

POCKET DEVOTIONS SERIES

# WORDS OF COMFORT

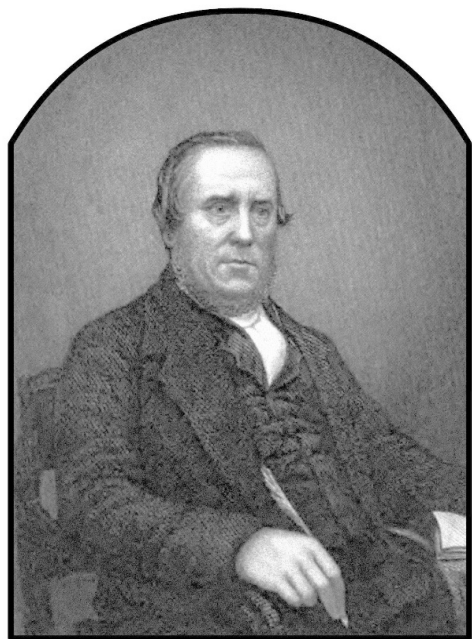


1 POCKET  
DEVOTIONS  
SERIES

James Smith



# WORDS OF COMFORT



*James Smith,*

# WORDS OF COMFORT

or

SOLACE IN SORROW

by  
James Smith

*NEW EDITION*



2024

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## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

The causes of sorrow are manifold in this life. Indeed, the Scriptures remind us that "Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward." (Job 5:7). Living as a sinner, among other sinners, in the midst of a sin-cursed world, means that suffering is inevitable for every one of us. We endure the loss of friends, possessions and employment. We suffer bereavements, illnesses and harsh mistreatment by others. Poverty, pain and death eventually comes to all of us.

Yet these physical sorrows are only a portion of what the Lord calls His own people to endure. For the redeemed also face great spiritual battles that the unbeliever knows nothing about. We fight against the sin that still remains in our own heart. We strive to resist temptations that come our way, and are stricken in our conscience when we fail. If we persist in our rebellion, we feel the painful rod of God's discipline. And perhaps worst of all, we start to entertain doubts about God and His character when we pass through the hard trials that He has ordained for us.

But thankfully, as Pastor Smith reminds us in this book, God remains the same faithful and compassionate Father to us throughout all our times of sorrow, whatever they may be. Though our hearts may be fickle, His love for us is unwavering. His promises remain sure and certain, even in the most uncertain of

times. Indeed, whatever may be the cause of our sorrow, He remains our ever present help in times of trouble. He will certainly supply us with all that we need to make it through our seasons of sorrow.

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.

Some 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 ("About the Author"), 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.

May the Triune God, then, be pleased to bless this new edition of *Words of Comfort* to every reader who is struggling through difficult times. May He use it to remind you that in Him, you have a Father who loves you far more than any earthly father loves his own children. In the Son, you have a sympathetic Saviour

## PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

who knows exactly what it is like to suffer as a human being in this world. And in the Spirit, you have Him who has been sent to be your Great Comforter, to tenderly minister the very words of Christ to your own hurting heart.

THE PUBLISHER  
*December 2024*



## GOD LOVES US

*We have known and believed the love that  
God hath to us. God is love.*

*1 John 4:16*

**T**HE SWEETER THE truth, the more backward are we to receive and believe it. Therefore it must be presented to us again and again. What more pleasant than the fact, that “God is love”, and yet we doubt it, or forget it, or fail to realize it. Therefore the gospel presents it to us again and again, and in almost every possible form. Twice over, within the compass of a few verses, John tells us in so many words that “God is love.”

Now, faith in this representation of our God lies at the root of our holiness, happiness, and peace. Just in proportion as we believe that “God is love,” and *love to us*, shall we consecrate ourselves to His service, enjoy peace in our consciences, and be happy in His ways.

God loves us, and therefore He planned our salvation in the covenant, sent His only-begotten Son to put away our sins by the sacrifice of Himself, gave His Holy Spirit to teach us our need of Christ and lead us to Him, and has put His blessed word in our hands that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope (Rom. 15:4).

God loves us, and therefore chastens us, strips us, empties us, and will not let us live satisfied without

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Himself. God is love, and only love to us; for all our sins are atoned for, and for us the law is magnified, justice is satisfied, and heaven prepared.

Yes, though we are sinners, and deeply feel it, though we are not at all what we wish to be, and deeply deplore it, yet *God loves us — yea, God to us is love.*

*Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

***1 John 4:10***



## JESUS ALWAYS PRESENT

*Lo, I am with you alway.**Matthew 28:20*

**S**UFFERING CHRISTIAN! Jesus is present with thee. He witnesses thy sufferings, sympathizes with thee in thy sorrows, and will do thee good by every pang and every pain. He is always present with His people, for He will never leave them nor forsake them (Heb. 13:5). But He is especially present with them when they are in the furnace.

It is the province of faith to realize Him as present, and to have personal dealings with Him for the soul's good. But in great pain or extreme lassitude, we are apt to forget, or at least we do not realize, that Jesus is present. And therefore we need to be reminded of the pleasing fact.

Remember, too, that Jesus, who is now with thee, hath suffered, having been tried. Yea, that He was tried in all points like as thou art, and is therefore able to sympathize with and succour those who are tried (Heb. 4:15). His head has been racked with pain. His heart has been torn with sorrow. He has been overwhelmed with darkness and distress, occasioned by the hiding of His Father's countenance. He can enter into the whole case. He will treat thee tenderly and lovingly. He observes the effect produced on thy nerves, and on thy soul. He will fulfil His precious

promises in thy experience, and looking to Him, trusting in Him, and pleading with Him, you will obtain strength, comfort, and victory.

Sweet thought, Jesus is with me — that Jesus who suffered and died for me — that Jesus who is my advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1), and who ever liveth to make intercession for me (Heb. 7:25) — *that* Jesus who is preparing for me a place in His Father's house, and who will soon come and receive me to Himself (John 14:2-3).

Blessed Spirit, enable me to realize that Jesus is with me. Unfold to me His glories, and give me to enjoy His sweet and soul-satisfying presence!

*I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you.*

*John 14:18*



## AFFLICTIONS APPOINTED

*He performeth the thing that is appointed for me.*

*Job 23:14*

**T**HE TRIALS OF time were appointed in eternity. He that chose us unto eternal life, ordained the path by which we were to reach it. Nothing ever happens to us by chance. Our little trials, our great troubles, our heavy crosses, and our painful losses, are all a part of God's plan.

Nor were they appointed for us merely in the exercise of divine sovereignty, but because our God saw them to be necessary, and intended to make them real blessings to us. Every cross is a mercy, every loss a gain, every trouble a covenant blessing, every trial a seed of joy. We shall be better in future for what we suffer now. If we sow in tears, we shall reap in joy (Ps. 126:5). A wet spring will introduce a glorious harvest. Many of our present tears will crystallize into pearls, and will be an ornament to us in glory.

And not only so, but the same love that ordained our trials, ordained our strength to bear them, and that our choicest comforts should flow from them. Time only reveals what God purposed in eternity. And eternity will reveal the design that God had in view in all the trials of time.

