the mother's feathers? Have we not heard their little cry of contented joy? In this way let us shelter ourselves in our God and feel overflowing peace in knowing that He is guarding us.

While the LORD covers us, we trust. It would be strange if we did not. How can we distrust when Jehovah Himself becomes house and home, refuge and rest to us?

This done, we go out to war in His name and enjoy the same guardian care. We need shield and buckler, and when we implicitly trust God, even as the chick trusts the hen, we find His truth arming us from head to foot. The LORD cannot lie; He must be faithful to His people; His promise must stand. This sure truth is all the shield we need. Behind it we defy the fiery darts of the enemy. Come, my soul, hide under those great wings, lose thyself among those soft feathers! How happy thou art!

December 5

High Places of Defense

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

The man to whom God has given grace to be of blameless life dwells in perfect security.

He dwells on high, above the world, out of gunshot of the enemy, and near to heaven. He has high aims and motives, and he finds high comforts and company. He rejoices in the mountains of eternal love, wherein he has his abode.

He is defended by munitions of stupendous rock. The firmest things in the universe are the promises and purposes of the unchanging God, and these are the safeguard of the obedient believer.

He is provided for by this great promise: "Bread shall be given him." As the enemy cannot climb the fort, nor break down the rampart, so the fortress cannot be captured by siege and famine. The LORD, who rained manna in the wilderness, will keep His people in good store even when they are surrounded by those who would starve them.

But what if water should fail? That cannot be. "His waters shall be sure." There is a never-failing well within the impregnable fortress. The LORD sees that nothing is wanting. None can touch the citizen of the true Zion. However fierce the enemy, the LORD will preserve His chosen.

December 6

"Through," Not Engulfed

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame

kindle upon thee"
(Isaiah 43:2).

Bridge there is none: we must go through the waters and feel the rush of the rivers. The presence of God in the flood is better than a ferryboat. Tried we must be, but triumphant we shall be; for Jehovah Himself, who is mightier than many waters, shall be with us. Whenever else He may be away from His people, the LORD will surely be with them in difficulties and dangers. The sorrows of life may rise to an extraordinary height, but the LORD is equal to every occasion.

The enemies of God can put in our way dangers of their own making, namely, persecutions and cruel mockings, which are like a burning, fiery furnace. What then? We shall walk through the fires. God being with us, we shall not be burned; nay, not even the smell of fire shall remain upon us.

Oh, the wonderful security of the heaven-born and heaven-bound pilgrim! Floods cannot drown him, nor fires burn him. Thy presence, O LORD, is the protection of Thy saints from the varied perils of the road. Behold, in faith I commit myself unto Thee, and my spirit enters into rest.

December 7

Gift of Strength; Peace to Bless

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

David had just heard the voice of the LORD in a thunderstorm and had seen His power in the hurricane whose path he had described; and now, in the cool calm after the storm, that overwhelming power by which heaven and earth are shaken is promised to be the strength of the chosen. He who wings the unerring bolt will give to His redeemed the wings of eagles; He who shakes the earth with His voice will terrify the enemies of His saints and give His children peace. Why are we weak when we have divine strength to flee to? Why are we troubled when the LORD's own peace is ours? Jesus, the mighty God, is our strength; let us put Him on and go forth to our service. Jesus, our blessed LORD, is also our peace; let us repose in Him this day and end our fears. What a blessing to have Him for our strength and peace both now and forever!

That same God who rides upon the storm in days of tempest will also rule the hurricane of our tribulation and send us, before long, days of peace. We shall have strength for storms and songs for fair weather. Let us begin to sing at once unto God, our strength and our peace. Away, dark thoughts! Up, faith and hope!

December 8

Following Leads to Honor

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

(John 12:26).

The highest service is imitation. If I would be Christ's servant I must be His follower. To do as Jesus did is the surest way of bringing honor to His name. Let me mind this every day.

If I imitate Jesus I shall have His company: if I am like Him I shall be with Him. In due time He will take me up to dwell with Him above, if, meanwhile, I have striven to follow Him here below. After His suffering our LORD came to His throne, and even so, after we have suffered a while with Him here below, we also shall arrive in glory. The issue of our LORD's life shall be the issue of ours: if we are with Him in His humiliation we shall be with Him in His glory. Come, my soul, pluck up courage and put down thy feet in the blood-marked footprints which thy LORD has left thee.

