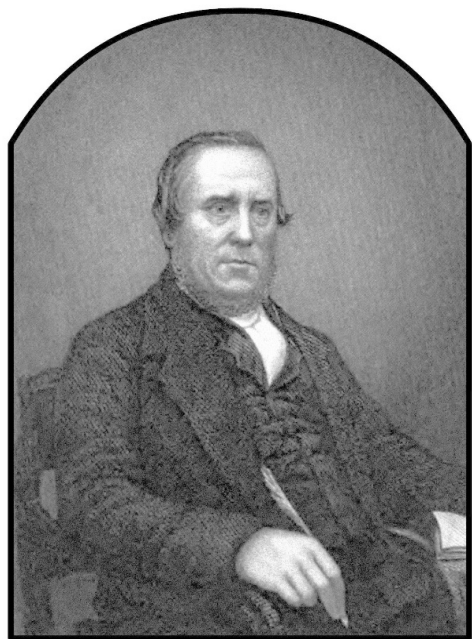


THE MORNING SACRIFICE



James Smith,

THE MORNING SACRIFICE

or

A HELP TO DEVOTION

by
James Smith

NEW EDITION



2024

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The Morning Sacrifice, or A Help to Devotion
Smith, James (1802-1862)

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

Under the Old Testament system of worship, the priest would come twice a day – morning and evening – to offer specially-prepared incense upon a golden altar. This altar was located in the Holy Place, and situated just outside the entrance to the Holy of Holies (Exod. 30:1-10). The incense symbolised the public prayers which God's people offered to Him (Luke 1:9-10; Rev. 5:8; 8:3-4), and which He accepted as a sweet-smelling aroma (Ps. 141:2).

Here in this book, Pastor James Smith seeks to turn our thoughts to the practice of morning prayer. These devotions focus on spiritual topics that not only warrant deeper thought and meditation, but which we may confidently bring before God as matters for prayer and thanksgiving at the start of each day.

In this new edition, only a few minor alterations were made to Pastor Smith's original work. Bible references have been added to the text in those places where quotes and allusions to the Scriptures occur. Some punctuation has also been updated and a small number of very long sentences have been broken up into smaller ones. On rare occasions, words with archaic meanings have been replaced with a modern

equivalent, and British spelling has been preferred throughout.

Extra material has also been included in this new edition which may be of interest to the reader. This includes a short biography of Pastor Smith, a timeline of his life and a list of his major works. Most of this information has been gleaned from his autobiography *Marvellous Mercy*. Above the title of each devotion is also an additional Bible passage. This serves as a suggested Scripture reading which may be read prior to the devotion itself.

Dear reader, no doubt you know by experience, that it can be difficult to establish a morning devotional routine. The duties and responsibilities of the day quickly intrude upon our waking thoughts, and demand our swift attention. Thoughts about temporal things easily overshadow the need to cultivate our own souls and to enjoy fellowship with the Lord. Yet the busyness of our daily lives should highlight our utter dependence upon the Lord, and our need to earnestly seek His help and blessing upon the day ahead. May these short devotions help you establish the habit of offering a ‘Morning Sacrifice’ to God which finds acceptance with Him through the Lord Jesus Christ.

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December 2024

THE MORNING PRAYER

*My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD;
in the morning will I direct my prayer
unto thee, and will look up.
Psalm 5:3*

THE MORNING is the best time for prayer. Jesus rose a great while before day, and went out into a solitary place, and there prayed (Mark 1:35). The most devout, holy, and useful of the Lord's people, have always given a portion of the morning to devotion. How much we have to praise God for, in reference to both the past and present! How much we need from God in reference to the future! David would use his voice in prayer, and many have found it a help in devotion. He would use his eyes, and look up to his Father's house, the place where His honour dwelleth.

Gracious Lord, morning by morning will we pray unto Thee. Rouse us from our slumbers, suggest holy thoughts to our minds and induce us to arise early to commune with Thee. Thou sayest, "Let Me hear thy voice," (Song 2:14). Shall we be so ungrateful as to refuse Thee? Shall our fellow men hear us before our God? Shall we not give Thee the first and the best — poor as our best is? Yes, yes! If anyone hears our voice in the morning, Thou shalt. To Thee will we direct our prayer, asking for grace to fit us for every duty, to preserve us from every temptation, and to keep us from every foe. To Thee will we direct our

prayer, seeking Thy presence to go with us into the world, into our families, and to help us in all the engagements of life. For Thy presence is salvation. We look up, hoping that our supplications will be heard and that our prayers will be answered. We will look up, hoping and expecting to receive the blessings we ask.

*Unto thee have I cried, O LORD, and in the morning
shall my prayer prevent thee.
Psalm 88:13*



MORNING PRAISE

But I will sing of thy power, yea, I will sing aloud of thy mercy in the morning. For thou hast been my defence and refuge in the day of my trouble.

Psalm 59:16

EVERY DAY SHOULD open with a song. The Lord is worthy to be praised (Ps. 18:3). The Lord loves and prizes the praises of His people. The power that sustains us should be gratefully acknowledged. The mercy that soothes our sorrows, sympathizes with our griefs, and supplies all our wants, should be commended. Power and mercy are two great sources of consolation to the Lord's people. Power and mercy unite to support, supply and befriend us, and should therefore be celebrated and praised by us. Power had defended the psalmist, and mercy had been his refuge in the day of his trouble. And therefore, he would praise the Lord. And have not we experienced the same mercy? Are not we laid under the same obligations?

Yes, merciful and almighty Lord, we will sing of Thy power. Yea, we will sing aloud of Thy mercy in the morning, for Thou hast been our defense and refuge in the day of our trouble. Thou hast exerted Thy power for us, and Thou hast put forth Thy power within us. Thou hast had mercy upon us, and Thou hast magnified Thy mercy in dealing with us. Thou hast been our defence, or long since we had been

overcome. Thou hast been our refuge, or ere this our enemies had swallowed us up (Ps. 56:1-2). Help us to trust to Thy power to keep us, and to Thy mercy to supply us, in all time to come. And may we ever find Thee to be our refuge in the day of evil — even a house of defence to save us (Ps. 31:2). Teach us to walk closely with Thee, to commit our all to Thee, and then implicitly trust Thee.

O Saviour, accept our morning song, poor though it be. And give us grace that we may praise Thee with our lives as well as with our lips, day by day!

*I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy, for thou hast
considered my trouble. Thou hast known
my soul in adversities.*

Psalm 31:7



THE MORNING ARM

O LORD, be gracious unto us; we have waited for thee: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble.

Isaiah 33:2

WHAT A BEAUTIFUL prayer for the morning is this! Holy and ever blessed Spirit, lead us into the spirit of it, and enable us to adopt it as our own. "O Lord, be gracious unto us." We are infinitely unworthy of Thy notice, and utterly undeserving Thy regard. But Thy grace looks for nothing in the creature, but glorifies itself by acting freely and blessing gratuitously. Thou hast said that Thou wilt be gracious, just because Thou wilt be gracious (Exod. 33:19). And Thou wilt have compassion, merely because Thou wilt have compassion (Rom. 9:15).

O Lord, be gracious unto us, and bear with our follies, pardon our faults, and send Thy Spirit to help our infirmities (Rom. 8:26). "We have waited for Thee," looking and longing for Thee to come and subdue our iniquities and cast all our sins into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). We have waited for Thy salvation (Gen. 49:18), to deliver us from the guilt, power, love and penal consequences of sin.

O Lord, come and save us. Be Thou our arm every morning, supporting us under all that may come upon us, enabling us to do whatever is required of us, and defending us against all that may rise up to

oppose us. Be our salvation in the time of trouble, for times of trouble will come, and this day may be a day of trouble. Thy people have much soul trouble, which is the worst of trouble. Many of them have family trouble and worldly trouble. In every trouble, be Thou present to save us from its natural tendency, and to benefit and bless us by it.