Let us, then, bear our afflictions with patience, and seek grace to honour God in all we suffer, as well as by all we do. If we keep our eye fixed on glorifying

God, God will so order and arrange everything that happens to us that it shall work for our good. Nothing shall by any means hurt us. The darkest clouds shall bring showers of blessings, and our sharpest pains shall only introduce us to the sweetest joys.

Gracious Lord, I desire not only to acquiesce in Thy appointments, but to be pleased with them — so pleased, that if the turning of a straw would alter them, I would not turn it! Oh, for grace to glory in tribulation!

*No man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.*

*1 Thessalonians 3:3*



## SUFFERING MITIGATED

*He stayeth his rough wind in  
the day of the east wind.*

*Isaiah 27:8*

UR AFFLICTIONS ON earth are compared to the winds of heaven. They are powerful, searching, and calculated to excite alarm. But our heavenly Father holds the winds in His hand, and only suffers them to blow as He pleases. He has a purpose to answer by every blast, and always watches its working and its effect.

He will not lay on us more than we are able to bear. If He increase the affliction, He will increase the strength. We may be tossed about, but we shall never be torn from the rock. Our anchor will hold us fast, our cable will never snap. Our place of refuge is sure, for it is founded on a rock — or rather, it is the Rock itself: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (Ps. 46:1) Our great refiner sits by while we are in the furnace. He regulates the heat, and superintends the whole process of purification. He will not suffer us to be tempted or tried above that we are able, but will with the temptation make a way for our escape, that we may be able to bear it (1 Cor. 10:13).

My afflicted brother, cheer up! There is a limit set to the power and duration of thy afflictions. If the biting east wind blow, the noisy rough wind shall be

stayed. The grace of Jesus is sufficient for thee, and His strength will be made perfect in weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).

Fear not, faint not. As thy days, so shall thy strength be (Deut. 33:25), and thy present afflictions will be seen to be blessings by-and-by. Thy present sufferings are for thy future good. Many now in glory have passed through the same, and many now on the road are experiencing the same pains, the same depressions, and the same sorrows. Cheer up, then, for thy present afflictions will sweeten the joys of heaven, and heighten the brightness of glory.

*The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his  
eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have  
suffered a while, make you perfect,  
stablish, strengthen, settle you.*

**1 Peter 5:10**



## AFFLICTION BENEFICIAL

*It is good for me that I have been afflicted.**Psalms 119:71*

**A**DVERSITY OFTEN proves a painful blessing, and prosperity a pleasant evil. Few have derived spiritual benefit from prosperity, but many have had to bear testimony that adversity has done them good. Affliction has brought many to Christ who never thought of seeking Him before, and it has restored many who in prosperity had wandered from Him.

Many, very many can say, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted," (Ps. 119:71) for it stopped me in my mad career of sin and folly. It instructed me, and taught me to know more of myself and of my God than I ever knew before. It softened me, and brought me to lie low before God. It weaned me from the world. It corrected many of my foolish notions, and it made heaven appear ten times more precious and glorious. The affliction that brings us to the feet of Jesus, gives us sober views of all earthly things, and stirs us up to make our calling and election sure (2 Pet. 1:10), always does us good.

God's sweetest smiles, His choicest cordials, and His kindest visits are granted us in seasons of affliction. Let us, therefore, seek grace to sanctify our affliction, and to make every pain, privation, and sorrow a blessing. Let us humble ourselves under the

mighty hand of God (1 Pet. 5:6), acknowledge His justice, grace, and faithfulness in afflicting us, and so when we come out of the furnace, we also shall be able to bear this testimony, “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.”

Merciful Lord, with every affliction give us special grace, that we may thereby learn Thy truth, prefer Thy will, observe Thy precepts, and seek Thy glory! Oh, may all our afflictions prove real blessings to our souls. Sanctify us *in* trouble, and sanctify us *by* trouble, to Thy praise.

*Before I was afflicted I went astray,  
but now have I kept thy word.  
Psalm 119:67*



## JESUS BEARING OUR SINS

*And it shall be upon Aaron's forehead, that Aaron may bear the iniquity of the holy things, which the children of Israel shall hallow in all their holy gifts, and it shall be always upon his forehead, that they may be accepted before the Lord.*

*Exodus 28:38*

**A**ARON WAS THE type of Christ. He, as the priest of Israel, made an atonement for all their sins. Not only so, but he was to bear the iniquity of their holy things before the Lord.

Just so Jesus. He not only died for our sins on earth, but now in heaven before His Father, He takes all our blame, and bears all the iniquity of our holy acts and services. We sin in all we do. We cannot pray, but we sin in praying. We cannot confess sin, but we sin in confessing it. We cannot come to Jesus, but we sin in coming. There is sin mixed with our faith, hope, and love. There is sin in our humility, self-abasement, and prostration before the Lord.

How, then, can we be accepted of God? How can we have boldness before the Lord? Provision is made for this, by our great High Priest appearing before God, in all the holiness of His nature and character, as our representative. He personates us. He officiates for us. He receives from us and presents to the Father, and He receives from the Father and confers on us. Thus an infinitely Holy God can receive our prayers,

accept our praises, and approve of our imperfect services, because they pass through the hands of His Son, and are perfumed with His precious merits.

Afflicted believer! Satan may try to harass and trouble your mind on account of the sin that mixes with your holiest duties. If he does, draw comfort from this: Jesus, your great High Priest, is before the throne, and He bears the iniquity of your holy things before the Lord.

Precious Lord Jesus, I bless Thee, I praise Thy glorious name, for such love!

*Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*  
**Hebrews 9:24**



## RETURN! RETURN!

*Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath  
torn, and he will heal us; He hath smitten,  
and he will bind us up.*

*Hosea 6:1*

**I**N HEALTH AND prosperity we too often wander from God: we forget our obligation to Him, and fail to realize our dependence upon Him. Then comes the rod. At first, perhaps a gentle stroke. If that is not heeded, then comes heavier. At length we are not only smitten but torn. Then we reflect, are convinced of our folly, and begin to feel after the Lord. But all is dark, dreary, and dead. We begin to sigh and groan, doubt and despond. And the more we look at our conduct, or into our hearts, the lower we sink, and the more miserable we become.

We try the means, but to us they have no life, power, or savour, and we are driven to self-despair, as we were at first. Then perhaps some friendly voice says to us, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord," (Hos. 6:1). He still invites us. He is willing to receive us. He is ready to forgive us. He will bind up our festering wounds. He will heal our wounded hearts. The cleansing wine and the healing oil will be applied, and thus He will cure and bring us health.

Carry, then, thy wounded spirit to Jesus. Go to Him torn and mangled as thou art. Confess thy sins frankly and fully, without excuse or extenuation.

Plead His precious promises, His loving invitations, and the atoning blood. And soon, very soon will He speak peace to thy soul, and enable thee to rejoice in the freeness and fullness of His forgiving love.