Let me not fail to note that the Father will honor those who follow His Son. If He sees me true to Jesus, He will put marks of favor and honor upon me for His Son's sake. No honor can be like this. Princes and emperors bestow the mere shadows of honor; the substance of glory comes from the Father. Wherefore, my soul, cling thou to thy LORD Jesus more closely than ever.

December 9

The "All" of Belief

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

Our unbelief is the greatest hindrance in our way; in fact, there is no other real difficulty as to our spiritual progress and prosperity. The LORD can do everything; but when He makes a rule that according to our faith so shall it be unto us, our unbelief ties the hands of His omnipotence.

Yes, the confederacies of evil shall be scattered if we can but believe. Despised truth shall lift its head if we will but have confidence in the God of truth. We can bear our load of trouble or pass uninjured through the waves of distress if we can gird our loins with the girdle of peace, that girdle which is buckled on by the hands of trust.

What can we not believe? Is everything possible except believing in God? Yet He is always true; why do we not believe in Him? He is always faithful to His word; why can we not trust Him? When we are in a right state of heart, faith costs no effort: it is then as natural for us to rely upon God as for a child to trust his father.

The worst of it is that we can believe God about everything except the present pressing trial. This is folly. Come, my soul, shake off such sinfulness, and trust thy God with the load, the labor, the longing of this present. This done, all is done.

December 10

God Is Our Ally

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

The LORD Christ in the midst of His people is to be acknowledged and obeyed. He is the vice-regent of God and speaks in the Father's name, and it is ours implicitly and immediately to do as He commands. We shall lose the promise if we disregard the precept.

To full obedience how large the blessing! The LORD enters into a league with His people, offensive and defensive. He will bless those who bless us and curse those who curse us. God will go heart and soul with His people and enter in deepest sympathy into their position. What a protection this affords us! We need not concern ourselves about our adversaries when we are assured that they have become the adversaries of God. If Jehovah has taken up our quarrel, we may leave the foemen in His hands.

So far as our own interest is concerned we have no enemies; but for the cause of truth and righteousness we take up arms and go forth to conflict. In this sacred war we are allied with the eternal God, and if we carefully obey the law of our LORD Jesus, He is engaged to put forth all His power on our behalf. Wherefore we fear no man.

December 11

Trust and Do; Do and Trust

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

Trust and do are words which go well together, in the order in which the Holy Spirit has placed them. We should have faith, and that faith should work. Trust in God sets us upon holy doing: we trust God for good, and then we do good. We do not sit still because we trust, but we arouse ourselves and expect the LORD to work through us and by us. It is not ours to worry and do evil but to trust and do good. We neither trust without doing nor do without trusting.

Adversaries would root us out if they could; but by trusting and doing we dwell in the land. We will not go into Egypt, but we will remain in Immanuel's land-the providence of God, the Canaan of covenant love. We are not so easily to be got rid of as the LORD's enemies suppose. They cannot thrust us out nor stamp us out: where God has given us a name and a place, there we abide.

But what about the supply of our necessities? The LORD has put a "verily" into this promise. As sure as God is true, His people shall be fed. It is theirs to trust and to do, and it is the LORD's to do according to their trust. If not fed by ravens, or fed by an Obadiah, or fed by a widow, yet they shall be fed somehow. Away, ye fears!

December 12

A Quiet Heart

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

It is always weakness to be fretting and worrying, questioning and mis-trusting. What can we do if we wear ourselves to skin and bone? Can we gain anything by fearing and fuming? Do we not unfit ourselves for action and unhinge our minds for wise decision? We are sinking by our struggles when we might float by faith.

Oh, for grace to be quiet! Why run from house to house to repeat the weary story which makes us more and more heart-sick as we tell it? Why even stay at home to cry out in agony because of wretched forebodings which may never be fulfilled? It would be well to keep a quiet tongue, but it would be far better if we had a quiet heart. Oh, to be still and know that Jehovah is God!

Oh, for grace to be confident in God! The holy One of Israel must defend and deliver His own. He cannot run back from His solemn declarations. We may make sure that every word of His will stand though the mountains should depart. He deserves to be confided in; and if we would display confidence and consequent quietness, we might be as happy as the spirits before the throne.

Come, my soul, return unto thy rest, and lean thy head upon the bosom of the LORD Jesus.