Gracious Lord, help us to look to Thy grace, to wait for Thy appearing, to lean on Thy arm, and expect Thy salvation, whenever trouble comes. Oh, sanctify our trouble, and so wean us from the world, make us more like Thy beloved Son, and fit us for glory.

*But the salvation of the righteous is of the LORD.
He is their strength in the time of trouble.
Psalm 37:39*



MERCY

God be merciful to me a sinner.

Luke 18:13

NO JEW WOULD ever ask for mercy or expect pardon but through an atonement, for they knew well that without shedding of blood there was no remission of sins. Justice as well as mercy must shine forth if God pardon us. Whatever God does must be in accordance with the principle of eternal justice. Until, therefore, we see that justice is fully satisfied by the sacrifice of Jesus, we cannot with confidence ask and expect mercy from God. The sinner's first prayer is for mercy, and such numerous and varied blessings are included in the word *mercy*, that the believer's last prayer is for mercy. Indeed, every day this prayer suits us, and the more we lament the depravity of our hearts, and the more we compare our lives with God's holy requirements, the more we feel our need of mercy.

Let us then use this prayer today: "God be merciful to me a sinner." Honour the atonement made by Thy Son, by pardoning all my sins, by accepting my person for His sake, by sanctifying my nature and making it just like His. O God, be merciful to my unrighteousness and place His obedience to my account (Rom. 5:19). Be merciful to my weakness and give me His strength. Be merciful to me in my sorrows and sufferings, and let me prove that His

grace is sufficient for me (2 Cor. 12:9). Be merciful unto me, O God. Glorify Thy free and sovereign grace in me day by day. Give me Thy Holy Spirit, to work in me both to will and to do of Thine own good pleasure (Php. 2:13). Oh, sympathize with me, and raise me above my fears, deliver me from unbelief, rescue me from Satan, and give me the victory over this evil world. Let mercy be honoured in my pardon, peace, and purity now, and in my glorification after death.

Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions. According to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.

Psalm 25:7



PARDON

*For thy name's sake, O LORD,
pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.*

Psalms 25:11

THIS IS A STRANGE plea. Men in general would be more likely to plead for pardon because their sins were few, or their guilt venial. But the suppliant knew that the Lord had gotten a name for pardoning great sinners, and thereby displaying great grace. He knew that the Lord had proclaimed His name as “gracious and merciful, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness in truth,” (Exod. 34:6). And now, according to His name, in illustration and confirmation of that name, he prays for the pardon of his great crimes. No one perishes now on account of the greatness of his sins, but only because he refuses a pardon presented to him in the gospel, and refuses to be saved by sovereign mercy. O beloved, however deep your sense of guilt, however glaring your sins, here is encouragement to seek for and expect pardon.

Merciful Lord, we have sinned — sinned against light and against love — sinned after pardon and a profession of love to Thy name — sinned from lightness and negligence — sinned against man as well as against God — sinned against the gospel as well as against the law. Truly, truly, our iniquity is great. It requires a great memory to remember it, a great mind to estimate it, a great sacrifice to atone for

it, and great grace to forgive it. Yet, O Lord, we plead with Thee to pardon it, for the sake of Jesus, and because He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). We pray Thee to blot our sins from Thy book, and remove the guilt of our sins from our consciences. Oh, to know that we are forgiven! Oh, for grace to rejoice in a pardoning God, and to triumph in a full salvation!

The law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Romans 5:20



CLEANSING

Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

Matthew 8:2

THIS WAS THE prayer of a poor leper. He had heard of Jesus. He had faith in His power. But as he had neither an invitation to come to Him, nor a promise from Him, He could not feel sure of His willingness to help Him. He came, therefore, at a peradventure, and proved, for his own comfort and ours, that Jesus is not only able to deliver, but as willing as He is able. Like the poor leper, we need a miracle of mercy to be wrought for us — not on the body, but on the soul. The leprosy of the body, blessed be God, we have not. But we have the leprosy of the soul. Not only does sin dwell within us, but it works, influences and defiles us. It not only pollutes our natures, but it pollutes all we do or say. Every prayer we offer, every duty we perform, is stained and dyed with sin.

Lord Jesus, it is Thine to make the leper clean. Thou didst cleanse many lepers when Thou wast here on earth, and give them health of body. Cleanse, oh cleanse, my soul! “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” Oh, cleanse my conscience by the sprinkling of Thy most precious blood! Purify my affections by the operations of Thy most blessed Spirit! Sanctify my entire nature through the application of Thy gracious Word. Cleanse my thoughts, my

motives, my words and all my actions. Wash my inmost soul, for Thou knowest I desire to be inwardly, outwardly, and eternally holy! Jesus, Saviour, is not holiness Thy delight? Dost Thou not require truth in the inward parts? (Ps. 51:6) And hast Thou not promised the sanctifying Spirit? (John 14:16-17) Condescend then, I beseech Thee, to wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Make me like Thyself, that I may be holy, harmless, and separate from sinners (Heb. 7:26).

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right spirit within me.*

Psalm 51:10



OBEDIENCE

Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

Acts 9:6

A TRULY AWAKENED soul is willing to do anything to escape the wrath to come, and therefore applies, as Saul did, to the Lord for direction. Blessed be God, we are not left at a loss for one moment, for the direction is given us in the plainest possible terms: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," (Acts 16:31).

Lord, give us a strong and lively faith in Jesus, that we may commit our souls to Him, and venture our all on Him, and so have eternal life. When we have received our pardon, and enjoy the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, then we are willing to do everything we can to glorify the thrice blessed name of Him that has saved us. We only want to show our gratitude and express our love by living to Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor. 5:15).

Blessed Jesus, what wilt Thou have me to do? Is there not some niche in Thy temple that I may fill? Is there not some plot in Thy vineyard that I could cultivate? Is there not some work that will glorify Thee that I can do? Oh, find me employment and give me wisdom and strength to do it! Never allow me to indulge in idleness, or selfishness, or be swallowed up with worldly cares. But let me live for Thee, and to Thee, and like Thee. Make me willing to do anything

that will please Thee, or suffer anything that will bring honour to Thy most holy name. Be Thou my pattern! Be Thou my Master! Be Thou my all!

Blessed Spirit, prepare me to work for Jesus. Point out to me the work for which I am qualified, and give me grace to do it to the honour of my gracious Lord! May I be willing to take the lowest place, perform the most self-denying service, and suffer the bitterest reproach, if Jesus be but glorified.

*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 honour.*

John 12:26



ASSURANCE

Say unto my soul, 'I am thy salvation.'

Psalms 35:3

THAT THE LORD does assure many of His people of their salvation, few will be prepared to deny. And that the desire to possess and enjoy this blessing is felt by all who are taught of God, no experienced Christian will question. Indeed, we cannot understand how anyone can be really convinced of his danger, and realise the desert of sin, without wishing to possess an unquestionable evidence of deliverance from it. By His presence in the soul, by the application of His word, and by the witness of the Spirit in the heart (Rom. 8:16), He does in a most satisfactory way assure the believer that he is saved. My soul, art thou saved? Hast thou the witness in thyself that thy sins are pardoned, and that thou hast passed from death unto life? (1 John 3:14)

O Lord, seeing Thou dost indulge poor sinners with a knowledge of their salvation and an assurance of Thy love, condescend in Thine infinite mercy to “say unto my soul, I am thy salvation.” Manifest Thyself to me as my God. Assure me of an interest in Thy love, and so banish all my doubts, fears, and painful misgivings. I wish to be Thine — wholly, entirely, and forever Thine — and to devote myself, body, soul and spirit, to Thy service. I desire most heartily to be holy, and as confidence in Thy love lies

at the very root of holiness, I beseech Thee to give me that confidence, and enable me with comfort to say, "Behold, God is my salvation. I will trust, and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song. He also is become my salvation," (Isa. 12:2). Let me have the witness in myself, not only that Thy Word is true, but that I am interested in its gracious promises, and glorious privileges. Oh send, send Thy Spirit to bear witness with my spirit that I am born of God, and meet for Thy glory!