Remember, whatever change may have taken place in you, Jesus is the same. He has not changed. His love is as great. His mercy is as tender. His grace is as free. His word is as faithful. He still says, "Come unto Me." Come as you are. Come and I will heal, restore, and bless you!

*O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God;  
for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.*

***Hosea 14:1***



## MERCY CERTAIN

*I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.*

*Jeremiah 31:20*

**T**HIS IS GOD'S determination respecting a backslider. His conduct had been base, and he had offered the greatest provocation to the Lord. But he saw his folly, he felt his sin, and he bemoaned his state. The Lord looked upon him, listened to him, and felt His heart drawn towards him. And now, though Satan may accuse him, his own heart condemn him, and his iniquities testify against him, the Lord's mind is made up and He speaks in the strongest, tenderest language: "*I will surely have mercy upon him.*"

Oh, what encouragement is here held out to us! What a propensity there is in the Most High to have mercy! What sins He will pardon! What sinners He will receive! If, therefore, we are cast down, on account of our past inconsistencies, or because of the sinfulness of our nature, let us take encouragement and cry to the Lord. Let us confess all to the Lord. Let us plead with the Lord. And doing so, He will surely have mercy upon us. However gross our conduct may have been, however corrupt and depraved our hearts may be, there is hope for us. For if we were the vilest of mankind, He speaks to us when He says, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, *and*

*He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon,” (Isa. 55:7).*

Oh, precious assurance, let us not doubt it! Oh, sweet invitation, let us avail ourselves of it! This is what God wishes us to do. He desires to manifest His love afresh — to fold us in the arms of His mercy, and feast us with the provisions of His grace. Let us, then, approach Him, plead with Him, and then shall we have to exclaim:

*Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity,  
and passeth by the transgression of the  
remnant of His heritage?*

*Micah 7:18*



## CHASTISEMENT A FRUIT OF LOVE

*Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*

*Hebrews 12:6*

**I**T IS A WONDER of wonders, that God should love sinners, such sinners as we are. And yet it is a glorious fact. Nothing is more clearly revealed in the word, and yet nothing is more difficult to believe sometimes. When our souls are in darkness, when our temporal affairs are in confusion, and when our bodies are in pain, it is not easy to believe then that God loves us, and that our very trials flow from, and are a proof of, His love.

Yes, God loves His people, not because He sees any beauty or excellency in them, but simply because He chooses to love them. And because He loves them, He chastens them for their follies, and scourges them for their sins. All His children need chastisement, and they all have it — some more, some less — some in one way, and some in another.

If the Lord did not love us, He would allow us to go on, and suffer us to fill up the measure of our iniquities (1 Thess. 2:16). If He loved us less than He does, He might correct us less. But because His love to us is infinite, tender, and eternal, therefore He seems to deal hardly with us. Let us beware lest we mistake the nature of our afflictions, or misinterpret the design of God in our troubles. Rather, let us en-

deavour to believe His love, rest upon His promises, tell out all our thoughts, feelings, and fears at His throne, and say, “Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,” (Job 13:5).

Tried believer, God loves thee — loves thee though thy faith is small, thy fears strong, and thy infirmities many. Nor did He ever love thee more than He does at this moment. Nor will He love thee more when He receives thee to His glory.

O Father, shed abroad Thy love in my heart, and so fill my heart with love to Thee! Help me to bless Thee for Thy love, and to praise Thee for every stroke of Thy rod!

*As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten:  
be zealous therefore, and repent.  
Revelation 3:19*



## BRETHREN OF CHRIST

*He is not ashamed to call them brethren.*

*Hebrews 2:11*

**A**FFLICTED BELIEVERS are too often neglected. And if they are poor as well as afflicted, many act towards them as if they were ashamed of them. They never call on them, seldom if ever send to them, or manifest any depth of feeling for them.

But Jesus, however poor they may be, however tried they may be, however despised by their fellow-men they may be, Jesus is not ashamed to call them brethren. And why? Because they are of the same nature as Himself, and because they are a part of the same family as Himself. His Father is their Father. His God is their God. His heaven is their home. He owns them now before His Father and the holy angels, and He will own them by and by before assembled worlds.

Suffering believer, Jesus is thy brother! He feels for thee all a brother's love. He takes in thee a brother's interest. He will perform toward thee a brother's part. He is the friend that loveth at all times, and the brother born for adversity (Prov. 17:17). He acted a brother's part toward thee on earth, by paying all thy debts, and redeeming thy forfeited inheritance with His blood. He acts a brother's part toward thee now He is in heaven, by pleading for thee

with His Father, by giving His angels charge over thee, and by sending to thee all that He sees necessary for thee.

Oh, how sweet it is to realize that Jesus is our brother, and to know that as our brother He ever loves and cares for us! Let this cheer and comfort us in our lonely hours, when no Christian friend comes to visit us, and in our secret sufferings, when we have no one near to sympathize with us. Jesus, our elder brother, is ever present, and present to soothe and comfort us with a brother's love.

*Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which  
is in heaven, the same is my brother,  
and sister, and mother.*  
**Matthew 12:50**



## THE COMMON LOT

*The same afflictions are accomplished in your  
brethren that are in the world.*

*1 Peter 5:9*

**E**VERY CHILD IN the Lord's family has his own cup, and he must drink the mixture it contains. But we often think our portion is more bitter, or that our cup contains more sorrow than that of our neighbour. And at times, looking at some of the Lord's people, we fancy that they escape the cross, and are spared the trials we are called to endure.

Nothing is more common than for Satan to tempt us to think that our case is singular, or our trials peculiarly severe. We should not believe him. We should not listen to him. His design is to produce rebellion against God, and to fill us with self-pity and complaining. Our case is not singular. No, "the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world," (1 Pet. 5:9).

Are we harassed and tempted by Satan? So are they. Are we tried in our domestic circle? So are they. Have we sharp and bitter conflicts of soul? So have they. Are we complaining of bereavements, or bitter trials in the world? So may they. Are our hearts cold and hard? So are theirs. Do we doubt and fear? So do they. Yes, and that experience which you

dare not name, dare not allude to, is experienced by many of them.

Tried as you are, timid as you are, doubting as you are, seeing you still cling to Jesus, you are in the footsteps of the flock. Thousands now in glory, when here on earth felt and feared just as you do. You will find it hard to believe this, but it is nevertheless true. You will be surprised by-and-by to find how much the experience of the Lord's people is alike. Not only so, but Jesus suffered before us, and was tried in all points like as we are (Heb. 4:15), and is therefore able to succour and support us, and He will do so.

*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial  
which is to try you, as though some strange  
thing happened unto you.  
1 Peter 4:12*



## THE STRONG ARM

*I will uphold thee with the right hand  
of my righteousness.  
Isaiah 41:10*

**W**HAT A PRECIOUS promise for all God's feeble children, who are daily fearing that they shall fall, or be crushed under the weight of their troubles and trials! It was first made to Israel, who had so provoked the Lord by their sins, that He determined to drive them out of their own land, and send them to Babylon for seventy years. In the prospect of this heavy trial — a trial rendered more heavy because it was brought on them by their sins — the Lord says, "Do not be terrified, I am still thy God. I will give thee strength. I will appear for thy help. Yea, I will uphold thee with my righteous omnipotent arm," (Isa 41:10).

