

CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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*“He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.
 Psalm 147:3.*

OFTEN as we have read this Psalm, we can never fail to be struck with the connection in which this verse stands, especially its connection with the verse that follows. Read the two together—“He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds. He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by their names.” What condescension and grandeur! What pity and Omnipotence! He who leads out yonder ponderous orbs in almost immeasurable orbits, nevertheless, is the Surgeon of men's souls and stoops over broken hearts! And with His own tender fingers closes up the gaping wound and binds it with the liniment of love. Think of it and if I should not speak as well as I could desire upon the wonderful theme of His condescension, yet help me by your own thoughts to do reverence to the Maker of the stars, who is, at the same time, the Physician for broken hearts and wounded spirits!

I am equally interested in the connection of my text with the verse that goes before it—“The Lord does build up Jerusalem: He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.” The Church of God is never so well built up as when it is built up with men of broken hearts. I have prayed to God in secret many a time, of late, that He would be pleased to gather out from among us a people who have a deep experience, who should know the guilt of sin, who should be broken and ground to powder under a sense of their own inability and unworthiness, for I am persuaded that without a deep experience of *sin*, there is seldom much belief in the Doctrines of Grace and not much enthusiasm in praising the Savior's name. The Church needs to be built up with men who have been pulled down! Unless we know in our hearts our need of a Savior, we shall never be worth much in preaching Him. That preacher who has never been converted, what can *he* say about it? And he who has never been in the dungeon, who has never been in the abyss, who has never felt as if he were cast out from the sight of God, how can he comfort many who are outcasts and who are bound with the fetters of despair? May the Lord break many hearts and then bind them up, that with them He may build up the Church and inhabit it!

But now, leaving the connection, I come to the text, itself, and I desire to speak of it so that everyone here who is troubled may derive comfort from it, God the Holy Spirit speaking through it. Consider, first, *the patients and their sickness*—“He healed the broken in heart.” Then, consider, *the Physician and His medicine* and, for a while, turn your eyes to Him who does this healing work. Then, I shall want you to consider *the testimonial to the great Physician* which we have in this verse—“He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.” Lastly, and most practically, we will consider *what we ought to do* towards Him who heals the broken in heart.

I. First, then, consider THE PATIENTS AND THEIR SICKNESS. They are broken in heart. I have heard of many who have died of a broken heart, but there are some who *live* with a broken heart—and who live all the *better* for having had their hearts broken—they live another and higher life than they lived before that blessed stroke broke their hearts in pieces.

There are many sorts of broken hearts and Christ is good at healing them all. I am not going to lower and narrow the application of my text. The patients of the great Physician are *those whose hearts are broken through sorrow*. Hearts are broken through disappointment. Hearts are broken through bereavement. Hearts are broken in 10,000 ways, for this is a heart-breaking world! But Christ is good at healing all manner of heartbreaks. I would encourage every person here, even though his heartbreak may not be of a *spiritual* kind, to make an application to Him who heals the broken in heart. The text does not say, “the *spiritually* broken in heart,” therefore I will not insert an adverb where there is none in the

passage. Come here, you that are burdened, all you that labor and are heavy laden! Come here, all you that sorrow, be your sorrow what it may! Come here, all you whose hearts are broken, be the heartbreak what it may, for He heals the broken in heart!

Still, there is a special brokenness of heart to which Christ gives the very earliest and most tender attention. He heals *those whose hearts are broken for sin*. Christ heals the heart that is broken because of its sin so that it grieves, laments, regrets and bemoans itself, saying, "Woe is me that I have done this exceedingly great evil and brought ruin upon myself! Woe is me that I have dishonored God, that I have cast myself away from His Presence, that I have made myself liable to His everlasting wrath and that even now His wrath abides on me!" If there is a man here whose heart is broken about his past life, he is the man to whom my text refers. Are you heartbroken because you have wasted 40, 50, 60 years? Are you heartbroken at the remembrance that you have cursed the God who has blessed you, that you have denied the existence of Him without whom you never would have been in existence, that you have lived to train your family without godliness, without any respect to the Most High God at all? Has the Lord brought this home to you? Has He made you feel what a hideous thing it is to be blind to Christ, to refuse His love, to reject His blood, to live an enemy to your best Friend? Have you felt this? O my Friend, I cannot reach across the gallery to give you my hand, but will you think that I am doing it, for I wish to do it? If there is a heart here broken on account of sin, I thank God for it, and praise the Lord that there is such a text as this—"He heals the broken in heart."