*To give knowledge of salvation unto his people
by the remission of their sins.*

Luke 1:77



COMFORT

*LORD, lift thou up the light of thy
countenance upon us.*

Psalm 4:6

THERE IS A restless desire in our minds by nature for some good which we have not, nor do we exactly know what it is. Therefore many ask, "Who will show us any good?" But when we are taught by the Holy Spirit, and become experientially acquainted with divine things, we know that the presence, favour, and smile of God are enough to satisfy and make us happy. Having once enjoyed such a privilege, we cannot be satisfied without it, and therefore few petitions are more frequently repeated than this: "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us."

Is not this the desire of our souls this morning? Do we not turn away from the objects which attract, fix the attention and draw out the desires of the many, and say, "Lord, bring me into Thy gracious presence, unfold to me Thy glorious perfections, assure me of Thy favour, and grant me one loving smile. Let me enjoy a sweet sense of Thine approval. Oh, look upon me, and be gracious unto me, as Thou usest to do unto those that love Thy name (Ps. 119:132). Shine away the darkness, doubts, and fears from my mind, and reveal Thyself to me afresh in the person of Thy beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Oh, to feel the

sunshine of Thy love! Oh, to enjoy the balmy breezes of Thy grace! Oh, to rejoice in Thy forgiving mercy! May my soul be weaned from earth, and be filled with a sense of Thy glory, grace, and love. Oh, to see Thee as my Father, looking down, and smiling lovingly upon me, and to hear Thee say, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love, and therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee,' (Jer. 31:3). Let me, then, through the hours of this day, walk in the light, as Thou art in the light (1 John 1:7), and enjoy hallowed communion with Thee."

*Thou hast made him exceeding glad
with thy countenance.*

Psalm 21:6



SANCTIFICATION

*The very God of peace sanctify you wholly. And I
pray God your whole spirit and soul and body
be preserved blameless unto the coming
of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 5:23

WHAT A COMPREHENSIVE prayer is this! Where is the Christian whose heart does not adopt it, and often use it? Our justification is complete at once, for the whole righteousness of the Lord Jesus is placed to our account, and we are fully and eternally acquitted from all charges brought against us, by our good and gracious God. But our sanctification, which is begun in our regeneration, needs the constant presence, power, and operation of the Holy Spirit to carry it on and complete it. We cannot be more justified, but we can be more sanctified. Our hearts, therefore, should be set on a deep and thorough work of sanctification. The God who sanctifies us is at peace with us. He has accepted the blood of His Son as an atonement for us, and has thrown open the fullness of His grace to us.

O Thou peaceful and loving God, our heavenly Father, we beseech Thee to deepen the work of sanctification within us. Make us more holy. Conform us exactly to the image of Thy spotless Son (Rom. 8:29). Give so much grace to us, and by Thy Spirit constantly work so powerfully in us, that our

entire persons — body, soul, and spirit — may be preserved blameless until Jesus comes. And when He comes may we be presented to Him without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:27). And then, then, may we be presented faultless before the presence of Thy glory with exceeding joy (Jude 24).

Oh, for a full preparation for the coming of Jesus in His glory, that we may then be invited to enter into the joy of our Lord! May we daily, with unveiled face, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor. 3:18).

*This is the will of God, even your sanctification.
1 Thessalonians 4:3*



INSTRUCTION

*Teach me thy way, O Lord; I will walk in thy truth:
unite my heart to fear thy name.*

Psalm 86:11

IT IS no use praying to be taught, if we are not willing to obey, for all religion is more or less practical. What is the use of knowing God's way, if we are not willing to walk in it? David desired to know the will of God, that he might do it, and to be taught the truth of God, that he might walk in it. He desired to serve God with all the strength of his soul, therefore he prayed that his heart might be united. God will not accept of a divided heart, nor can He approve of a wandering heart. Therefore, as our hearts are ever prone to go out after the world, and to wander in search of forbidden objects, our frequent prayer should be that God would apply a remedy, and unite our hearts to fear His name.

O Lord, Thou art good, and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon Thee (Ps. 86:5). Therefore we pray Thee to teach us Thy way — the way in which Thou wouldst have us walk with Thee, that we may please and honour Thee. We wish, we desire to walk in Thy truth, doing the will of God from the heart (Eph. 6:6). But, alas, our hearts are so prone to wander, and are ever ready to start aside like a broken bow. Be pleased, therefore, by the power of Thy love, and by the operations of Thy

Spirit, to unite our hearts, that we may wholly serve Thee, and evermore love Thee. Bind our hearts to Thyself, and let our whole souls reverence Thy authority, worship at Thy throne, and obey Thy sacred precepts. Oh for grace to make us Thine entirely, and to keep us Thine forever! Oh for the power of the Spirit to subdue our wills, elevate our affections, enlighten our understandings, make our consciences tender, and lead us in the way everlasting!

*They shall be my people, and I will be their God,
and I will give them one heart, and one way,
that they may fear me forever.
Jeremiah 32:38-39*



A LIVELY HOPE

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3

ALL THE WORKS of God praise Him, but His saints they bless Him. They receive His richest favours. They feel their deep obligation. They experience devout gratitude, and out of the fullness of a grateful heart they bless His name. His mercy is abundant. It abounds more than our vileness, baseness, and horrid wickedness, and therefore of His mere mercy He hath begotten us again to a lively hope. Once we were without God and without hope in the world (Eph. 2:12). But our most merciful God, to honour His beloved Son, sent His Holy Spirit to create us anew, and fill us with a vigorous expectation of a glorious and unchangeable inheritance.

Father of mercies, we bless Thee, and praise Thy glorious name that, though we were once dead in sin, Thou hast quickened us, brought us into union with Christ, and given us a good, lively, and animating hope. Blessed be Thy glorious name forever, and may the whole earth soon be filled with Thy glory. Blessed be God for the resurrection of His Son, which assures us that our debts are paid, that the ransom

price paid for our release is accepted, and that we shall have everlasting life. Now, O Lord, fill us with lively gratitude. Keep up in our minds daily a vivid remembrance of Thy abundant mercy, and help us to rejoice in our union to Thy Son, and in hope of the glory that is yet to be revealed.

Blessed Saviour, we praise Thee for Thy life and death on our behalf, and desire to honour Thee by our daily gratitude and prompt obedience to Thy holy will.

Blessed Spirit, we praise Thee for our regeneration, and for the lively hope that animates, stimulates, and cheers us on toward our Father's house.

*But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were
far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.*

Ephesians 2:13



PRESERVATION

*Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps
slip not....Keep me as the apple of the eye. Hide
me under the shadow of thy wings.*

Psalms 17:5,8

THE PSALMIST felt his weakness and saw his danger. He was afraid lest he should dishonour God, wound his conscience, or grieve the saints. Therefore he prays that God would lead him by the hand, and hold him up in every dangerous path. He desires to be kept carefully and comfortably, and therefore prays to be guarded as the apple of the eye, and to be protected like the bird beneath the warm and strong wing of its parent. How beautiful, how simple, how touching the figures employed by Scripture — so easy to be understood, and commending themselves to one's judgment! Beloved, we need keeping too, for we are weak. We need careful keeping, for our path is often dark and slippery. Many have fallen from the spot where we stand. Let us then pray as David prayed, and seek what David sought.