December 13

Evening Brightens into Day

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

It is a surprise that it should be so; for all things threaten that at evening time it shall be dark. God is wont to work in a way so much above our fears and beyond our hopes that we are greatly amazed and are led to praise His sovereign grace. No, it shall not be with us as our hearts are prophesying: the dark will not deepen into midnight, but it will, of a sudden, brighten into day. Never let us despair. In the worst times let us trust in the LORD who turneth the darkness of the shadow of death into the morning. When the tale of bricks is doubled Moses appears, and when tribulation abounds it is nearest its end.

This promise should assist our patience. The light may not fully come till our hopes are quite spent by waiting all day to no purpose. To the wicked the sun goes down while it is yet day: to the righteous the sun rises when it is almost night. May we not with patience wait for that heavenly light, which may be long in coming but is sure to prove itself well worth waiting for?

Come, my soul, take up thy parable and sing unto Him who will bless thee in life and in death, in a manner surpassing all that nature has ever seen when at its best.

December 14

Nothing Old

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

Glory be to His name! All things need making new, for they are sadly battered and worn by sin. It is time that the old vesture was rolled up and laid aside, and that creation put on her Sunday suit. But no one else can make all things new except the LORD who made them at the first; for it needs as much power to make out of evil as to make out of nothing. Our LORD Jesus has undertaken the task, and He is fully competent for the performance of it. Already he has commenced His labor, and for centuries He has persevered in making new the hearts of men and the order of society. By and by He will make new the whole constitution of human government, and human [character] shall be changed by His grace; and there shall come a day when the body shall be made new and raised like unto His glorious body.

What a joy to belong to a kingdom in which everything is being made new by the power of its King! We are not dying out: we are hastening on to a more glorious life. Despite the opposition of the powers of evil, our glorious LORD Jesus is accomplishing His purpose and making us, and all things about us, "new" and as full of beauty as when they first came from the hand of the LORD.

December 15

World Concord

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

Oh, that these happy times were come! At present the nations are heavily armed and are inventing weapons more and more terrible, as if the chief end of man could only be answered by destroying myriads of his fellows. Yet peace will prevail one day; yes, and so prevail that the instruments of destruction shall be beaten into other shapes and used for better purposes.

How will this come about? By trade? By civilization? By arbitration? We do not believe it. Past experience forbids our trusting to means so feeble. Peace will be established only by the reign of the Prince of Peace. He must teach the people by His Spirit, renew their hearts by His grace, and reign over them by His supreme power, and then will they cease to wound and kill. Man is a monster when once his blood is up, and only the LORD Jesus can turn this lion into a lamb. By changing man's heart, his bloodthirsty passions are removed. Let every reader of this book of promises offer special prayer today to the LORD and Giver of Peace that He would speedily put an end to war and establish concord over the whole world.

December 16

Divine Expulsion

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

It is a great encouragement to valor to be assured of victory, for then a man goes forth to war in confidence and ventures where else he had been afraid to go. Our warfare is with evil within us and around us, and we ought to be persuaded that we are able to get the victory and that we shall do so in the name of the LORD Jesus. We are not riding for a fall, but to win; and win we shall. The grace of God in its omnipotence is put forth for the overflow of evil in every form: hence the certainty of triumph.

Certain of our sins find chariots of iron in our constitution, our former habits, our associations, and our occupations. Nevertheless we must overcome them. They are very strong, and in reference to them we are very weak; yet in the name of God we must master them, and we will. If one sin has dominion of us we are not the LORD's free men. A man who is held by only one chain is still a captive. There is no going to heaven with one sin ruling within us, for of the saints it is said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you." Up, then, and slay every Canaanite, and break to shivers every chariot of iron! The LORD of hosts is with us, and who shall resist His sin-destroying power?

December 17

Nearest and Dearest Fellowship

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

While we are here the LORD is with us, and when we are called away we are with Him. There is no dividing the saint from His Savior. They are one, and they always must be one: Jesus cannot be without His own people, for He would be a Head without a body. Whether caught up into the air, or resting in paradise, or sojourning here, we are with Jesus; and who shall separate us from Him?

What a joy is this! Our supreme honor, rest, comfort, delight, is to be with the LORD. We cannot conceive of anything which can surpass or even equal this divine society. By holy fellowship we must be with Him in His humiliation, rejection, and travail, and then we shall be with Him in His glory. Before long we shall be with Him in His rest and in His royalty, in His expectation and in His manifestation. We shall fare as He fares and triumph as He triumphs.