Christ also heals hearts that are *broken from sin*. When you and sin have quarreled, never let the quarrel be made up! You and sin were friends at one time, but now you hate sin and you would be wholly rid of it if you could. You wish never to sin. You are anxious to be clear of the most darling sin that you have ever indulged in and you desire to be made pure as God is pure. Your heart is broken away from its moorings. That which you once loved you now hate. That which you once hated, you now, at least, *desire* to love! It is well. I am glad that you are here, for to you is sent the text, "He heals the broken in heart."

If there is a brokenhearted person anywhere about, many people despise him. "Oh," they say, "he is melancholy. He is mad, he is out of his mind through religion!" Yes, men despise the broken in heart, but such, O God, You will not despise! The Lord looks after such and heals them.

Those who do not despise them, at any rate avoid them. I know some few friends who have long been of a broken heart and when I feel rather dull, I must confess that I do not always go their way, for they are apt to make me feel more depressed. Yet would I not get out of their way if I felt that I could help them. Still, it is the nature of men to seek the cheerful and the happy and to avoid the brokenhearted. God does not do so—He heals the broken in heart. He goes where they are and He reveals Himself to them as the Comforter and the Healer.

In a great many cases people despair of the brokenhearted ones. "It is no use," says one, "I have tried to comfort her, but I cannot do it." "I have wasted a great many words," says another, "on such and such a friend, and I cannot help him. I despair of his ever getting out of the dark." It is not so with God! He heals the broken in heart. He despairs of none. He shows the greatness of His power and the wonders of His wisdom by fetching men and women out of the lowest dungeon wherein despair has shut them!

As for the brokenhearted ones, themselves, they do not think that they can *ever* be converted. Some of them are *sure* that they never can—they wish that they were dead—though I do not see what they would gain by *that*. Others of them wish that they had never been born, though that is a useless wish *now*. Some are ready to rush after any new thing to try to find a little comfort, while others, getting worse and worse, are sitting down in sullen despair. I wish that I knew who these were—I would like to come round and say to them, "Come, Brother. There must be no doubting and no despair tonight, for my text is gloriously complete and is meant for you! 'He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.'" Notice that 5th verse, "Great is our Lord, and of great power; His understanding is infinite." Consequently, He can heal the broken in heart! God is glorious at a dead lift! When a soul cannot stir, or help itself, God delights to come in with His Omnipotence and lift the great load—and set the burdened one free!

It takes great wisdom to comfort a broken heart. If any of you have ever tried it, I am sure you have not found it an easy task. I have given much of my life to this work and I always come away from a desponding one with a consciousness of my own inability to comfort the heartbroken and cast-down. Only God can do it. Blessed be His name that He has arranged that one Person of the Sacred Trinity should undertake this office of Comforter, for no man could ever perform

its duties. We might as well hope to be the Savior as to be the Comforter of the heartbroken! Efficiently and completely to save or to comfort must be a Divine work. That is why the Divine Holy Spirit heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds with infinite power and unfailing skill.

II. Now, secondly, we are going to consider THE PHYSICIAN AND HIS MEDICINE—"He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds." Who is this that heals the broken in heart?

I answer that *Jesus was anointed of God* for this work. He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor; He has sent Me *to heal the brokenhearted*." Was the Holy Spirit given to Christ in vain? That cannot be! He was given for a purpose which must be answered and that purpose is the healing of the brokenhearted. By the very anointing of Christ by the Holy Spirit, you may be sure that our Physician will heal the broken in heart!

Further, Jesus was *sent of God* on purpose to do His work—"He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted." If Christ does not heal the brokenhearted, He will not fulfill the mission for which He came from Heaven. If the brokenhearted are not cheered by His glorious life and the blessings that flow out of His death, then He will have come to earth for nothing! This is the very errand on which the Lord of Glory left the bosom of the Father to be veiled in Human clay, that He might heal the broken in heart—and He will do it!