Good and gracious Lord, Thou knowest our weakness, and the difficult road we have to travel. Therefore we appeal to Thy mercy, and beseech Thee to hold up our goings in Thy paths, that our footsteps slip not. Suffer us not to be drawn aside from them, or stumble in them. But help us to press on in the

good old way, and to walk erect before our fellow-men. Keep us, we pray Thee, carefully and constantly, setting a suitable and sufficient guard over us, as Thou hast over the apple of the eye. Hide, oh hide us under Thy wings, and we shall not only be safe, but enjoy our safety, and daily make our boast of the Lord, that the humble may hear thereof and be glad (Ps. 34:2). We, like young birds, are exposed to many dangers, and our safety is alone in Thee. Oh, cover us with Thy feathers, and let Thy wings be our defence (Ps. 91:4).

*How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God!
Therefore the children of men put their
trust under the shadow of thy wings.
Psalm 36:7*



BLESS ME INDEED

*Oh that thou wouldest bless me indeed, and enlarge
my coast, and that thine hand might be with me,
and that thou wouldest keep me from
evil, that it may not grieve me.*

1 Chronicles 4:10

JAbez was evidently taught of God. He knew his own weakness, and was aware of the dangers to which he was exposed. He had no confidence in the flesh, but he had confidence in God. His prayer was the utterance of his heart, as all prayer should be. It was a direct appeal to God. He asked for what he wanted. He pleaded for what he earnestly desired. He valued God's blessing, and therefore he sought it. He knew that the blessing of the Lord maketh rich (Prov. 10:22), and therefore he set his heart upon it. Can we not pray as he did? We have the same God to go to. We have stronger encouragement to go, and surely we have as much need as he had.

O Lord, bless us indeed. Give us a real blessing, a large blessing, a full blessing. Bless us with a full pardon, with unspeakable peace, with entire satisfaction. Enlarge our hearts to contain more of Thy love, and to devise greater things for Thy glory. If it will be for our good, and lead us to honour Thee more, increase our temporal supplies. But on this point we wish heartily to say, "Not my will, but Thy will be

done,” (Luke 22:42). Let Thine hand be with us to sustain us, to deliver us, and to thrust out our enemies from before us. Keep us from the evil within us, that it may not break out. Keep us from the evil without us, that it may not overcome us. Keep us from the evil one, that he may not afflict and grieve us. Keep, oh, keep us from the evil that is in the world, that it may not ensnare or injure us. May we be kept by Thee at all times, and be so kept, that no sin may be indulged by us, no temptation be too strong for us, nor any duty or privilege be neglected under any pretense whatever.

I will not let thee go except thou bless me.
Genesis 32:26



THE LOVE OF GOD

*The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,
and into the patient waiting for Christ.*

2 Thessalonians 3:5

IS NOT THIS an inspired prayer to the Holy Spirit? It is the Spirit who is entreated to work, leading the minds of the Lord's people into their Father's love, and into the patient waiting for their beloved Saviour. As a divine Person, one with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit is an object of prayer, but according to the economy of the covenant, prayer is generally addressed to the Father, through the Son, by the teaching and help of the Holy Spirit. The love of God is infinite, and it is a subject full of sweet and spiritual comfort. The coming of Jesus is the great object of our hope, and considering the evils from which it will deliver us, and the blessings to which it will introduce us, it were no great wonder if we became impatient for it.

O blessed Spirit, lead our souls into the love of God! May we believe it, realize our interest in it, and enjoy it as shed abroad in our hearts by Thy most gracious agency (Rom. 5:5). May we meditate on its eternity, infinity, and unchangeability, until we are filled with love to our God in return. Holy Comforter, fix our thoughts often on the glorious advent of Jesus. May we look for it, expect it, and daily prepare for it. May we think much of the grace that will then be

brought unto us, and anticipate with delight the descent of our Lord in glory, remembering that “when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory,” (Col. 3:4). Oh to share in all the glory of the first resurrection, and may we have a place appointed us at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7).

Lord Jesus, come quickly, and let us share Thy triumphs, form part of Thy train, and be forever with Thee! (Rev. 22:20)

*Hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God
is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy
Ghost, which is given unto us.*

Romans 5:5



JOY AND PEACE

Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Romans 15:13

PRAY ONE FOR another, is an apostolic precept, and it is carried out by the penmen of the sacred writings. What they sought for others, we may ask for ourselves. God, as our God in Christ, excites hope in our bosoms, and hope vents itself in prayer. We may hope not only for good things, but for *great* things, and therefore we *may*, we *should* ask for them. There is a fullness of joy for the Lord's people, and peace that passeth all understanding. We may not only hope, but *abound in hope*, expecting more and more from God, through the Lord Jesus, and by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Gracious God, deliver us from gloom and grief. Save us from doubt and despondency, and fill, oh fill us with joy — pure, spiritual, holy joy! We would joy in God. We would rejoice in Christ Jesus. We would be at peace with God and at peace with all mankind. Oh, let the peace of God rule in our hearts (Col. 3:15), and keep us cool and calm in the day of battle and in the hour of temptation.

Spirit of God, exert Thy power within us, conquering our unhappy tempers, governing our unruly passions, cleansing our polluted consciences, and filling

us with joy, and peace, and hope. O God of hope, help us to hope in Thee, and give us daily encouragement to expect great and glorious blessings from Thee! Grant us Thy presence, in which is fullness of joy (Ps. 16:11), and impart to us Thy grace, which will make us peaceful and happy. Oh, make us happy Christians, that we may recommend Thy religion to all about us, and by the sweetness of our tempers, the cheerfulness of our spirits, and the earnestness of our testimony, win many souls to Christ. Oh to be holy, happy, and useful, in our day and generation!

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Romans 14:17



WISDOM

That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

Ephesians 1:17

THIS IS A PART of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians, in which he approaches the Most High as the God of Jesus and the glorious Father. How sweet it is to view God as our God because He is the God of Jesus — realizing that we are one in Him, and sharing with Him in all the privileges of the kingdom! God is the fountain of glory, as well as the fountain of grace — the God of Jesus, and our God in Him. For the sake of Jesus, and in honour of His work, He gives the Holy Spirit to reveal Christ to the hearts of His people, and make them wise unto salvation. And that blessed Spirit makes known Christ more fully to the saints, unfolding the glories of His person, the depth of His love, the riches of His grace, the vastness of His merit, the tenderness of His sympathy, the prevalence of His intercession, and His glorious coming and kingdom.

O, our God, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, give unto us, we pray Thee, the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ! O, for the Spirit to make us wise — wise to avoid sin, wise to detect error, wise to do Thy will, wise to win souls, and wise to act so in life that we shall not be

pained with regrets on our dying bed! Oh for the Spirit to reveal Christ to us more fully, more clearly, more powerfully, that we may know Him, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death! (Php. 3:10). Oh to know Christ by the Spirit's teaching as God's Son, as my Saviour, as the church's Head, and as the Judge of all! Spirit of wisdom, reveal Jesus to me this day, and enable me to rejoice in Him!

*The Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will
send in my name, he shall teach you all things,
and bring all things to your remembrance,
whatsoever I have said unto you.*

John 14:26



STRENGTH

I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man.

Ephesians 3:14,16

THE POSTURE EMPLOYED in prayer is of small moment. Yet kneeling seems the most appropriate in private devotion. The object addressed is Jehovah, as the Father of the Lord Jesus, who has already manifested such love to us as to give His Son to die in our stead, that we may be saved from wrath through Him (Rom. 5:9). He who gave His Son will surely give us anything (Rom. 8:32). Paul wishes his Ephesians to be inwardly strong — strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might (Eph. 6:10). The Father's loving heart gives every blessing. The Son's precious blood removes every legal impediment out of the way, that the richest blessings may honourably come into our possession. The Holy Spirit works within us, new-creating us at first, and renewing us afterwards from day to day.