O my LORD, if I am to be forever with Thee, I have a destiny incomparable. I will not envy an archangel. To be forever with the LORD is my idea of heaven at its best. Not the harps of gold, nor the crowns unfading, nor the light unclouded is glory to me; but Jesus, Jesus Himself, and myself forever with Him in nearest and dearest fellowship.

December 18

Defended and Covered

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

With hurrying wing the mother bird hastens up to the protection of her young. She wastes no time upon the road when coming to supply them with food or guard them from danger. Thus as an eagle's wings will the LORD come for the defense of His chosen; yea, He will ride upon the wings of the wind.

With outspread wing the mother covers her little ones in the nest. She hides them away by interposing her own body. The hen yields her own warmth to her chicks and makes her wings a house, in which they dwell at home. Thus doth Jehovah Himself become the protection of His elect. He Himself is their refuge, their abode, their all.

As birds flying and birds covering (for the word means both), so will the LORD be unto us: and this He will be repeatedly and successfully. We shall be defended and preserved from all evil: the LORD who likens Himself to birds will not be like them in their feebleness, for He is Jehovah of hosts. Let this be our comfort, that almighty love will be swift to succor and sure to cover. The wing of God is more quick and more tender than the wing of a bird, and we will put our trust under its shadow henceforth and forever.

December 19

Afflictions, But No Broken Bones

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

This promise by the context is referred to the much afflicted righteous man: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of them all." He may suffer skin wounds and flesh wounds, but no great harm shall be done; "not a bone of him shall be broken."

This is great comfort to a tried child of God, and comfort which I dare accept; for up to this hour I have suffered no real damage from my many afflictions. I have neither lost faith, nor hope, nor love. Nay so far from losing these bones of character, they have gained in strength and energy. I have more knowledge, more experience, more patience, more stability than I had before the trials came. Not even my joy has been destroyed. Many a bruise have I had by sickness, bereavement, depression, slander, and opposition; but the bruise has healed, and there has been no compound fracture of a bone, not even a simple one. The reason is not far to seek. If we trust in the LORD, He keeps all our bones; and if He keeps them, we may be sure that not one of them is broken.

Come, my heart, do not sorrow. Thou art smarting, but there are no bones broken. Endure hardness and bid defiance to fear.

December 20

Men as Men; God as God

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

Let the text itself be taken as the portion for today. There is no need to enlarge upon it. Trembling one, read it, believe it, feed on it, and plead it before the LORD. He whom you fear is only a man after all; while He who promises to comfort you is God, your Maker, and the creator of heaven and earth. Infinite comfort more than covers a very limited danger.

"Where is the fury of the oppressor?" It is in the LORD's hand. It is only the fury of a dying creature; fury which will end as soon as the breath is gone from the nostril. Why, then, should we stand in awe of one who is as frail as ourselves? Let us not dishonor our God by making a god of puny man. We can make an idol of a man by rendering to him excessive fear as well as by paying him inordinate love. Let us treat men as men, and God as God; and then we shall go calmly on in the path of duty, fearing the LORD and fearing nobody else.

December 21

From Anger to Love

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

God never turns from His love, but He soon turns from His wrath. His love to His chosen is according to His nature; His anger is only according to His office. He loves because He is love; He frowns because it is necessary for our good. He will come back to the place in which His heart rests, namely, His love to His own, and then He will take pity upon our griefs and end them.

What a choice promise is this--"He will subdue our iniquities"! He will conquer them. They cry to enslave us, but the LORD will give us victory over them by His own right hand. Like the Canaanites, they shall be beaten, put under the yoke, and ultimately slain.

As for the guilt of our sins, how gloriously is that removed! "All their sins"--yes, the whole host of them; "thou wilt cast"--only an almighty arm could perform such a wonder; "into the depths of the sea"--where Pharaoh and his chariots went down. Not into the shallows out of which they might be washed up by the tide, but into the "depths" shall our sins be hurled. They are all gone. They sank into

the bottom like a stone. Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

December 22

Immediately Present

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

A help that is not present when we need it is of small value. The anchor which is left at home is of no use to the seaman in the hour of storm; the money which he used to have is of no worth to the debtor when a writ is out against him. Very few earthly helps could be called "very present": they are usually far in the seeking, far in the using, and farther still when once used. But as for the LORD our God, He is present when we seek Him, present when we need Him, and present when we have already enjoyed His aid.

