

What Saith the Scripture?
<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

C. H. Spurgeon's
Faith's Checkbook

A Daily Devotional

for the month of

MARCH

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 from 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 line. 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 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 from 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.

We ourselves are promised quiet in connection with the peace of the nation, and this most desirable; for thus we can bring up our families in the fear of the Lord, and also preach the gospel without let or hindrance. Today let us be much in prayer for our country, confessing national sins and asking for national pardon and blessing, for Jesus' sake.

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 [willful] 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 quiet, 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 lisplings 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 must 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 stablish 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 stablish 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 stablish 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 tail? 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?

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.