Oh, believer, what comfort is here! For this promise is confirmed to thee in Jesus, and by the death of Jesus. Yes, it is thine — as much so as if spoken to thee directly by the mouth of God. Oh, what a mercy! God says He will hold thee up! He will put strength into thee. He will enable thee to bear thy afflictions. He will bring thee safely through all thy troubles. Satan may say, "I will trip thee up." God says, "I will uphold thee." Unbelief may say, "You will one day fall and perish." God says, "I will uphold thee." Flesh may cry out, "I can never bear up under

this.” God says, “I will uphold thee.” Thy feeble heart may misgive and say, “How can I endure such privations, such bereavements, such buffetings of Satan, such temptations, such losses, such fiery trials?” God says, “I will uphold thee.”

Hence of every believer it is testified, “They go from strength to strength. Every one of them in Zion appeareth before God,” (Ps. 84:7). In weakness, the Lord strengthens them. In want, the Lord supplies them. In sickness, the Lord sustains them. And in death, the Lord gives them the final victory.

*Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for  
the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.*

*Psalm 37:24*



## GIVE UP THE BURDEN

*Cast thy burden upon the Lord,  
and He shall sustain thee.*

*Psalms 55:22*

**T**HE LORD'S PEOPLE are often burdened, and from their conduct, one would fancy that they preferred carrying their own burden. For though directed to cast it on the Lord, until almost compelled, they seldom do so.

Some have secret burdens, of which they never speak to others. These are made up of evil thoughts, foul suggestions, and terrible temptations. Under such a burden they sigh, groan, and stagger, and yet keep it all to themselves, fearing to speak to anyone of what lies with an almost crushing weight on the mind. Communion on the points with a judicious and experienced Christian would do much good, though the best way is to cast it on the Lord. Spread out the whole matter before Him, and pray for grace to resist Satan, to relieve the mind, and produce confidence in God. Others have visible burdens. From the state of their affairs, or from what is seen in their families, or from disease of body, it is well known that they groan, being burdened (2 Cor. 5:4).

Well, burdened Christian, there is One that is willing to carry thy burden for thee. Are you willing to commit it to Him, leave it with Him, and expect that it will be well managed by Him? Put yourself

and all your affairs into His hands, and He will work in you, both to will and to do of His own good pleasure (Php. 2:13).

As each care comes in, cast it on the Lord. As sources of perplexity arise, carry them to the Lord. As anxieties rise in your soul, go with them to the Lord. Ask for wisdom, that you may lay your troubles where God has laid your sins — on the back of Jesus. There is nothing, however great or however small, that troubles thee, but it affects thy Saviour, and He is willing that you should cast it on Him.

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden,  
and I will give you rest.*

***Matthew 11:28***



## REST IN JESUS

*I will give you rest.**Matthew 11:28*

**I**S YOUR POOR body rendered restless by disease and suffering, and your mind by trouble and sorrow? Poor restless sufferer! Jesus speaks to thee. The physician cannot give thee rest. Thy attentive nurse has tried in vain. Perhaps Christian friends have endeavoured to soothe thy troubled spirit. But all have failed. Now Jesus speaks to thee. He says, "*I will give thee rest.*"

He can give rest to thy poor, weak, restless body. And coming to Him, He will, if it is for thy good. He can give rest to thy poor, perturbed, and anguished spirit. And coming to Him, He will. Yea, He will give such sweet repose to thy spirit, that the sufferings of thy body will be borne with patience and comparative ease. For when the soul is solaced, refreshed, and fed by Jesus, the pains of the body become light, and are much more easily borne.

Come to Jesus, then. Come to Him, as to a fast and faithful friend. Come to Him, as to a kind, loving Saviour, who sympathizes with thee, and with heaven and earth at His command, promises to give thee rest. Come, and lay your whole case before Him. Come, and plead with Him. Come, and believing His precious promise, ask Him, and expect Him to make it good. Thousands on the bed of sickness, and thou-

sands in deep trouble and sorrow, have found rest in Jesus, and such rest as has made them willing to be in circumstances of suffering, if they might but still enjoy the same.

Precious promise of a precious Saviour: "*I will give you rest!*" Oh, for faith to believe it, to carry it to Jesus, that He may honour it, and make it good in our experience! Faith alone is necessary, and the promise is ours, and the Promiser will soon make it good. Lord, work faith in our poor unbelieving hearts, that we may come to Jesus and enjoy rest!

*We which have believed do enter into rest.*  
*Hebrews 4:3*



## ALWAYS TRUST

*Trust in Him at all times.**Psalms 62:8*

**I**N TIMES OF trouble, and in seasons of affliction, we are often left to feel so much of the hardness of our own hearts, to see such deep and unexpected corruption in our nature, and to be so severely buffeted by Satan, that we are ready to conclude that it would be horrid presumption to hold fast our confidence. We are violently tempted to distrust God, to doubt His love, and rashly conclude that we have deceived ourselves, and everybody about us.

To trust in God, then, is exceedingly difficult. For we cannot help thinking that He is dealing with us in wrath, not in mercy, and to conclude, if He had love to us, He would not deal so hardly with us. All this is from the flesh, or from Satan. We are not to judge of God's nature from the dispensations of His providence, but from the testimony of His word. His work is not yet finished, but His word is perfect. The end He has immediately in view in our present trial, we know not. But by His word He assures us that all will end well.

God is to be trusted when He cannot be traced. He is to be trusted by us in the dark, as well as in the light — when He smites us, as much as when He comforts and cheers us. We should trust in His word for it

is true, in His faithfulness for it is unchangeable, and in His love for it is immutable. We should give Him credit for wisdom, mercy, and truth, and trust Him to manifest His wisdom, display His mercy, and make plain His truth. Trusting in God honours Him, confounds Satan, and brings us peace and comfort. Therefore trust in Him at all times.

Gracious Lord, enable us to trust in Thee, to believe the love Thou hast to us, and so glorify Thy free and sovereign grace! Oh, crush our unbelief, scatter our fears, and give us strong and steady confidence in Thy blessed self.

*Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

***Job 13:5***



## THE RIGHT DIRECTION

*Trust in Him at all times.**Psalms 25:15*

**T**HE LORD DIRECTS us to look to Him *for* all we want, *from* all we fear, and *through* all that troubles us. Looking to man, dishonours the Lord, and ends in disappointment. Looking into ourselves often fills us with gloom, sadness, doubts, and fears. It was wise, therefore, of the psalmist to keep his eyes fixed steadily and habitually on the Lord.

Beloved, in all your sufferings, let your eyes be ever toward the Lord. Look to Him for ease in pain, for strength in weakness, for comfort in sorrow, and for relief in distress. Keep your eye fixed on Him, as your Father, as your God in covenant, as pledged to you by promise and oath, to do you good. Looking to the Lord will relieve you, as it is written of some of old, “They looked unto Him and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed,” (Ps. 34:5). They expected relief and deliverance from the Lord. They looked to Him for it. He was as good as His word, and they were filled with joy and peace.