Father of Jesus, and our Father, grant unto us, according to Thy glorious riches, that we may be strengthened with all might by Thy Spirit in the inner man. May we be strengthened to bear with patience whatever Thou shalt see fit to lay upon us. May we be strengthened to do whatsoever Thou shalt require

of us. May we be strengthened by spiritual communications, that so we may put off the old man with His deeds, and put on the new man (Col. 3:9-10), mortify the flesh, with its passions and lusts, overcome the world with its pleasures and cares, trample Satan under foot, and quench all his fiery darts (Eph. 6:16) — in one word, honour our God every moment, in body, soul, and spirit.

Gracious Spirit, whenever we feel weak, discouraged and cast down, lead us to Jesus for strength, courage, and comfort, that so we may honour our heavenly Father by the holiness and happiness of our lives.

*Strengthened with all might, according to His
glorious power, unto all patience and
long-suffering with joyfulness.*

Colossians 1:11



TRUE SACRIFICES

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Psalm 51:17

THE SOUL THAT sins must suffer. We must experience the pangs of deep repentance, or endure the flames of hell. No impenitent sinner can be saved. No substitute for repentance can be found. A sense of the love of God to us, or a sight by faith of Christ dying for us, will break, melt, yea, dissolve the heart. Then, deep sorrow is felt and generally the tears of penitence will flow. God loves to see us properly affected with a sense of sin, and to hear us inwardly mourning over sin. The heart that sighs, groans, and bleeds, because it has dishonoured God by breaking His holy law, is more precious in the sight of God than smoking incense, a bleeding lamb, other most costly sacrifices. Deep may be our sense of unworthiness, sad and dejected may be our spirit, and mixed with sin may be our best services, but the Lord will not despise us if we are mourning for sin.

Holy Spirit, lead us to Gethsemane, and give us a sight of our Saviour there. Lead us to Calvary, and let us have fellowship with Jesus there, that so our spirits may be thoroughly broken for sin, and our hearts be made truly contrite. May we look on the pierced One, and mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and be in bitterness, as one that is in bitterness for his

firstborn (Zech. 12:10). Let us go mourning over sin every day, and yet rejoice in God our Saviour. Let us grieve more and more that ever we have grieved the Lord, and at the same time enjoy His free and everlasting love. Oh, for a strong and steady faith in Christ! Oh, for deep, heart-affecting repentance toward God! Oh, for a broken and a contrite heart! Oh, for a growing hatred of all sin!

*The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart,
and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

Psalms 34:18



LOVE

The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you, to the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable, in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints.
1 Thessalonians 3:12-13

THIS IS UNQUESTIONABLY a prayer presented to the Holy Spirit, who is here distinguished from God, even our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Besides which, it is a prayer for that which it is the Spirit's office and work to produce. Love is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and the prayer is for a great increase of love, in order that we may have our hearts established in unblameable holiness at the last. Precious prayer! Let us adopt it, and make it our own. It is for the blessing which we and the church of Christ in general most need.

Holy Spirit, we worship Thee, we adore Thee, as one with the Father and the Son — God over all, and blessed forevermore. Let it please Thee, in Thy sovereign goodness, to increase our spiritual and fraternal love. Fill us with love to all who love Jesus, irrespective of their opinions or views of church government. Wherever Jesus looks and loves, may we look and love, and may we love with more fervour, intensity, and constancy. Let us love all men, compassionating their circumstances and seeking their

salvation. Oh that we may so live and so love that our hearts may be established in holiness! May we now be unblameable in our spirit and conduct before our fellow men. And when Jesus comes to receive His people to Himself, may we be found of Him unblameable in holiness, that so we may be found without fault before the throne of God forever. Holy-making Spirit, make us holy. Fill us with love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, and faith. In one word, make us like Jesus.

Above all things, have fervent charity among yourselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins.

1 Peter 4:8



EVERLASTING CONSOLATION

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17

HERE IS A PRAYER addressed to the Lord Jesus Christ equally with God the Father. The Lord Jesus, the incarnate God, is a proper object of religious worship. He is worshipped in heaven (Rev. 5:12-13), and He should be worshipped also on earth. He is God equally with the Father (John 10:31). He has loved us equally with the Father. He should therefore be the object of our faith, affection, and worship, equally with the Father. How sweet in approaching God to have, as here, full confidence in His love, and to see Him, as the effect of that love, opening to us an ever-flowing fountain of consolation, and laying for us a firm and imperishable foundation for our hope.

Precious Lord Jesus, and ever-loving God our Father, having in the glorious gospel given us everlasting consolation, and having of Thy free grace generated a good hope in our hearts, let it please Thee of Thy great mercy to comfort our hearts. Thou knowest our griefs, sorrows, and cares. Thou seest how we often droop, and despond, and doubt Thy love. Pity

us, we pray Thee, and comfort, oh comfort us with an assurance of Thy love, by discovering to us afresh our interest in Thy promises, and by Thy Holy Spirit's work in our hearts. Stablish us, we pray Thee, in every good, word and work. Teach us to speak well of Thee, and to speak well for Thee, and to persevere in doing so. Teach us to work from a gracious principle, with a view to Thy honour. And wherever we are, may we be actively employed for the advancement of Thy cause and kingdom. For us to live, let it be Christ, that to die may to us be everlasting gain (Php. 1:21).

*Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus
Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all
comfort, who comforteth us in all our tribulation.
2 Corinthians 1:3*



HELP IN WORK

*Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.
Nehemiah 6:9*

THE LORD'S PEOPLE are sometimes called to perform arduous duties, to bear heavy crosses, or to endure great privations. But the Lord never calls us to do or suffer anything in our own strength. He has provided all that is necessary for us, has stored it up in His beloved Son, has promised it to us, and invited us to come and receive it by prayer and faith. It is not, therefore, for us to quail before any foe, or to shrink from any trial, or to say that we cannot perform any duty. But it is for us with the apostle to say, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me," (Php. 4:13). Paul knew where his great strength lay, and so did Nehemiah. Therefore, instead of being filled with fear, timidity or dismay, he met the difficulty, he faced the foe, and, looking up to heaven, cried, "Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands." Let us also, whenever called to perform self-denying duties, or to conquer mighty and determined foes, and when friends or helpers fail us, look up and seek strength from above.

O Lord, graciously condescend to strengthen our hands, that we may do whatsoever Thou requirest of us, bear whatsoever Thou shalt lay upon us, and overcome all the foes that shall come against us! In strength derived from Thee, may we endure afflic-

tions, conquer our inbred sins, and press on in the path of tribulation, until we sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God. We are absolutely dependent upon Thee (John 15:5), for all our resources are with Thee. Therefore we look to Thee, ask of Thee, and expect from Thee. Blessed, forever blessed be Thy name, for Thou hast promised that as our day, so shall our strength be (Deut. 33:25). O Lord, strengthen our hands!

*In the day when I cried, thou answeredst me,
and strengthenest me with strength in my soul.
Psalm 138:3*



REVIVAL

*O LORD, revive thy work in the midst of the years,
in the midst of the years make known;
in wrath remember mercy.
Habakkuk 3:2*

THE LORD'S WORK often needs reviving, both in the church and in the hearts of His people. Grace in our hearts must be revived and replenished by grace from the heart of God. He who gave the grace we have, giveth more grace (James 4:5-6), and if we have not fresh supplies, it is because we do not seek it, or we seek it from an improper motive, or for some evil end. God is never backward to communicate to His people. He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly (Ps. 84:11). We often displease Him by our coldness, worldliness, prayerlessness, and ingratitude. We provoke Him to anger, and He is displeased with us. Then the reviving and refreshing showers are withholden, and all becomes barren and unprofitable.

