

GRACE AND GLORY

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 THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BELOVED PREACHER'S ENTRANCE INTO "GLORY."
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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*"The LORD will give grace and glory."
 Psalm 84:11.*

WHEREVER, in the Old Testament, you see the word, "LORD," in capital letters, it ought to be read, "JEHOVAH," SO our text really is, "JEHOVAH will give grace and glory."

Who else could give either grace or glory? But God is full of grace—His very name is Love—it is His Nature to freely dispense of His goodness to others. As it is according to the nature of the sun to shine, so it is according to the Nature of God to give good things to His creatures. In Him all fullness dwells—all grace and all glory are perpetually resident in Jehovah, the Infinite. What a mercy it is that we, poor empty sinners, have to do with a God of such fullness and of such goodness! If He were shorthanded with His love, what would become of us? If He had but little graciousness, if He had but little glory, then we great sinners must certainly perish. But since the Lord is a bottomless well of love and a topless mountain of grace, we may come to Him, and come freely, without any fear that either His grace or His glory will ever suffer any diminution.

Note again that the text says, "Jehovah will give grace and glory." Not only has He these wondrous blessings, but He has them that He may *give* them freely. If He were to keep them to Himself, He would be none the richer, and when He distributes them, He is none the poorer! The Lord does not *sell* grace or glory, He does not put them up to auction to those who can give something in return for them. God is a great Giver and a great Forgiver. He gives grace and glory without money, without price and without any merit in the receiver. The Lord *gives*—there is nothing freer than a gift and there can be nothing freer than that greatest of all the gifts of God, eternal life! That expression, "eternal life," sums up these two things—grace and glory. "The Lord will give grace and glory." It is His glory to give His grace and because of His graciousness, He gives glory!

Should not this Truth of God be a comfort to anyone here who is struggling against sin and who is crying, "How shall I ever get to Heaven?" This is the answer—"The Lord will give *grace and glory*." "But I am so unworthy." "The Lord *will give* grace and glory." "But I can offer Him no recompense." There is no need of any recompense, for, "the Lord will *give* grace and glory." "But I cannot procure these by any effort of my own." You have not to procure them, for, "the Lord will *give* *grace and glory*." O you who are full of needs and empty of everything else, come and joyfully accept the free gift of God in Christ Jesus, for, according to the text, "the Lord will give grace and glory"!

There are just two things for me to talk about at this time—the *first gift* and the *last gift*. "The Lord will give grace." That is His first gift. "The Lord will give glory." That is His last gift. Glory never comes without grace coming first, but grace never comes without glory coming last—the two are bound together and, "what God has joined together, let not man put asunder." He never gave grace without giving glory and He never gave glory without *first* giving grace. You must have the two. They must go together—you must not attempt to tear this seamless coat—"The Lord will give grace and glory."

I. So we begin with THE FIRST GIFT—"The Lord will give grace."

And, first, let me say that *the Lord will give grace to all those who feel that they need it and confess their need*. God will not give Divine Grace to a man who boasts of his merits and who claims a reward as a debt. God will meet such a man on his own ground and deal with him on his own terms—and will give him only what he merits—and what he

really deserves. And what will that be, Sirs? O you who are pharisaic and boastful of your own righteousness, listen to the answer to this question! Such a man's deserts will be shame and confusion of face forever! Remember what Jehovah says by His servant Isaiah, "Behold, all you that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks. Walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that you have kindled. This shall you have of My hand—you shall lie down in sorrow."

If you are willing to meet God on the ground of being undeserving and guilty, God will meet you on those terms and, so meeting you, He will come in robes of Divine Grace and say to you, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions and, as a cloud, your sins." Claim anything as of a *right* and God will only give you what you have a right to claim! And that will be everlasting destruction from His Presence and from the glory of His power! But confess that you are guilty! Put the rope around your neck and stand ready for the death sentence to be executed! Acknowledge that you are an undeserving, ill-deserving, Hell-deserving sinner and appeal to the unmerited mercy of God—and you shall have grace freely given to you. Put yourself where grace can come to you, that is, in the place of the guilty, the worthless—in the place of those who merit Divine Wrath and deserve nothing better—and then God will meet you in mercy, and you will prove the truth of our text, "The Lord will give grace." Come, then, you black sinners, for "the Lord will give grace." Come, then, you worthless ones, for "the Lord will give grace."

Come, then, you graceless ones, for "the Lord will give grace." Do but be empty and He will fill you! Do but be naked and He will clothe you! Do but be hungry and He will feed you! Do but be spiritually bankrupt and he will deliver you from all your liabilities and enrich you with the boundless wealth of His grace! God cannot be gracious to a man who is not in need of Divine Grace—that were to insult Him—and until you take the sinner's place, which is your right place, you do not stand where the free favor of God can come and deal with you. Let this Truth of God, stern as it is in some aspects, be an encouragement to confession of sin and to contrition before God, for, "the Lord will give grace" to those who need it and who confess that need.