Our Lord was also *educated* for this work. He was not only anointed and sent, but He was trained for it. "How?" you ask. Why, He had a broken heart, Himself, and there is no education for the office of Comforter like being placed where you, yourself, have need of comfort, so that you may be able to comfort others with the comfort wherewith you have been comforted of God! Is your heart broken? Christ's heart was broken. He said, "Reproach has broken My heart; and I am full of heaviness." He went as low as you have ever been and deeper than you can ever go. "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" was His bitter cry. If that is your agonized utterance, He can interpret it by His own suffering. He can measure your grief by His grief. Broken hearts, there is no healing for you except through Him who had a broken heart Himself! You disconsolate ones, come to Him! He can make your heart happy and joyous by the very fact of His own sorrow and the brokenness of His own heart. "In all our afflictions He was afflicted." He was tempted in all points like as we are." "A Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief." For a broken heart, there is no physician like He!

Once more, I can strongly recommend my Lord Jesus Christ as the Healer of broken hearts because He is so *experienced* in the work. Some people are afraid that the doctor will try experiments upon them, but our Physician will only do for us what He has done many times before. It is no matter of experiment with Him—it is a matter of *experience*. If you knock, tonight, at my great Doctor's door, you will, perhaps, say to Him, "I am the strangest patient, my Lord, that ever came to You." He will smile as He looks at you and He will think, "I have saved hundreds like you." Here comes one who says, "That first man's case was nothing compared with mine! I am about the worst sinner who ever lived." And the Lord Jesus Christ will say, "Yes, I saved the worst man that ever lived long ago—and I keep on saving such as he. I delight to do it." But here comes one who has a curious odd way of brokenheartedness. He is an out-of-the-way fretter. Yes, but my Lord is able to "have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way." He can lay hold of this out-of-the-way one, for He has always been saving out-of-the-way sinners! My Lord has been healing broken hearts well near 1,900 years! Can you find a brass plate anywhere in London telling of a physician of that age? He has been at the work longer than that, for it is not far off 6,000 years since He went into this business! And He has been healing the broken in heart ever since that time.

I will tell you one thing about Him that I have on good authority, that is, He never lost a case yet! There never was one who came to Him with a broken heart but He healed him. He never said to one, "You are too bad for me to heal." But He did say, "Him that comes to Me, I will in no wise cast out." My dear Hearer, He will not cast you out! You say, "You do not know me, Mr. Spurgeon." No, I do not, and you have come here, tonight, and you hardly know why you are here—only you are very low and very sad. The Lord Jesus Christ loves such as you are, you poor, desponding, doubting, desolate, disconsolate one! Daughters of sorrow, sons of grief, look here! Jesus Christ has gone on healing broken hearts for thousands of years and He is well up in the business! He understands it by experience, as well as by education. He is "mighty to save." Consider Him! Consider Him and the Lord grant you Grace to come and trust Him even now!

Thus I have talked to you about the Physician for broken hearts. Shall I tell you what His chief medicine is? It is His own flesh and blood! There is no cure like it. When a sinner is bleeding with sin, Jesus pours His own blood into the

wound—and when that wound is slow in healing, He binds His own Sacrifice about it. Healing for broken hearts comes by the Atonement—Atonement by Substitution—Christ suffering in our place. He suffered for everyone who believes in Him and he that believes in Him is not condemned and never can be condemned, for the condemnation due to him was laid upon Christ! He is clear before the bar of justice as well as before the Throne of Mercy! I remember when the Lord put that precious ointment upon my wounded spirit. Nothing ever healed me until I understood that He died in my place—died that I might *not* die! And now, today, my heart would bleed itself to death were it not that I believe that He, “His own Self, bore our sins in His own body on the tree.” “With His stripes we are healed,” and with no medicine but this atoning Sacrifice! A wonderful heal-all is this, when the Holy Spirit applies it with His own Divine power and lets life and love come streaming into the heart that was ready to bleed to death!

III. My time flies too quickly, so, thirdly, I want you to consider THE TESTIMONIAL TO THE GREAT PHYSICIAN which is emblazoned in my text. It is God the Holy Spirit who, by the mouth of His servant, David, bears testimony to this congregation, tonight, that the Lord Jesus heals the broken in heart and binds up their wounds! If I said it, you need no more believe it than I need believe it if *you* said it! One man's word is as good as another's if we are truthful, but this statement is found in an Inspired Psalm. I believe it—I dare not doubt it, for I have proven its truth.