Friends may fail you, relatives may neglect or be unkind to you, those you love most may be unable to help you. But looking to the Lord, He will never fail you. He will never neglect you, but will prove Himself both able and willing to help you.

Let nothing divert your attention, then, from the Lord, but carry everything to Him, be very familiar with Him, and exercise implicit confidence in Him. Cast on Him every care, commit to Him every work, lay before Him every difficulty. And you will prove that He is not only able, but willing also, to do for you exceeding abundantly above all that you can ask or think (Eph. 3:20). And whenever Satan tempts you, or guilty fears torment you, turn your eyes to Calvary, and see Jesus your substitute — suffering, bleeding, and dying in your stead. And so you will enjoy peace.

*Mine eyes are unto thee, O God the Lord:  
in Thee is my trust; leave not my soul destitute.*

*Psalm 141:8*



## THE LORD WILL PROVIDE

*Abraham called the name of  
that place Jehovah-Jireh.  
Genesis 22:14*

**T**HIS WAS ABRAHAM'S greatest trial, and in it his faith and love shone forth conspicuously. The stronger the faith, the heavier the trial, so that instead of heavy trials proving that we have no faith, they indicate that our faith is strong. God commands, Abraham obeys. God gives no reason, Abraham asks for none. He just does what God bids him, suffers what God lays upon him, and is silent.

After his trial he speaks to us, and says, "Be not afraid to obey God. Do not distrust God. He sees where you are, what you are, and what you want, and He will provide." The ram was ready before Isaac was liberated, and so we shall see God's hand in our greatest difficulty, and read God's love in our sorest trial. He says, "Only believe Me when I speak, only trust Me when I work, and all will be well." "Where is the lamb?" said Isaac. "God will provide," replied Abraham. "Where is it to come from? How can we be supplied?" says little faith. "God will provide," saith the Scripture.

Only believe this, and all your fears will depart. Only believe this, and the sweetest comfort will flow in. God has never found any difficulty in providing for any one of His numerous family yet. Nor was any

one ever disappointed who trusted in and waited for Him. Nor will there be any difficulty in your case. Nor shall you be disappointed if you wait for Him. He will honour His own name in supplying all your wants.

Beloved, God loves to be trusted! He exhorts you to trust Him. He gives you opportunities to trust Him. And He will honour the trust you repose in Him. Your duty is to do what God bids, and believe what God says. And in so doing, God will provide for all your wants, and supply all your needs (Php. 4:19).

*Our fathers trusted in thee:  
they trusted, and Thou didst deliver them.  
Psalm 22:4*



## STRENGTH AS THE DAY

*As thy days, so shall thy strength be.*

*Deuteronomy 33:25*

**H**ERE IS A PRECIOUS promise for a trying day! It belongs to every traveller to Mount Zion. It provides for every part of the journey, for every day as each day may require. It is especially suited to dark days, wintry days, trying days — days when creatures cannot help us — when all our earthly props fail us.

Fellow-pilgrim, are you dispirited, depressed, and cast down? Are you looking back upon the past with sorrow, and forward into the future with fear? Cheer up, the Lord will not lay on you more than He will enable you to bear, nor will He allow any other to do so (1 Cor. 10:13). However weak you may feel in yourself, however rough the road you have to travel, however heavy the burden you have to carry, sufficient strength will be given you. You have never been crushed yet, though you may have staggered under some heavy burdens. And He who has helped you in the past is your helper now, and will help you in all the future. “*As the day,*” — let the day be as it may — “*so shall thy strength be.*” In the day of adversity and in the day of prosperity — in the day of life and in the day of death — suitable supplies will be sent, and all necessary aid afforded.

Look not, then, at thy trials, dwell not on thine inability. But lay hold on the promise, and seek grace to exercise faith in the almighty Promiser. Then, let Satan suggest what he please, or the flesh object what it may, you will be able to say, "I will not fear. For as my day, so shall my strength be."

Blessed Lord, we praise Thee for this precious promise! Help, oh, help us to confide in it, and day by day, as duty or trials may require, enable us to look to Thee, and expect sufficient strength from Thee!

*In the day when I cried thou answeredst me, and  
strengthenedst me with strength in my soul.*

*Psalm 138:3*



## TRIBULATION

*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*

*John 16:33*

**T**O BE FOREWARNED is to be forearmed. Our divine Lord here assures His disciples that they will be tried, and gives them to understand that they must not expect a very smooth path.

Tribulation formerly, generally took the form of persecution, and was so common, that the apostle said, "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution," (2 Tim. 3:12). But the fires of persecution have now almost burnt out, at least in our country. But though persecution ceases, tribulation will remain. The road to the kingdom will be more or less a rough road. Almost every day something or other will happen to try our tempers, exercise our graces, and pain our minds.

And at times we shall have much tribulation. Within, a violent conflict between the flesh and the spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Without, vexations, disappointments, heavy losses, or rugged crosses. In the body, weakness and pain. In the soul, darkness, temptation, and a thousand fears. In the church, much to depress, discourage, and cast us down. In the world, enough to make us weep day and night, and cause rivers of tears to run down our eyes. If it were not for the comforts of the Holy Ghost, the fullness of the Lord Jesus, the throne of

grace, and the prospect of perfect peace and rest in our Father's house, we should be of all men the most miserable.

But as it is, we make some progress in the rough road. Though we often sigh, we now and then raise a song, and rejoice in the persuasion that all will end well. When we reach the kingdom, tribulation will cease. In our Father's house there are no foes, no fears, no privations, and, best of all, there is no sin — all will be holy and peaceful forever.

*Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting  
them to continue in the faith, and that we must through  
much tribulation enter into  
the kingdom of God.*

*Acts 14:22*



## BE STILL

*In the world ye shall have tribulation.*

*Psalms 46:10*

**T**HUS GOD SPEAKS to His people amidst the most terrible convulsions of nature, the most cruel wars, and the most painful trials. The Lord reigneth. The Lord worketh. The Lord is doing His will, accomplishing His purposes, and while doing so, He keeps His promises in view. Be childlike: run to thy Father's arms, nestle in thy Father's bosom, realize safety in thy Father's love and power. He will not allow His child to be injured. He will hold thee in the hollow of His hand, hide thee under His wing, and carry thee as the shepherd does the lamb, in His bosom.

"Be still," for though painful at present, it will soon be over. Though hard to nature, it is easy to grace. Know that God is supreme, and worketh all things after the counsel of His own will (Eph. 1:11). Know that God never loses sight of thee, forgets thy frame, or will suffer anything to harm thee.

Exercise patience, relieve thy burdened heart by prayer, and wait in full expectation of a blessing. The darkest cloud is often the bearer of the most fruitful shower. And so the darkest dispensation often ushers in the choicest mercies. Only yield thyself to God, keep close to the loving heart of God, and acquiesce

in the will of God. So will you be able to carry any cross, bear any trial, or endure any affliction.

Be silent, be calm, be still. For the Lord sitteth above the water-floods, and remaineth King for ever. Complain not, for it will displease the Lord. Murmur not, for it will grieve the blessed Comforter. Fear not, for it will dishonour Jesus.