O Lord, the author and giver of life, revive Thy work within us. Quicken our graces, brighten our evidences, and fire us with holy zeal. May we mourn over sin, believe in Christ afresh, love Thee with new fervour, sink into nothing at Thy feet, and yet hope for all the great and good things Thou hast promised in Thy word. Revive Thy work in Thy churches. Put

life and power into the ministry. Let our pastors travail in birth for souls, until Christ be formed in them (Gal. 4:19). May Thy people unite with them in holy longings and earnest efforts for the conversion of sinners, that as of old it may be said, "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children," (Isa. 66:8). Oh for power in all the members of the church! Oh for power in all the services of the church! Oh for power in all the departments of the church, especially in the missionary field! Oh for power to accompany every effort made to save souls and exalt our Lord and Saviour!

*Wilt thou not revive us again,
that thy people may rejoice in thee?
Psalm 85:6*



DELIVERANCE

*LORD, it is nothing with thee to help, whether
with many or with them that have no power.*

*Help us, O LORD our God, for we rest on
thee. Let not man prevail against thee.*

2 Chronicles 14:11

KING ASA WAS now in great difficulties, and in great distress. But he knew the Lord, and he had faith in God. He therefore carried the whole matter to the Lord, laid it before Him, and pleaded with Him. He recognised the power and supremacy of God. He acknowledged His sovereignty, and he sought His help. While he sought help of the Lord, he reminded the Lord that he was resting on Him, and appealed to His honour, saying, “Let not man prevail against Thee.” Let us imitate his example, and daily put all our affairs into the hands of the Lord, engaging Him against all our foes, and then expect that He will fight for us, and deliver us, as He did Asa. In this way we shall succeed in all our affairs, be calm under all our troubles, and obtain a glorious victory over all our enemies.

God of Israel, and our God in Jesus, we need Thy help, for our corruptions are strong, the world is powerful, and Satan, as a roaring lion, is seeking to devour us (1 Pet. 5:8). We have no strength against such foes, but it is nothing to Thee to help the most feeble, or to deliver either with means or without.

Help us, O Lord our God! Help us to conquer sin, to overcome the world, and so to resist Satan that he may flee from us (James 4:7). Help us, for we rest on Thee. We have no confidence in the flesh. We have no faith in man (Ps. 146:3). Thou art our hope. Leave us not destitute. Our cause is identified with Thine, and Thy cause is identified with ours. Let not sin, or Satan, or man prevail against Thee, but give, oh give us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! Make us conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Him that loved us (Rom. 8:37).

*There be more with us than with him. With
him is an arm of flesh, but with us is
the LORD our God, to help us.
2 Chronicles 32:7-8*



THE PRESENCE OF GOD

*Oh that thou wouldst rend the heavens, that thou
wouldest come down, that the mountains
might flow down at thy presence!
Isaiah 64:1*

THE LORD'S PEOPLE are sometimes filled with the most passionate longings for His presence, both in their own souls and in the church. Real religion always leads the soul to centre in God Himself. The most correct conduct, the most scriptural church, the most fascinating religious services, will not satisfy a gracious soul without God. But there are times of deadness, inactivity, and division among the Lord's people, when we feel the prophet's language to be most appropriate. We have no hope of quickening, no hope of seeing better days, except the Lord come down, purge His temple, correct His children, and afresh impart His Spirit. At this very time, we feel that the presence and power of God are very much needed in our hearts, and in the church of God at large.

O Thou that dwellest in the heavens, and yet lovest to meet and dwell with Thy people on earth, let it please Thee to come down into Thy church with power and great glory! Bend the firmament that divideth earth from heaven, and manifest Thyself gloriously in the midst of Thy people. Rouse up the lethargic, stimulate the dull and dilatory, quicken the

dead and lifeless, restore the backslider and the wanderer, cleanse the foul and filthy, and correct the views of the erroneous. Let Thy people flow together, become one with each other, and go forth to the Lord's work as a band of men whose hearts God has touched. O Lord, come down into our hearts. Burn up the wood, hay, and stubble (1 Cor. 3:12). Remove every obstacle out of the way of our entire consecration to Thee, and let our words and works declare that the God of holiness dwells within!

*Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies
pour down righteousness. Let the earth open,
and let them bring forth salvation, and
let righteousness spring up together.*

Isaiah 45:8



THE FAMILY PORTION

Remember me, O LORD, with the favour that thou bearest unto thy people. Oh, visit me with thy salvation that I may see the good of thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of thy nation, that I may glory with thine inheritance.

Psalms 106:4-5

THE LORD SPECIALLY favours His people, because He loves them. Therefore He manifests Himself to them, communes with them, and bestows His Spirit upon them. He visits them in trouble, and delivers them, assuring them that He is their Saviour. Having chosen His people in Christ, He calls them by His grace, justifies them from all sin, and brings them into union with Himself. The knowledge of this makes them glad, and in anticipation of the glory to be conferred upon them, they rejoice and are happy.

O Thou infinitely gracious God, remember me when Thou dispensest Thy special favours, and give me a new and holy heart. Bestow upon me the Holy Spirit, as a Spirit of love, power, and of a sound mind! (2 Tim. 1:7) Oh, visit me, and assure me that I am saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation! Let me see Thy chosen people united, peaceful and prosperous, and let me share in all their privileges, pleasures, and prospects. Indulge me to rejoice in Christ Jesus, made glad as Thy people are by being

gathered to Him, united with Him, and presided over by Him. Oh for grace to glory with Thine inheritance, not in what I have, or in what I am, or even in what I shall be, but in the Lord Jesus, and because I know Thee, O Thou who exercisest lovingkindness and tender mercies in the earth! Oh to see the church of God holy, active, and happy, and to share with it in all its joys!

Blessed Jesus, let me see Thy church increase in numbers, grace, and happiness. And let me live and die in union with Thyself and it. Give me, oh give me a joyous, spiritual, and active Christianity, for Thy mercy's sake!

*Let Israel rejoice in him that made him.
Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.
Psalm 149:2*



SATISFACTION

*Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest
to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy
courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness
of thy house, even of thy holy temple.*

Psalms 65:4

THAT GOD HAS chosen His people in His Son, is clearly and fully stated in the New Testament, and that those who are chosen by Him are brought near unto Him, to know Him, love Him, and obey Him, is equally clear. Here the man is declared to be blessed whom God hath chosen, whom He hath drawn to His feet, and to whom He hath given a place in His house. Nearness to God is one of our greatest privileges, and to be allowed to enjoy the ordinances of the gospel is a great favour. When thus indulged, we may expect to be satisfied with the rich, varied, and abundant provision of His temple.

Glorious Lord, give unto us, we beseech Thee, a knowledge of our election, by drawing us very near to Thee, and by making us very like Thee! May we realize that as Thou hast chosen us in Thy adorable sovereignty, so Thou hast called us by Thy invincible grace. And having called us by Thy grace, Thou wilt keep us by Thy divine power, through faith, unto salvation. Indulge, oh indulge us with greater nearness to Thyself! Cause us to approach unto Thee, to come even to Thy seat, and there may we daily hold

sweet, hallowed, and heart-affecting fellowship with Thy blessed self. Let, oh let us dwell on high, enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 10:19), and be abundantly satisfied with the good things which Thou hast prepared and laid up for them that love Thee! May we dwell in God, and O Lord, do Thou in Thy great mercy dwell in us! We want to rise to the enjoyment of the highest privileges of Thy people, and to share in their greatest honours. May we always have access to Thee with confidence by the faith of Jesus, and rejoice in hope of the glory that is to be revealed (Rom. 5:2).

*Blessed are they that dwell in thy house:
they will be still praising thee.*
Psalm 84:4



REMEMBER ME

*Lord, remember me when thou
comest into thy kingdom.*

Luke 23:42

EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS prayer was remarkable. The Person to whom it was addressed — the Son of God, dying as a malefactor. The person praying — a robber executed for crime, who just before mocked the object to whom he now prays. The faith in which it was presented — he believed that Jesus would have a kingdom, and would have the greatest blessings at His disposal. The humility it displays — he only asks to be remembered.