I understand my text to mean this—*He does it effectually*. As I said last Thursday night, if there is a person cast down or desponding within 20 miles, he is pretty sure to find me out. I laugh, sometimes, and say, “Birds of a feather flock together,” but they come to talk to me about their despondency and, sometimes, they leave me half desponding in the attempt to get them out of their sadness! I have had some very sad cases, lately, and I am afraid that when they went out of my room, they could not say of me, “He heals the broken in heart.” I am sure that they could say, “He tried his best. He brought out all the choice arguments he could think of to comfort me.” And they have felt very grateful. They have come back, sometimes, to thank God that they have been a little bit encouraged, but some of them are frequent visitors—and I have been trying to cheer them up by the month together!

But, when my Master undertakes the work, “He heals the broken in heart,” He not only tries to do it, He *does* it! He touches the secret sources of the sorrow and takes the spring of the grief away. We try our best, but we cannot do it. You know it is very hard to deal with the heart. The human heart needs more than human skill to cure it. When a person dies and the doctors do not know the reason why he died, they say, “It was heart disease.” They did not understand his malady—that is what that means. There is only one Physician who can heal the heart, but, glory be to His blessed name, “He heals the broken in heart.” He does it effectually.

As I read my text, I understand it to mean *He does it constantly*. “He heals the broken in heart.” Not merely, “He healed them years ago,” but He is doing it *now*. “He *heals* the broken in heart, and *binds up* their wounds.” What? At this minute? Ten minutes to eight? Yes, He is doing this work *now*! “He heals the broken in heart.” And when the service is over and the congregation is gone, what will Jesus be doing then? Oh, He will still be healing the broken in heart! Suppose this year, 1890, should run out and the Lord does not come to Judgment—what will He be doing then? He will still be healing the broken in heart! He has not used up His ointments. He has not exhausted His patience. He has not, in the least degree, diminished His power! He still heals.

“Oh dear!” one says, “If I had come to Christ a year ago, it would have been well with me.” If you come to Christ *tonight*, it will be well with you, for, “He *heals* the broken in heart.” I do not know who was the inventor of that idea of “sinning away the Day of Grace.” If you are willing to have Christ, you may have Him! If you are as old as Methuselah—and I do not suppose that you are older than he was—if you want Christ, you may have Him! As long as you are out of Hell, Christ is able to save you! He is going on with His old work. Because you are just past 50, you say the die is cast. Because you are past 80, you say, “I am now too old to be saved.” Nonsense! He *heals*, He *heals*, He is still doing it! “He heals the broken in heart.”

I go further than that and say that *He does it invariably*. I have shown you that He does it effectually and constantly—and He does it invariably. There never was a broken heart brought to Him that He did not heal! Do not some brokenhearted patients go out at the back door, as my Master's failures? No, not one! There never was one yet that He could not heal! Doctors are sometimes obliged, in our hospitals, to give up some persons and say that they will never recover. Certain symptoms have proved that they are incurable. But, despairing one, in the Divine Hospital, of which Christ is the Physician, there never was a patient of His who was turned out as incurable! He is able to save to the utter-

most. Do you know how far that is—"to the uttermost?" There is no going beyond "the uttermost," because the uttermost goes beyond everything else, to make it the uttermost! "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." Where are you, Friend "Uttermost"? Are you here tonight? "Ah," you say, "I wonder that I am not in Hell." Well, so do I, but you are not, and you never will be if you cast yourself on Christ! Rest in the full Atonement that He has made, for He always heals without any failure! "He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds."

As I read these words, it seems to me that *He glories in doing it*. He said to the Psalmist, by the Holy Spirit, "Write a Psalm in which you shall begin with Hallelujah, and finish with Hallelujah. And set in the middle of the Psalm, as one of the things for which I delight to be praised, that I heal the broken in heart." None of the gods of the heathen were ever praised for this! Did you ever read a song to Jupiter, or to Mercury, or to Venus, or to any of them, in which they were praised for binding up the broken in heart? Jehovah, the God of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—is the only God who makes it His boast that He binds up the broken in heart! Come, you big, black sinner! Come, you desperado! Come, you that have gone beyond all measurement in sin! You can all glorify God more than anybody else by believing that He can save even you! He can save you and put you among the children! He delights to save those that seemed farthest from Him.