Be still, for thy safety is provided for. Be still, for thy wants shall be supplied. Be still, for all things shall work together for thy good (Rom. 8:28). Be still, for God bids thee, and the result will commend thee, for all will end well.

But as it is, we make some progress in the rough road. Though we often sigh, we now and then raise a song, and rejoice in the persuasion that all will end well. When we reach the kingdom, tribulation will cease. In our Father's house there are no foes, no fears, no privations, and, best of all, there is no sin — all will be holy and peaceful forever.

*I know that the Lord is greater than all gods: for in the  
thing wherein they dealt proudly,  
he was above them.*

**Exodus 18:11**



## SUFFICIENT GRACE

*My grace is sufficient for thee.*

*2 Corinthians 12:9*

**J**ESUS IS FULL of grace, and the term “grace” comprises all that the believer needs. Nature may fail, grace cannot. The grace that is in us may be insufficient, but there is a fullness of grace in Jesus. Grace already received has made us what we are. And grace may be had to make us as superior to what we are, as we now are to what we were in a state of nature.

The grace of Jesus is sufficient to subdue every corruption, to banish every doubt, to fortify us against every fear, to enable us to conquer every foe, perform every duty, and endure with patience every affliction. The grace of Jesus is an antidote to all our fears, a solace for all our sorrows, and a source of joy in the saddest day.

Let us, then, come to Jesus for grace in every time of need — grace to sanctify our afflictions, to fortify our minds, and to fill us with joy and peace. Nor let us ever give way to doubt, or fear, or despondency, since Jesus has assured us that His grace is sufficient for us. Nor let us doubt our interest in it. For grace is for the unworthy, and the deeper our sense of unworthiness, the clearer our evidence of interest in this grace.

Cheer up, then, my poor tried friend! For there is grace in Jesus for thee, and grace so powerful, that it will make you more than a match for all your trials, troubles, and distresses. Lay fast hold of this promise, believe it, plead it, and it shall be honoured in thy experience. Thousands, millions, have proved it true. Martyrs at the stake, confessors in their dungeons, and believers in the greatest sufferings which nature could endure, have found the grace of Jesus sufficient. What it was, it is. And what it is, it ever will be. In all the past you have had sufficient grace, and you shall in all the future, for Jesus will never fail you, nor forsake you. Therefore, trust in Him.

*By the grace of God I am what I am.*  
**1 Corinthians 15:10**



## PRAYER HEARD AND ANSWERED

*Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble,  
and he saveth them out of their distresses.*

*Psalms 107:19*

**F**OUR TIMES THESE words are repeated in this psalm, and the truth contained in them many times in other places. Trouble is intended to drive us to the Lord. It furnishes us with matter for prayer, and puts life and energy into our prayers. When all is smooth and pleasant, we rather talk before the Lord than pray to the Lord. There is no earnestness or power in our prayers. But when we are well loaded with trouble, when we feel that we are in imminent peril, when we see that no one can deliver us but God, then we *cry unto the Lord*.

We feel more than we say. Our prayers well up from the very bottom of our hearts. The eye is fixed on the Lord, while the heart pleads with the Lord. And when prayer ascends from our hearts, it always touches the heart of God. We cry, and the Lord saveth us out of our distresses. Deliverance is certain when faith is exercised and prayer is presented.

But how the Lord will deliver us, and when the Lord will deliver us, must be left to Himself. It is enough for us to know that He will deliver, and that both wisdom and mercy will shine forth in our deliverance. In our last trouble, when heart and flesh are failing, we will cry unto the Lord. And then will

come our last, our complete deliverance, and a glorious deliverance it will be! Oh, to anticipate it often with confidence and satisfaction!

Beloved, prayer prevails now. Prayer will prevail in all our future trials and troubles. And prayer will prevail in the hour of death. Let us not, then, yield to doubt or fear. Let us not despond or complain. But let us cry unto the Lord in our troubles, and continue to cry, until He delivers us out of our distresses, and sets us before His face forever.

*Call upon Me in the day of trouble:  
I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.*

*Psalm 50:15*



## THE CLEANSING BLOOD

*The blood of Jesus Christ his Son  
cleanseth us from all sin.*

*1 John 1:7*

**I**N TIMES OF affliction and trouble, the Lord often sets our iniquities before us — our secret sins in the light of His countenance. Then it is that sin appears exceeding sinful, and we are apt to fix the eye so intently upon our depraved nature and sinful life, that we begin to doubt our acceptance with God, and question if our standing before Him is good. This is wrong, for the sight of sin is only intended to lay us in the dust, exalt the free grace of God, and endear more than ever to us the atoning blood.

Nothing can affect the standing of a believer before God in Christ, but many things will affect his comfort. When, therefore, the sins of our past lives come up before us, or the deep depravity of our hearts is anew discovered to us, we must look at once to the blood of Jesus. That blood, shed for us, has put away the guilt of our sins forever, and has obtained our eternal redemption. And that blood applied to us, removes all sense of condemnation, giving us sweet peace and holy confidence in God. The blood is for daily use. It *cleanseth* us from all sin, not only once, but every time we exercise faith in it.

Precious blood of Jesus! Let us fix the eye of the mind on it, believe that there is infinite merit in it, and that, depending upon it, we are delivered at once and forever from all the penal consequences of sin. He that trusts in the blood of Christ can never be condemned, but shall have everlasting life. He that keeps his eye fixed on the blood of Jesus, will enjoy peace with God, and be delivered from all slavish fears.

Holy Spirit, apply that blood to our consciences, and fill us with all joy and peace in believing in its infinite virtue and everlasting efficacy!

*In whom we have redemption through his blood,  
the forgiveness of sins, according to  
the riches of His grace.  
Ephesians 1:7*



## THE BLESSED MAN

*Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and  
teachest him out of thy law.*

*Psalm 94:12*

**T**HE CHASTENINGS of the Lord often appear severe, but they are merciful. They are to correct our follies, subdue our proud wills, and soften and humble our hard hearts before His throne. When God chastens, He teaches. The lessons are in His word, but many of them are never learned but in the furnace. We often learn more truth in a short but sharp affliction, than we do from many books and sermons.

In affliction, God teaches us our own emptiness and vanity, our dependence on Himself, and the insufficiency of all earthly things. He endears the Lord Jesus and His great salvation to us. He shows us the value of the means of grace, and makes us grateful that we can obtain grace without the means. He makes our consciences tender and honest. He qualifies us for usefulness on earth, and fits us for the enjoyment of Himself in heaven. It is a blessed thing to be chastened of the Lord, especially when the rod teaches us such important and invaluable lessons.

We need chastening. And if we do not receive it, we become carnal, worldly, light, and trifling, unsavoury, and useless in the world and in the

church. Chastened Christians are generally useful and ornamental Christians.

But you must not suppose a Christian is not chastened because you are not called to witness his correction. The rod is sometimes laid on the body, but more frequently on the soul. The heart knoweth its own bitterness when others little suspect what it is enduring (Prov. 14:10).