He is more than "present," He is very present. More present than the nearest friend can be, for He is in us in our trouble; more present than we are to ourselves, for sometimes we lack presence of mind. He is always present, effectually present, sympathetically present, altogether present. He is present now if this is a gloomy season. Let us rest ourselves upon Him. He is our refuge, let us hide in Him; He is our strength, let us array ourselves with Him; He is our help, let us lean upon Him; He is our very present help, let us repose in Him now. We need not have a moment's care or an instant's fear. "The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

December 23

Precious Things

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

We may be rich in such things as Joseph obtained, and we may have them in a higher sense. Oh, for "the precious things of heaven"!

Power with God and the manifestation of power from God are most precious. We would enjoy the peace of God, the joy of the LORD, the glory of our God. The benediction of the three divine Persons in love, and grace, and fellowship we prize beyond the most fine gold. The things of earth are as nothing in preciousness compared with the things in heaven.

"The dew." How precious is this! How we pray and praise when we have the dew! What refreshing, what growth, what perfume, what life there is in us when the dew is about! Above all things else, as plants of the LORD's own right hand planting, we need the dew of His Holy Spirit.

"The deep that coucheth beneath." Surely this refers to that unseen ocean underground which supplies

all the fresh springs which make glad the earth. Oh, to tap the eternal fountains! This is an unspeakable boon; let no believer rest till he possesses it. The all-sufficiency of Jehovah is ours forever. Let us resort to it now.

December 24

Over Jordan with Singing

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

That archenemy, the devil, is a liar from the beginning; but he is so very plausible that, like mother Eve, we are led to believe him. Yet in our experience we shall prove him a liar.

He says that we shall fall from grace, dishonor our profession, and perish with the doom of apostates; but, trusting in the LORD Jesus, we shall hold on our way and prove that Jesus loses none whom His Father gave Him. He tells us that our bread will fail, and we shall starve with our children; yet the Feeder of the ravens has not forgotten us yet, and He will never do so, but will prepare us a table in the presence of our enemies.

He whispers that the LORD will not deliver us out of the trial which is looming in the distance, and he threatens that the last ounce will break the camel's back. What a liar he is! For the LORD will never leave us or forsake us. "Let him deliver him now!" cries the false fiend: but the LORD will silence him by coming to our rescue.

He takes great delight in telling us that death will prove too much for us. "How wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?" But there also he shall prove a liar unto us, and we shall pass through the river singing psalms of glory.

December 25

He Came; He Is Coming

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

Many are celebrating our LORD's first coming this day; let us turn our thoughts to the promise of His second coming. This is as sure as the first advent and derives a great measure of its certainty from it. He who came as a lowly man to serve will assuredly come to take the reward of His service. He who came to suffer will not be slow in coming to reign.

This is our glorious hope, for we shall share His joy. Today we are in our concealment and humiliation, even as He was while here below; but when He cometh it will be our manifestation, even as it will be His revelation. Dead saints shall live at His appearing. The slandered and despised shall

shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Then shall the saints appear as kings and priests, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. The long rest and inconceivable splendor of the millennial reign will be an abundant recompense for the ages of witnessing and warring.

Oh, that the LORD would come! He is coming! He is on the road and traveling quickly. The sound of His approach should be as music to our hearts! Ring out, ye bells of hope!

December 26

God Only, You Can Trust

"Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended"

(Matthew 26:33).

Why," cries one, "this is no promise of God." Just so, but it was a promise of man, and therefore it came to nothing. Peter thought that he was saying what he should assuredly carry out; but a promise which has no better foundation than a human resolve will fall to the ground. No sooner did temptations arise than Peter denied his Master and used oaths to confirm his denial.

What is man's word? An earthen pot broken with a stroke. What is your own resolve? A blossom, which, with God's care, may come to fruit, but which, left to itself, will fall to the ground with the first wind that moves the bough.

On man's word hang only what it will bear.

On thine own resolve depend not at all.

On the promise of thy God hang time and eternity, this world and the next, thine all and the all of all thy beloved ones.

This volume is a checkbook for believers, and this page is meant as a warning as to what bank they draw upon and whose signature they accept. Rely upon Jesus without limit. Trust not thyself nor any born of woman, beyond due bounds; but trust thou only and wholly in the LORD.

December 27

His Kindness and Covenant

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

(Isaiah 54:10).