IV. This is my last point—consider WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO.

If there is such a Physician as this and we have broken hearts, it goes without saying that, first of all, *we ought to resort to Him*. When people are told that they have an incurable disease, a malady that will soon bring them to their grave, they are much distressed. But if, somewhere or other, they hear that the disease may be cured, after all, they say, "Where? Where?" Well, perhaps it is thousands of miles away—but they are willing to go if they can. Or the medicine may be very unpleasant or very expensive—but if they find that they can be cured, they say, "I will have it." And if anyone came to their door and said, "Here it is! It will heal you and you can have it for nothing and as much as you want of it," there would be no difficulty in getting rid of any quantity of the medicine so long as we found people sick!

Now, if you have a broken heart tonight, you will be glad to have Christ. I had a broken heart once and I went to Him and He healed it in a moment and made me sing for joy! Young men and women, I was about 15 or 16 when He healed me. I wish that you would go to Him, now, while you are yet young. The age of His patients does not matter. Are you younger than fifteen? Boys and girls may have broken hearts—and old men and old women may have broken hearts—but they may come to Jesus and be healed! Let them come to Him, tonight, and seek to be healed.

When you are about to go to Christ, possibly you ask, "How shall I go to Him?" Go by prayer. One said to me, the other day, "I wish that you would write me a prayer, Sir." I said, "No, I cannot do that, go and tell the Lord what you need." He replied, "Sometimes I feel such a great need that I do not know what it is I need! And I try to pray, but I cannot. I wish that somebody would tell me what to say." "Why," I said, "the Lord has told you what to say! This is what He has said—'Take with you words, and turn to the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously.'" Go to Christ in prayer with such words as those, or any others that you can get. If you cannot get any words, tears are just as good, and rather better! And groans and sighs and secret desires will be acceptable with God.

But add faith to them. *Trust the Physician*. You know that no ointment will heal you if you do not put it on the wound. Oftentimes when there is a wound, you want something with which to strap the ointment on. Faith straps on the heavenly heal-all! Go to the Lord with your broken heart and believe that He can heal you! Believe that He alone can heal you and trust Him to do it! Fall at His feet and say, "If I perish, I will perish here. I believe that the Son of God can save me and I will be saved by Him! But I will never look anywhere else for salvation. 'Lord, I believe; help You my unbelief!'" If you have come as far as that, you are very near the Light of God! The great Physician will heal your broken heart before very long. Trust Him to do it now!

When you have trusted in Him and your heart is healed, and you are happy, *tell others about Him*. I do not like my Lord to have any tongue-tied children. I do *not* mean that I would want you all to *preach*. When a whole Church takes to preaching, it is as if the whole body were a mouth and that would be a vacuum! I want you to tell others, in some way or other, what the Lord has done for you, and be earnest in endeavoring to bring others to the great Physician. You all remember, therefore I need not tell you again, the story that we had about the doctor at one of our hospitals, a year or two ago. He healed a dog's broken leg and the grateful animal brought other dogs to have their broken legs healed. That was a good dog—some of you are not half as good as that dog! You believe that Christ is blessing you, yet you never try to

bring others to Him to be saved! That must not be the case any longer. We must excel that dog in our love for our species and it must be our intense desire that if Christ has healed us, He should heal our wife, our children, our friends, our neighbors—and we should never rest till others are brought to Him!

Then, when others are brought to Christ, or even if they will not be brought to Him, be sure to *praise Him*. If your broken heart has been healed and you are saved, and your sins forgiven, praise Him! We do not sing half enough. I do not mean in our congregations, but when we are at home. We pray every day. Do we sing every day? I think that we should. Matthew Henry used to say about family prayer, “They that pray do well; they that read and pray do better; they that read and pray and sing do best of all.” I think that Matthew Henry was right. “Well, I have no voice,” says one. Have you not? Then you never grumble at your wife. You never find fault with your food. You are not one of those who make the household unhappy by your evil speeches. “Oh, I do not mean that!” No, I thought you did not mean *that*. Well, praise the Lord with the same voice that you have used for complaining!