Lord Jesus, Thou art now at Thy Father's right hand in glory, and all things are put under Thy feet. Remember, oh, remember us! Remember our sins, and pardon them. Remember our wants, and supply them. Remember our prayers, and answer them. Remember our families, and bless them. Remember us in sorrow, to comfort us. Remember us when alone, to commune with us. Remember us in company, to control us. Remember us in pain, to soothe us. Remember us in life, and make us useful. Remember us in death, and enable us to triumph over it. Remember, oh, remember us, when Thou comest into Thy kingdom. Give us a part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:5-6). Appoint us a place at the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9). And grant that

with the righteous we may shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of our Father (Matt. 13:43).

Lord, remember me, and enable me to remember Thee. Often at Thy table, as Thou hast appointed, and always, day by day, wherever I am, whatever I do, let my thoughts be filled with Thee. May I remember Thy example to copy it, Thy merit to trust in it, Thy love to rejoice in it, and Thy second advent, to prepare for it. Lord, remember me in heaven, to send down needed blessings, and I will remember Thee on earth, to send up my prayers and praises.

*Remember me, O my God, for good.
Nehemiah 13:13*



PANTING FOR GOD

*As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth
my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth
for God, for the living God: when shall I
come and appear before God?*

Psalms 42:1-2

GRACE ALWAYS LEADS back the soul to God, from whom it has wandered, and makes God, as He is revealed in the gospel, the great object of desire and love. Wherever grace reigns, the soul cannot be satisfied without God. As well may we live without water for the body as without God for the soul. The hunted hart, heated and exhausted, does not more long for the brooks of water than the truly gracious soul longs for fellowship and communion with God. Ordinances are precious, but they will not do as a substitute for God. The Bible is precious, but even God's own word will not do as a substitute for Him. "My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Here is the proof of grace in the heart, the evidence of divine life in the soul. No one ever thirsts thus but a Christian, and every one that so thirsts shall be satisfied.

Ever-living and life-giving God, our souls are thirsting for Thee. We want the sense of Thy presence. We want to feast on Thy glories. We want to feel Thy love flowing into our souls, and to feel our love flowing out to Thee in return. Come, gracious

God, come and satisfy us early with Thy mercy. Come, and quench this painful thirst that we feel. Come, and hold close and sensible communion with us. We want to be near to God. We want to receive spiritual supplies from God. We want heaven to come down to us, preparatory to our ascending to heaven. Thou knowest, Lord, that we cannot be satisfied without Thee. Let us not then be put off with anything less than Thee. This day let us walk with Thee, talk with Thee, and enjoy rich communications from Thee.

*O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my
soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee
in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is.*

Psalm 63:1



FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

*O LORD, save thy people, the remnant of Israel.
Jeremiah 31:7*

THE LORD'S ANCIENT people should not be forgotten of us. We owe them a debt which can best be discharged by praying for them. They are still beloved for the fathers' sakes, and the Lord has predicted, that prior to their restoration this prayer shall be offered for them. Of old He said, "Blessed is he that blesseth thee," (Gen. 27:29). Let us then give them a place in our prayers, and as God turned the captivity of Job when he prayed for his friends, who can tell? The Lord may give us some special blessing when we pray for the Jews. We know it is the will of God that we should do so, for the command is, that "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men," (1 Tim. 2:1) and they must be included in the "all men." God loves to hear the voice of intercession. He loves to see us sympathize with others, and to hear us pray for them.

God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, look down, we beseech Thee, in pity on Thine ancient people. Remember for them Thy covenant, Thy promises, and the blood of Thy dear Son. Take away the veil from their hearts. Open their poor blind eyes. Let Thy law come home to them in its spirituality and power, that they may deeply feel the need of a Saviour. And send

Thy Holy Spirit to convince them that Jesus is the true Messiah, the Saviour of the world, and that He is able and willing to save them. Take away from them, according to Thy promise, the heart of stone, and give them the heart of flesh (Ezek. 11:19-20). Turn upon them a pure language, that they may turn and seek the Lord with one consent (Zeph. 3:9). Oh to see the seed of Abraham embracing the Saviour, enjoying peace with God, and crowning Jesus Lord of all!

*I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all
countries whither I have driven them, and
will bring them again to their folds, and
they shall be fruitful and increase.*

Jeremiah 23:3



COMPLETENESS

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Hebrews 13:20-21

PAUL'S PRAYERS WERE very comprehensive, and are an excellent pattern for us. He always takes a sweet and encouraging view of God when he comes to Him for blessings, and asks for those things which are most needed by the Lord's people. Here he worships Him as the God of peace, who, having received full satisfaction at the hands of His Son for the sins of all His people, raises Him from the dead. The death of the Shepherd was the redemption of the sheep, and the liberation of the Shepherd secured the liberation of the flock. Realizing this, he prays for the perfecting of the Lord's people, by the inworking of the Holy Spirit enabling them to abound in every good work.

O then God of peace, as Thou hast liberated and exalted Thy Son, our Saviour, thereby putting honour on His work, and laying a firm foundation for our hope, we pray Thee to perfect us in every grace, and set our hearts on pleasing Thee. Oh, work in us both to will and to do of Thy good pleasure (Php. 2:13), and

enable us to work, both in the world and in the church, so as to glorify and please Thee. Complete, oh, complete the formation of our characters after the model set before us in Thy word, and render us just like our beloved Lord and Master. Teach us to add to our faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity. May these things be, in us and abound, that we may be fruitful in every good work (2 Pet. 1:5-8).

*The God of all grace, who hath called us unto
his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye
have suffered awhile, make you perfect,
establish, strengthen, settle you.*
1 Peter 5:10



ANSWERS DELAYED

*O LORD, how long shall I cry and thou wilt not hear?
Habakkuk 1:2*

THE LORD OFTEN tests our sincerity, and increases our earnestness in prayer, by delaying to answer. He that solicits favours must not dictate as to time, nor complain if he sometimes has to wait. The longer we wait, often, the more valuable the blessings become, and we prize the mercy in proportion to the difficulty of obtaining it. Moreover, the Lord supports, while He makes us wait, and teaches us important lessons by our waiting. The Syrophoenician woman had to wait, and was repulsed more than once, and yet at last obtained much more than she asked for. This is recorded for our encouragement, and for the same purpose it is written, "Everyone that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened," (Luke 11:9). Let us then ask in faith, plead with fervour, and wait with patience. So shall we obtain, and glorify God.

Heavenly Father, preserve us from impatience, when Thou shalt delay to answer our prayers, and keep us from doubting Thy love, or questioning the truth of Thy word, because Thou dost not immediately reply. Give us deep humility, strong confidence, and patient hope. So shall we be willing to give Thee time, and still expect the blessing, though it tarry.

May we follow hard after Thee, if Thou shouldst appear to depart and leave us, and let Thy right hand uphold us, until the needed and sought for mercy comes. Because Thou hast been our help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings may we rejoice (Ps. 63:7). We know Thou hearest us, and we know, too, that if what we ask will do us good, Thou wilt grant it, because we ask in the name of Jesus. May our confidence in Thee increase, and our expectations be enlarged day by day.

They shall not be ashamed that wait for me.
Isaiah 49:23



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James Smith (1802-1862) was a 19th century English Baptist pastor who became a prolific and much-loved devotional author. Called to the ministry in his mid-20s, he served as pastor of two churches in Cheltenham over a period of 12 years. In 1841 he accepted a call to the New Park Street chapel in London - the church which Charles Spurgeon would later pastor for almost 40 years. Health issues eventually forced him to leave London in 1850, and he eventually returned to Cheltenham to pastor a third church in the area from 1852 until his death. In total, he authored more than 50 books, along with numerous tracts and articles for various Christian periodicals and magazines.