Chastened Christian, seek grace to bear the rod, to bless the rod, and to kiss the hand that holds the rod. Heavenly Father, correct us tenderly, lovingly, and whenever Thou correctest us, let us see Thy face!

*Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore, despise not thou the chastening  
of the Almighty.  
Job 5:17*



## ALL FOR THE BEST

*We know that all things work together for good to them  
that love God, to them who are the  
called according to his purpose.*

***Romans 8:28***

**A**LL THINGS, yes, whatever happens to the Christian, is directed and overruled by a special providence for his good. It may be very bitter. It may lay him very low. It may try him to the quick. It may keep him in the dust for a long time. But it will do him good, not only in the end, but while it lasts.

Believer, your present trial is for your good! Nothing could be better for you. You may not see it now. You may feel as if you never could think so. But the time is coming when you will bless God for it. You love God, though it is but feebly, and that proves that God loves you with an infinite and eternal love. You have come to the cross as a poor sinner, and you look to the Lord Jesus to be your perfect Saviour, and this proves that you have been called according to God's purpose. And it is as one beloved of God, as one of God's called ones, that we have this assurance respecting you, that *all things* — light and darkness, health and sickness, hatred and love, prosperity and adversity, life and death — will work together for your good.

God asserts the fact, and therefore you should believe it. The history of all God's people proves and illustrates it, and therefore you should rejoice in it. Dark clouds bring rich blessings. Sharp winters introduce fruitful springs. And sore troubles often precede the sweetest consolations. Your present affliction, be it sickness of body, trouble of mind, bereavements, losses, crosses, or whatever else, is working for your good. Not merely will work in the future, but is working now. While your heart is bleeding, while you are tempted to think all is against you, all is working together for your good.

*We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation  
worketh patience; and patience, experience;  
and experience, hope.  
Romans 5:3-4*



## THE DESTITUTE ENCOURAGED

*He will regard the prayer of the destitute,  
and not despise their prayer.*

*Psalms 102:17*

**I**N AFFLICTION we are apt to take the eye off the Lord Jesus, and turn it inwards upon ourselves. And when we look within, we appear to be so destitute of all that is holy, or excellent, or good, that we are filled with gloom, and tempted to despond.

Stripped of our own righteousness, having a vivid view of the corruptions within, and taking the eye off Jesus, we feel ourselves to be in a most destitute condition. Then we sigh, cry, and groan before God. We loathe ourselves in our own sight. We cry out with Job, "Behold, I am vile," (Job 40:4) or with Isaiah, "I am undone," (Isa. 6:5). We despise ourselves, and believe that everyone else would do so, if they did but know us. We think that prayers from such hearts as ours, and such prayers — so broken, so imperfect, and mixed with so much sin — never can be acceptable to God.

We forget, at such times, that Jesus, our great High Priest, stands between us and God, that our prayers are put into His censer and perfumed with the sweet incense of His merits, and are by Him presented to God. But so it is. And God, infinitely gracious in His nature, reading the desires of our poor troubled

hearts, regards our prayers, registers our prayers, and determines to answer our prayers.

He will not despise the poorest prayer of His feeblest and most unworthy child. Despise our poor prayers! Never. He sees them as the effect of His grace, as the production of His own Spirit, as the simple lisplings of His own child. And while they appear worthless, contemptible, and deserving of punishment to us, they are most precious to Him.

Gracious Saviour, look upon us in our destitution, and give us more grace — grace to spiritualize our affections, regulate our wills, purify our consciences, and fill us with light and love!

*He shall deliver the needy when he crieth;  
the poor also, and him that hath no helper.*

*Psalm 72:12*



## COMFORT FOR THE POOR

*Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen  
the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the  
kingdom which he hath promised  
to them that love Him?*

*James 2:5*

**P**OVERTY IS NOT spirituality, but sanctified poverty is a great friend to it. Poverty is no sin, but it is sometimes a preventative to sin. Poverty has its temptations, but it has also its consolations. The poor ought not to repine at poverty, because God, in His infinite wisdom, has appointed it, and is able to render it the greatest blessing.

God's chosen are generally found among the poor. Not that He chose them because they were poor, but choosing them in Christ, He appointed them to be poor as the best thing for them. His enemies have their portion in this life. Here they have their good things. Not so His children. Here they have their evil things, and the best things are to come.

The poor Christian has a rich Father in whom to trust, the fullness of Jesus to which to look, the precious promises on which to depend, the Holy Spirit in whom to confide, and a glorious inheritance to anticipate and prepare for. "The kingdom," — grace here, and glory hereafter! "The kingdom," in which Jesus will reign, and where they will be princes, yea,

kings and priests! (Rev. 5:10). “The kingdom,” prepared for them from the foundation of the world! (Matt. 25:34).

My poor brother — my poor sister! Look up, look forward. The cottage will soon be exchanged for a mansion, sickness for health, poverty for wealth, sin for holiness, earth for heaven. You will not always be poor. You will not be poor long. Jesus will soon come, and then the meek, the spiritual poor, shall inherit the earth (Matt. 5:5). For you, an inheritance is reserved in heaven (1 Pet. 1:4). For you, a mansion is being prepared (John 14:2). For you, glory, honour, immortality, even eternal life, is in reserve (Rom. 2:7).

*God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty.*  
**1 Corinthians 1:27**



## COMFORT FOR THE WIDOW

*A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is  
God in his holy habitation.*

*Psalms 68:5*

**T**HE WIDOW OFTEN feels destitute and desolate, and when she most needs the sympathy of man, she often experiences it least. But the God of Israel is the widow's God. He offers to be her husband, to fill the husband's place, and perform the father's part. He says, "*Let thy widows trust in me,*" (Jer. 49:11). As if He had said, "I am able to supply all the widow's needs, to crush all the widow's foes, to sanctify all the widow's sorrows, and to fill the widow's heart with comfort and peace. Let her ask Me to do so. Let her trust Me to do so. Let her expect Me to do so."

My widowed sister, carry all that pains thy heart or depresses thy spirit to Jesus. Look to Jesus through thy tears, and for the supply of all thy needs. And if enemies arise, if man would oppress thee, go to Jesus as the judge (Luke 18:1-8). He will listen to thee, take thy case in hand, carry thy cause for thee, and even turn man's curse into a blessing. Take thy poor fatherless children to Him. Put them into His hands. Ask Him to adopt them for His own, to manage them for thee, and make them holy, honourable, and useful — a comfort to thee, and a blessing to others.

You cannot ask too much of Jesus, nor expect too much from Jesus. He will love to hear thee. He will kindly listen to thee. He will value thy confidence. He will crown and reward thy faith. Fret not, fear not, but put Jesus in thy husband's place, and expect Him to do a husband's part.

Believe these precious words: "Thy Maker is thine husband. The Lord of hosts is His name: and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall He be called," (Isa. 54:5). Jesus loves to hear the widow's voice, to sympathize with the widow's sorrows, and to answer the widow's prayers.