“But I could not carry a tune,” says one. Nobody said you were to do so. You can at least sing as I do. My singing is of a very peculiar character. I find that I cannot confine myself to one tune. In the course of a verse I use half-a-dozen tunes—but the Lord, to whom I sing, never finds any fault with me. He never blames me because I do not keep this tune or that. I cannot help it. My voice runs away with me and my heart, too! But I keep on humming something or other by way of praising God’s name. I would like you to do the same. I used to know an old Methodist and the first thing in the morning, when he got up, he began singing a bit of a Methodist hymn. And if I met the old man during the day, he was always singing. I have seen him in his little workshop, with his lap stone on his knee, and he was always singing and beating with his hammer. When I said to him, once, “Why do you always sing, dear Brother?” He replied, “Because I always have something to sing about.”

That is a good reason for singing! If our broken hearts have been healed, we have something to sing about in time and throughout eternity! Let us begin to do so to the praise of the glory of His Grace, who “heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.” God bless all the broken hearts that are in this congregation tonight, for Jesus’ sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

Psalm 147.

This is one of the Hallelujah Psalms. It begins and ends with, “Praise you the LORD.” May our hearts be in tune, that we may praise the Lord while we read these words of praise!

Verse 1. *Praise you the LORD*—It is not enough for the Psalmist to do it, himself. He needs help in it, so he says, “Praise you the LORD.” Wake up, my Brothers! Bestir yourselves, my Sisters! Come, all of you, and unite in this holy exercise! “Praise you the LORD.”

1. *For it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely.* When a thing is good, pleasant, and comely, you have certainly three excellent reasons for attending to it. It is not everything that is good—but here you have a happy combination of goodness, pleasantness, and comeliness. It will do you good to praise God. God counts it good and you will find it a pleasant exercise. That which is the occupation of Heaven must be happy employment. “It is good to sing praises unto our God.” “It is pleasant” and certainly nothing is more “comely” and beautiful, and more in accordance with the right order of things than for creatures to praise their Creator—and the children of God to praise their Father in Heaven.

2. *The LORD does build up Jerusalem.* Praise His name for that. You love His Church—be glad that He builds it up. Praise Him who quarries every stone and puts it upon the one Foundation that is laid, even Jesus.

2. *He gathers together the outcasts of Israel.* Praise Him for that. If you were once an outcast and He has gathered you, give Him your special personal song of thanksgiving.

3. *He heals the broken in heart, and binds up their wounds.* Praise Him for that, you who have had broken hearts! If He has healed you, surely you should give Him great praise.

4. *He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by their names.* He who heals broken hearts counts the stars and calls them by their names, as men call their servants, and send them on their way. Praise His name! Can you look up at the starry sky at night without praising Him who made the stars and leads out their host?

5. *Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite.* Praise Him, then. Praise His greatness, His almightiness, His infinite wisdom. Can you do otherwise? Oh, may God reveal Himself so much to your heart that you shall be constrained to pay Him willing adoration!

6. *The LORD lifts up the meek.* What a lifting up it is for them, out of the very dust where they have been trod down by the proud and the powerful! The Lord lifts them up. Praise Him for that.

6. *He casts the wicked down to the ground.* Thus He puts an end to their tyranny and delivers those who were ground beneath their cruel power. Praise His name for this, also. Excuse me that I continue to say to you, "Praise you the Lord," for, often as I say it, you will not praise Him too much—and we need to have our hearts stirred up to this duty of praising God which is so much neglected. After all, it is the praise of God that is the ultimatum of our religion. Prayer does but sow—praise is the harvest! Praying is the end of preaching and praising is the end of praying. May we bring to God much of the very essence of true religion and that will be the inward praise of the heart!

7. *Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our Go.* "Unto our God." How that possessive pronoun puts a world of endearment into the majestic word, "God!" "This God is our God." Come, my Hearer, can you call God your God? Is He, indeed, yours? If so, "Sing unto the LORD with thanksgiving; sing praise upon the harp unto our God."

8. *Who covers the Heaven with clouds, who prepares rain for the earth, who makes grass to grow upon the mountains.* They did not talk about the "law of Nature" in those days. They ascribed everything to God. Let us do the same! It is a poor science that pushes God farther away from us instead of bringing Him nearer to us. HE covers the Heaven with clouds! HE prepares the rain for earth! HE makes the grass to grow upon the mountains!