"The Lord will give grace," that is to say, *He will give grace to those who believe in His Son, Jesus Christ*. No, He *has given grace to them already*. It has pleased the Father that in Christ should all fullness dwell and, therefore, fullness of Divine Grace abides in Christ. If you want Divine Grace, you must go to Jesus for it! As Pharaoh said to those who sought corn in Egypt, "Go to Joseph," so does God say to those who seek His mercy, "Go to Jesus—turn to the Crucified." He is that golden pipe through which the mercy of God flows to the guilty sons of men! Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? In other words, do you trust yourself wholly with Him? Then if you do, God has given you Divine Grace—you have salvation, you are a saved man, your sins are forgiven you—you are accepted in the Beloved. "By grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." But that faith rests itself upon the completed work of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Further, "The Lord will give grace," that is to say, *He will give more grace to those to whom He has given some grace*. "The Lord *will* give grace." "Oh" you say, "I have such a little grace!" Thank God that you have any. If you have only the gleam of a candle, thank God for that, and believe that you shall yet have a light like that of the seven-branched candlestick in the ancient Tabernacle! If you have had the first droppings of Divine Grace, keep on looking to Him who gave you those first drops, for there is a shower on the way! He who has grace enough to believe in Christ may say that he hears the sound of abundance of rain. "He gives more grace." Do you not remember that Jesus has come, not only that we might have life, but that we might have it more abundantly? A little genuine grace ensures the death of all our sins and the life of all our graces! If you are brought into covenant with God by Christ Jesus, then all the Divine Grace that is in the Covenant and in the Covenant Head is yours and you may freely partake of it! If you have but a morsel of the dainties of Christ in your mouth, there stands One at the table who says to you, "Eat, O Friend. Drink, yes, drink abundantly, O Beloved!" If you are but His son, all that He has is yours and you shall, by-and-by, have, in conscious enjoyment, more Divine Grace than you have had as yet, for where He has given some grace, He delights to give more!

"The Lord will give grace," also means that *He will give it in the form in which it is needed*. "I am looking forward to a great trouble," says one. "The Lord will give grace." "I am about to undertake a very serious responsibility," says another. "The Lord will give grace." "I am getting very old," says a third, "and infirmities are creeping over me." "The Lord will give grace." "Oh, but I am approaching the time of my death! I feel that I have received my death-wound." "The Lord will give grace." Whatever is to come upon a child of God, Divine Grace shall come with it. Therefore, Be-

loved, be not afraid, but remember those ancient promises, “Fear you not, for I am with you: be not dismayed; for I am your God: I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you; yes, I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness.”

“The Lord will give grace,” means, too, that *He will give Divine Grace when it is needed*. He will not give you any grace to go and show about, so that you may boastingly say, “See what a lot of grace I have!” I think I have heard some testimonies which appeared to imply that the Brother had his pockets full of gold and, as he put in his hand and rattled the coins, he seemed to say, “*See* what a rich man I am!” That is all wrong! God does not give us any grace to turn into diamond rings to wear on our fingers and to flash in the sunshine. He does not give us any grace that we may turn into best clothes to wear on Sundays that people may see what fine people we are. Grace is a thing which has to be used and the Lord who gives it means us to use it. Whenever God sharpens my scythe, I know that there is some grass for me to cut. If ever He hands me a sword, He seems, by that very action, to say to me, “Go and fight,” and He does not give it to me that I may have it dangling between my legs to show what a man of war I am! When you need grace, you shall have grace.

One said in His heart just now, when we were singing that line—

“All needful grace will God bestow,”

“I am afraid I have not grace to die with.” My dear Friend, you may not be going to die just yet. When you are to die, you shall have dying grace in dying moments! I have heard one say, “I am afraid I am not a child of God, for I could not preach like So-and-So, and I could not pray like So-and-So.” But you shall have grace to do it when God calls you to it. Somebody, the other day, trying to excuse or justify war, said to me, “Did not God tell Joshua to go and kill the Canaanites?” I answered, “When God tells me to go and kill anybody, I will go and do it, but, until He does so, I will heed what our Lord said to Peter, ‘Put up your sword into its place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.’” It is a blessed thing that God gives Divine Grace to men according to their requirements. You remember the promise to Asher, “Your shoes shall be iron and brass; and as your days, so shall your strength be”? That was said to men who had to go on a long journey, but you do not need iron shoes and brass shoes! If you had them given to you, as soon as you reached home you would kick them off and say, “Give me a pair of light slippers.” And God will not give us grace just for show—He will give it to us as we need it! Therefore fall back on this blessed Word of God, “The Lord will give grace.” As it is needed, so shall the grace be given.