Smith's writings were full of Christ, and he sought to magnify and exalt His precious Saviour in every book. He aimed to not only cultivate a genuine love for the Lord Jesus in the hearts of his readers, but to see such love for Christ manifested in their everyday lives. In the preface to his popular *The Believer's Daily Remembrancer*, he wrote:

"In this little work, I aim to speak in the closet, in the cottage, in the kitchen, and even in the field, to the different classes of the Lord's family; endeavouring to draw them nearer to their God and gracious Father. My desire is to

promote the power of godliness; and these little pieces are written to convince, comfort, and correct; to fan the flame of devotion, and to produce holiness of heart and life...Habitual dependence upon God for all we need, acknowledging the hand of God in all we receive, and walking with God, notwithstanding all that may happen to us below, enter into the very vitals of genuine Christianity; and it is only while we are thus acting that we enjoy peace with God, and walk in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.”

Most Christian authors would naturally have similar desires. But whereas many are able to speak about the Christian life in theory, Smith had first-hand experience of the truths that he wrote about. In God’s providence, he learnt them by passing through his own fiery trials. Smith’s father died while he was still an infant, and as a young child he was pressed into the workforce to help his mother support the family. As an apprentice and employee, he battled with the opposition that he received from ungodly co-workers. As a father of at least seven children, he saw three of them die at an early age. As a pastor, he experienced the hatred, slander and nastiness that sometimes comes from professing Christians, and he went through more than one bitter church split. Nor was he exempt from health and financial worries either. In addition to all this, Smith endured the normal internal battles against sin that plague every

believer, while also bearing the heavy burden for the souls of others that accompanies a faithful ministry.

Not surprisingly, Smith's writings began to resonate with other readers who were enduring similar trials. Through his pen, they were being comforted with the same comfort that he himself had received from God (2 Cor. 1:4). Before long, Smith's books began to spread throughout England and eventually around the world. Many wrote to him, expressing gratitude for the tremendous help they had received, or explaining how God had used his writings to awaken unbelieving friends and relatives. Hungry souls were being fed, and for a while, his writings were even more popular than those of Charles Spurgeon. Sadly, his works are now largely unknown by most 21st century Christians, but it is hoped that as more of them are reprinted, the Lord will again use them to exalt Christ and bless the souls of His beloved saints.

Further information about Pastor James Smith can be found in his autobiography, *Marvellous Mercy, as Displayed in the Life and Experience of the Author, James Smith of Cheltenham*. The first edition contains a record of his life up until August 1861, and was published prior to his death in December of the following year. In a subsequent printing in 1864, his son Joseph Smith, provided some additional details about Pastor Smith's final months.

Brief Timeline

- 1802 Born in Old Brentford, Middlesex (19th November).
- c.1812 Taken from school to work in a soap factory to help his widowed mother earn an income for the family.
- c.1816 Commenced work as an apprentice fell-monger (tanner and dealer of sheepskins).
- 1819 Conversion (28th February).
- 1820 Publicly baptized (31st March) and received into church membership (2nd April).
- 1824 Marriage to Ann Cook (29th August).
- 1825 Moves to Chertsey for work purposes as his employer's fell-monger business begins to expand (April).
- 1826 Preaches publicly for the first time at Alton from Ps. 9:18 (19th November). It was his 24th birthday. Preaches twice more that same day from Zech. 9:10 and Zech. 13:1.
- 1827 Brentford church sets him apart for the ministry of the word (March), and he begins preaching in various places as needed.
- 1828 Accepts an invitation to preach for a 12 month trial period at Cheltenham, with the possibility of becoming the church's pastor. During this time he faced severe opposition from some in the church, and a number of members decided to leave.

- 1829 Ordained as pastor of Bethel Chapel in Cheltenham (26th May) and the church continues to grow, despite ongoing controversies. Members with hyper-calvinistic and antinomian views become increasingly critical of his ministry and message. In order to divert his mind from these trials, Smith begins to write, print and circulate gospel tracts.
- c.1830 Death of daughter Mercy.
- 1831 Death of 19-month-old daughter Anne after a three day illness (13th Jan.)
- 1833 Death of son Charles.

Comes to believe in the universal offer of the gospel to all lost sinners, and determines to start calling them to repent and believe in the gospel, and offer them the Lord Jesus as Saviour. Previously, he held the view that gospel invitations should only be made to sinners who had been made to feel their need of Christ. He anticipates further opposition from the church as a result.
- 1835 The church situation deteriorates further and he resigns as pastor of Bethel Chapel. A number of members also leave, and he begins preaching among them at a local gallery for the next three months.
- 1836 Becomes pastor of the newly-formed Salem Baptist Chapel in Cheltenham (1st January). Though the original premises could seat 600 people, the congregation numbered more than 1200 within just 2 years and the building had to be enlarged.

THE MORNING SACRIFICE

- 1841 Resigns as pastor of Salem Chapel (9th November) and accepts a call to New Park Street Chapel, London. He describes the London church as 'in a very low state, and the congregation very small,' but between 400 and 500 new members would be added to the church during his pastorate.
- 1850 Resigns as pastor of New Park Street Chapel (February) due to ongoing lung and asthma problems. Commences a two year trial at Byrom Street Chapel in Liverpool (August) which only lasts until the end of the year.
- 1851 Invited to oversee the church at Shrewsbury for 12 months (February).
- 1852 Returns to Cheltenham to pastor a church which was meeting in Ebenezer Chapel (February). This church, which had formed in 1843 from previous members of Salem Chapel, was now itself in danger of disbanding. It recovered under Smith's ministry and would soon become Cambray Baptist Church.
- 1861 Suffers a sudden stroke and paralysis (September), which prevents any further work as a preacher or writer.
- 1862 Death at the age of 60 years (15th December)

List of Published Works

- 1836 Parental Solitude
- 1838 Jehovah Revealed as the Object of Faith and Hope
- 1839 Messenger of Mercy, A
- 1840 Minister's Pocket Companion, The
- 1842 Believer's Daily Remembrancer, The (Pastor's Morning Visit)*
- 1845 Book That Will Suit You, The*
Church As It Ought to Be, The
Love of Christ [Set Forth], The*
- 1846 Believer's Daily Remembrancer, The (Pastor's Evening Visit)
Christian's Railway and Steamboat Companion
Way of Salvation Set Forth, The
- 1847 Voice of Mercy in the House of Affliction, The
- 1848 Green Pastures for the Lord's Household
- 1849 Manna in the Wilderness
Sinner's Guide to God and Glory, The
Streams in the Desert
- 1850 Daily Bible Readings for the Lord's Household
Rainbow of the Covenant, The*
Refreshing Dew-Drops
Selection of Spiritual Poetry, A
- 1852 Book That You Want, The
Still Waters*
- 1854 Precious Things From the Everlasting Hills
- 1855 Better Land, The

THE MORNING SACRIFICE

Sabbath Readings
Welcome to Jesus

- 1856 Early and Latter Rain, The
Good Seed for the Lord's Field
Our Heavenly Father
Sacramental Meditations
- 1857 Bread From Heaven
Christ Alone
- 1858 Great Comforter, The
Light for Dark Days
Sunny Subjects for All Seasons
- 1859 Book You Will Like, A
Evening Sacrifice, The
Important Questions
Morning Sacrifice, The
Pearls from the Ocean
Words of Comfort
- 1860 Fruit From the Tree of Life
Gleams of Grace
Good News for All
Rills from the Rock of Ages
- 1861 Glad Tidings of Good Things
Pleading Saviour, The
- 1862 Marvellous Mercy
- 1863 Believer's Triumph, The
- 1865 Bright Rays and Reviving Showers
- 1867 Food for the Soul

**Exact year of publication unknown.* Given dates indicate the year in which the book was first published, and are not necessarily the same year in which they were written.

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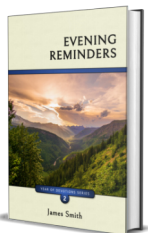


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