*Ye shall not afflict any widow or fatherless child. If  
thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all  
unto me, I will surely hear their cry.  
Exodus 22:22-23*



## OLD AGE

*Now also, when I am old and grey-headed,  
O God, forsake me not.*

*Psalm 71:18*

**A**GE AND ITS infirmities will creep on us. And with age come weakness, pains, and fears. But an old Christian should be a happy creature, for he has proved the Lord to be faithful so many years. He has had answers to prayer so many times, and the God of his youth stands pledged never to leave nor forsake him.

The Lord forsake an old servant? Never! The Father of mercies forsake one of His children when compassed with the infirmities of old age? Impossible! No, no! The Lord who has borne with us so long, will bear with us to the end. The Lord, who has glorified Himself in our life, will get glory to Himself in our death. As the God of all comfort, He will comfort us on the bed of languishing, and will make all our bed in our sickness. And when heart and flesh are failing, He will be the strength of our heart, and our portion forever (Ps. 73:26).

Aged believer, doubt not, fear not! God has given you His word, trust it. He has confirmed His word by the death of His Son, therefore exercise confidence in Him. He has been a friend and a Father to you for many years, and He will be your friend and Father to the very last. Be much with Him in prayer, and with

all the simplicity of a little child let your requests be made known unto Him. He has grace for old age, as He had for youth. And He has grace for a dying bed, as He had grace for all the conflicts of life.

Believe His word, rest in His love, expect His blessing to the end, and you shall be more than a conqueror through Him that loved you (Rom. 8:37). God never loved you more than He does now in your weakness, pains, and old age. And, sweet thought, He will never love you less! His love is infinite, everlasting. Having loved, He loveth to the end (John 13:1).

*Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs  
will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will  
carry, and will deliver you.*

**Isaiah 46:4**



## MOURNING ENDED

*The days of thy mourning shall be ended.*

*Isaiah 60:20*

**S**IGHING AND SORROW are confined to earth. They are limited by time, and a blessing is pronounced upon them: “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted,” (Matt. 5:4).

Every believer is a mourner. The Saviour’s dove is a mournful bird. We mourn over our imperfect duties, feeble graces, neglected privileges, and many shortcomings. We mourn, because our hearts are unholy and our lives are sinful, because our children are unconverted and our other relatives love not the Saviour. We mourn, because we suffer, but more because we sin. How much there is in the world, in the church, in the family, and in the heart, to make us mourn! We do groan, being burdened (2 Cor. 5:4).

But soon, very soon, the days of our mourning will be ended. We shall see Jesus, be with Jesus, and be like Jesus (1 John 3:2). All sin and all sorrow will be left on earth when we ascend to heaven. Then our tears will be wiped away (Isa. 25:8). Every cause of sorrow will be removed. And joy, peace and pleasure will be our portion forever. Then we shall be made perfect in love. Then we shall be filled with holiness. Then we shall enjoy full satisfaction. Then we shall reap in joy who have sown in tears (Ps. 126:5).

Let us, then, look upward, and look forward remembering, when our cup is bitterest, when our burden is heaviest, when our sorrow is greatest, that in a very little time the days of our mourning will be ended. The night of sadness will soon be past, and the morning of joy, everlasting joy, will break upon us (Ps. 30:5). Then there shall be no more pain, neither sorrow nor crying (Rev. 21:4). Then, perfect in knowledge, perfect in holiness, and perfect in happiness, we shall be ever with the Lord. Then we shall see Jesus, be with Jesus, and be like Jesus, and that forever. Everlasting joy succeeds the sorrows of a day.

*Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.*  
*Luke 6:21*



## NO MORE PAIN

*Neither shall there be any more pain.*

*Revelation 21:4*

**H**OW MUCH PAIN many of the Lord's people are called to suffer, and how severe that pain often is! It spoils, or prevents, the enjoyment of everything earthly. But blessed be God, spiritual things may be enjoyed, even while much pain is being endured. The light of God's countenance, the application of some precious promise, or the sweet communion we are privileged to enjoy with Jesus at times, almost raises us above the sense of pain. The sufferer rejoices in his gracious God, feeds like a hungry man on the rich promises of grace, and triumphs in Christ Jesus as his Saviour and friend.

But there are times when pain is hard to bear, when our spirit is exhausted, and we are sorely tempted to doubt the pity and tender love of our heavenly Father. Then, it is often sweet to look forward to the place and anticipate the time when there shall be no more pain, neither sorrow nor crying, for the former things will have passed away (Rev. 21:4).

Suffering Christian, thy pain will soon cease, thy sufferings will soon be over! Jesus will come and fetch thee from the bed of pain, the chamber of affliction, and the house of mourning. And absent from the body, you will be present with the Lord (2 Cor.

5:8). Seek grace from the Lord to suffer patiently. There is a need be for every pain, and soon, very soon, you will bless the Lord for the very pains which now cause you to sigh and groan. The songs of heaven will be sweetened by the groans of earth. And the pleasures of eternity will be heightened by the pains of time.

Every pain endured leaves one less to suffer. And every hour passed brings us nearer to the time when the ransomed of the Lord shall return from the land of darkness and death, and come home to their Father's house with everlasting joy, while sorrow and sighing shall forever flee away (Isa. 35:10).

*Thou shalt weep no more.  
Isaiah 30:19*



## A CLOSING QUESTION

*What will ye do in the day of visitation?*

*Isaiah 10:3*

**T**ROUBLES, TRIALS, and afflictions, are the lot of all. None can finally escape them. It becomes everyone, therefore, to be prepared for them. We may soon, we may suddenly, be visited with sickness, bereavement, or death. Therefore the Lord kindly asks us what we intend to do when they come.

Reader, *what will you do?* Will you bear them with fortitude and patience? Will you look to the Lord for wisdom and strength to enable you to triumph over them? Will you have Jesus to sympathize with you in them, support you under them, and bring you through them? Or will you be left to grapple with them in your native strength? Few sights are more painful than to see a sinner, without a hope in Jesus, without peace with God, without a prospect of glory, sinking in the floods of deep affliction.

Reader, *will this be your case?* Is there the least probability of it? If so, let me most earnestly and affectionately beseech you now, before the day of visitation comes, before the storm falls, before the tempest bursts upon you, to seek and find refuge in Jesus. Make personal religion your great object. Seek pardon and peace through Jesus without delay. Set

your heart upon union to Christ, and never rest until you enjoy it. It may be realized, and it may be realized by you. *In* Christ, deriving strength *from* Christ, and enjoying communion *with* Christ, you will be prepared for the day of visitation, whether that visitation be temporal losses, soul conflicts, domestic troubles, or even death itself.

Seek, oh, seek, then, an interest in Christ! Rest not until you know that Christ is yours, and that you are entitled to all the promises of His grace. And then, if asked “What will you do in the day of visitation?” you will be able to say, “*I will trust in JESUS.*”

*If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the  
ungodly and the sinner appear?*

**1 Peter 4:18**



## 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.

## WORDS OF COMFORT

- 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

## WORDS OF COMFORT

- 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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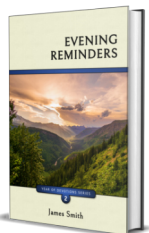


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