9. *He gives to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.* Our God cares for the birds and the beasts. He is as great in little things as in great things. Praise you His name! The gods of the heathen could not have these things said of them, but our God takes pleasure in providing for the beasts of the field and the birds of the air. The commissariat of the universe is in His hand! "You open Your hands and satisfy the desire of every living thing."

10, 11. *He delights not in the strength of the horse: He takes not pleasure in the legs of a man. The LORD takes pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy.* Kings of the olden times rejoiced in the muscles and sinews of their soldiers and their horses, but God has no delight in mere physical strength. He takes pleasure in *spiritual* things, even in the weakness which makes us fear Him—even that weakness which has not grown into the strength of faith and yet hopes in His mercy. "The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear Him, in those that hope in His mercy."

12. *Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion.* Let whole cities join together to praise God! Shall we live to see the day when all London shall praise Him? Shall we, ever, as we go down these streets with their multitudes of inhabitants, see the people standing in the doorways and asking, "What must we do to be saved?" Shall we ever see every house with anxious enquirers in it, saying, "Tell us, tell us, how can we be reconciled to God?" Pray that it may be so! In Cromwell's day, if you went down Cheapside at a certain hour of the morning, you would find every blind drawn, for the people were all at family prayer. There is no street like that in London today! In those glorious Puritan times there was domestic worship everywhere—and the people seemed brought to Christ's feet. Alas, it was but an appearance in many cases—and they soon turned back to their own devices! Imitating the Psalmist, let us say, "Praise the Lord, O London; praise your God, O England!"

13. *For He has strengthened the bars of your gates; He has blessed your children within you.* As a nation, we have been greatly prospered, defended and supplied. And the Church of God has been made to stand fast against her enemies and her children have been blessed.

14, 15. *He makes peace in your borders, and fills you with the finest of the wheat. He sends forth His Commandment upon earth: His Word runs very swiftly.* Oriental monarchs were very earnest to have good post arrangements. They sent their decrees upon swift camels. They can never be compared with the swiftness of the purpose of God's decree. "His Word runs very swiftly." Oh, that the day would come when over all the earth, God's Writ should run, and God's written Word should come to be revered, believed, and obeyed!

16. *He gives snow like wool.* Men say, "it" snows. But what "it" is it that snows? The Psalmist rightly says of the Lord, "HE gives snow." They say that according to the condition of the atmosphere, snow is produced. But the Believer says, "He gives snow like wool." It is not only like wool for whiteness, but it is like it for the warmth which it gives.

16. *He scatters the hoar frost like ashes.* The simile is not to be easily explained, but it will often have suggested itself to you who, in the early morning, have seen the hoar frost scattered abroad.

17. *He casts forth His ice like morsels: who can stand before His cold?* None can stand before His heat, but when He withdraws the fire and takes away the heat, the cold is equally destructive! It burns up as fast as fire would. “Who can stand before His cold?” If God is gone, if the Spirit of God is taken away from His Church, or from any of you, who can stand before His cold? The deprivation is as terrible as if it were a positive infliction. “Who can stand before His cold?”

18. *He sends out His Word, and melts them; He causes His wind to blow, and the waters flow.* The frozen waters were hard as iron. The south wind touches them and they flow again. What can God *not* do? The great God of Nature is our God. Let us praise Him! Oh, may our hearts be in a right key tonight to make music before Him!

19. *He shows His Word unto Jacob, His statutes unto Israel.* This is something greater than all His wonders in Nature. The God of Nature is the God of Revelation! He has not hidden His Truth away from men. He has come out of the eternal secrecies and He has showed His Word, especially His Incarnate Word, unto His people. Let His name be praised!

20. *He has not dealt so with any nation.* Or, with any *other* nation. He revealed His statutes and His judgments to Israel, and since their day, the *spiritual* Israel has been privileged in like manner—“He has not dealt so with any nation.”

20. *And as for His judgments, they have not known them.* Even today there are large tracts of country where God is not known. If we know Him, let us praise Him.

20. *Praise you the LORD.* Hallelujah! The Psalm ends upon its keynote—“Praise you the LORD.” So may all our lives end! Amen.

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