One of the most delightful qualities of divine love is its abiding character. The pillars of the earth may be moved out of their places, but the kindness and the covenant of our merciful Jehovah never depart

from His people. How happy my soul feels in a firm belief of this inspired declaration! The year is almost over, and the years of my life are growing few, but time does not change my LORD. New lamps are taking the place of the old; perpetual change is on all things, but our LORD is the same. Force over turns the hills, but no conceivable power can affect the eternal God. Nothing in the past, the present, or the future can cause Jehovah to be unkind to me.

My soul, rest in the eternal kindness of the LORD, who treats thee as one near of kin. Remember also the everlasting covenant. God is ever mindful of it--see that thou art mindful of it too. In Christ Jesus the glorious God has pledged Himself to thee to be thy God and to hold thee as one of His people. Kindness and covenant dwell on these words as sure and lasting things which eternity itself shall not take from thee.

December 28

Absolute Assurance

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

Several times in the Scriptures the LORD hath said this. He has often repeated it to make our assurance doubly sure. Let us never harbor a doubt about it. In itself the promise is specially emphatic. In the Greek it has five negatives, each one definitely shutting out the possibility of the LORD's ever leaving one of His people so that he can justly feel forsaken of his God. This priceless Scripture does not promise us exemption from trouble, but it does secure us against desertion. We may be called to traverse strange ways, but we shall always have our LORD's company, assistance, and provision. We need not covet money, for we shall always have our God, and God is better than gold; His favor is better than fortune.

We ought surely to be content with such things as we have, for he who has God has more than all the world besides. What can we have beyond the Infinite? What more can we desire than almighty Goodness.

Come, my heart; if God says He will never leave thee nor forsake thee, be thou much in prayer for grace that thou mayest never leave thy LORD, nor even for a moment forsake His ways.

December 29

He Will Carry Us Home

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

The year is very old, and here is a promise for our aged friends; yes, and for us all, as age creeps over us. Let us live long enough, and we shall all have hoar hairs; therefore we may as well enjoy this

promise by the foresight of faith.

When we grow old our God will still be the I AM, abiding evermore the same. Hoar hairs tell of our decay, but He decayeth not. When we cannot carry a burden and can hardly carry ourselves, the LORD will carry us. Even as in our young days He carried us like lambs in His bosom, so will He in our years of infirmity.

He made us, and He will care for us. When we become a burden to our friends and a burden to ourselves, the LORD will not shake us off, but the rather He will take us up and carry and deliver us more fully than ever. In many cases the LORD gives His servants a long and calm evening. They worked hard all day and wore themselves out in their Master's service, and so He said to them, "Now rest in anticipation of that eternal Sabbath which I have prepared for you." Let us not dread old age. Let us grow old graciously since the LORD Himself is with us in fullness of grace.

December 30

Loved to Perfection

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

This fact is essentially a promise; for what our LORD was He is, and what He was to those with whom He lived on earth, He will be to all His beloved so long as the moon endureth.

"Having loved": here was the wonder! That He should ever have loved men at all is the marvel. What was there in His poor disciples that He should love them? What is there in me?

But when He has once begun to love, it is His nature to continue to do so. Love made the saints "his own"--what a choice title! He purchased them with blood, and they became His treasure. Being His own, He will not lose them. Being His beloved, He will not cease to love them. My soul, He will not cease to love thee!

The text is well as it stands: "to the end." Even till His death the ruling passion of love to His own reigned in His sacred bosom. It means also to the uttermost. He could not love them more: He gave Himself for them. Some read it, to perfection. Truly He lavished upon them a perfect love, in which there was no flaw nor failure, no unwisdom, no unfaithfulness.

Such is the love of Jesus to each one of His people. Let us sing to our Well-beloved a song.

December 31

No Stranger in Heaven

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

From day to day and from year to year my faith believes in the wisdom and love of God, and I know that I shall not believe in vain. No good word of His has ever failed, and I am sure that none shall ever fall to the ground.

I put myself into His hand for guidance. I know not the way that I should choose: the LORD shall choose mine inheritance for me. I need counsel and advice; for my duties are intricate, and my condition is involved. . . The counsel of the infallible God I seek in preference to my own judgment or the advice of friends. . .

Soon the end will come: a few more years and I must depart out of this world unto the Father. My LORD will be near my bed. He will meet me at heaven's gate: He will welcome me to the gloryland. I shall not be a stranger in heaven: my own God and Father will receive me to its endless bliss.

Glory be to Him who
Will guide me here,
And receive me hereafter. Amen.