Furthermore, we know from this precious text that *He will give us Divine Grace to a much larger degree when we are prepared to receive it*. Let none of us believe that we are yet all that we are to be, or all that we ought to be, or all that we may be. Brothers and Sisters, we have no conception of what, by the grace of God, a Christian may become. “I can do nothing,” says one. That is true. Learn that lesson well! But there is another lesson, remember, to follow it—“I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.” Do not always rest content with the A B C—go on to the rest of the letters of the alphabet. There is a higher life than some professors live and blessed is he who attains to it. You are a doubter—I am sorry that is the case and I wish I could lead you out of Doubting Castle. But only the Lord can deliver you from that dreadful dungeon! You are a trembler, weak and feeble. Well, God be thanked that you are alive at all, but still, it would be better if you were to grow “strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might.” And you may. You, who now, through lack of faith, wear sackcloth and ashes, may yet, as God’s trustful children, put on the silken garments all bespangled with the jewels of His love! You sit today upon the dunghill, but God does not make dunghills for you—He means you to sit upon a throne, for He has made us kings and priests unto our God. Then why are we sitting on the dunghill? It is well to be even there when God places us there, but it is far better to rise from it and put on our beautiful garments and get to the top of Amana—and there hold sweet communion with Him who dwells on high! God bring us there by His grace! The promise still stands—“The Lord will give grace.” You may have it—therefore desire it! Long for it, seek it, prize it—and you shall yet have it and praise God for it.

I think that the text further means that *the Lord will give grace until it melts into glory*. “The Lord will give grace and ____.” You know that in some dissolving views, you have one picture on the sheet and then presently the operator begins to slide another over it—and the one melts into the other. That is how it is with the Believer. There is the earthly picture of grace and you can see slowly coming into it—creeping over it, not altogether concealing it, but gradually absorbing it—that blessed picture of glory! Glory is really nothing more than grace fully developed—and when Christians begin to get spiritually ripe—something of the sweetness of Heaven is seen in them even here below. Paul says to the Philippians that “our conversation is in Heaven.” Not only our *citizenship*, which the word means, but I like our version,

our, “conversation” is there, because our “citizenship” is there. The Lord gives His people the grace to live a heavenly life before they get to Heaven! He gives them the grace to taste the clusters of Eshcol before they enter the Promised Land! And He will continue to give grace till grace is consummated in glory. Do not be afraid of the glorious Doctrine of the saints’ Final Preservation, but believe that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ! He who puts His hand to this plow will never look back from it, but will plow a straight furrow right to the last end of the headland. If He has begun to bear our souls up toward Himself and His glory, He will never turn from His purpose, or slacken His hand until He has finished the work in righteousness. He who has commenced this building will never cease to work till the headstone is brought forth with shouts of “grace, grace unto it.”

“The Lord will give grace and glory.” Think of that, Sinner! Think of your one day being in Glory! If you are, to-day, in grace, you shall one day be in Glory, as surely as you are now in grace! If you are a poor wretched sinner, only fit to make fuel for the flames of Hell, yet, if you will come and accept the grace of God and trust in the precious blood of Christ, you shall one day strike your harp among the angels and the spirits of just men made perfect! You shall one day be without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, before the Throne of God in Heaven! Does it not make you laugh in your heart to think of it? It often makes me sing as I bless the Lord that I, too, shall be there among the blood-redeemed ones! And you, sorrowful Soul, ought to be merry of heart at the very thought that you shall yet partake with angels and glorified spirits of the bliss which God has prepared for them that love Him!

II. Now we come to THE LAST GIFT, upon which I shall say but little, yet, had I time, I could say much—“The Lord will give glory.” He will give that glory to those to whom He has given His grace.

What does this word, “glory,” mean? Ah, Friends, I shall not attempt to tell you all about it—it is too vast a subject for any mortal to handle. Here is sea room for the biggest man-of-war in our great King’s navy! My little boat shall only do a little coasting around the edge of this boundless ocean. “Glory.” What is that?

Well, first, it is *something for the soul of man*. This soul of ours, when it is glorified, will be made like to God. That image of God, which Adam had, shall be restored, only yet more brightly through our union with the Second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ. The soul shall be made like unto the Spirit of God in true holiness and righteousness. The glory of the soul will lie much in its absolute perfection. Whatever a soul ought to be, whatever a soul *can be*—that our soul *shall be*—it shall be rid of all sin, all tendency to sin, all liability to sin, all possibility of sinning! Oh, this is, indeed, glory, to be perfectly pure!

I do not doubt, also, that the glorified soul will be greatly enlarged and all its powers much increased—its ability to know, its ability to understand, its ability to enjoy, its ability to love, its ability to serve. We shall not be merely this poor little seed that we now are, but we shall be developed into that glorious flower which God intends to make His people to be in the day of their manifestation! Our glory will also very much consist in happy communion with God, in a very near and dear fellowship with the Most High. We shall converse familiarly with angels and the spirits of the blessed. Far more, we shall converse with Jesus, our elder Brother, our Lover, our Husband! These words drop easily enough from my lips, but what their full meaning must be, who of us can, at present, conceive? An hour with Christ on earth is worth a king’s ransom—have not some of us enjoyed, in ten minutes here below, so much bliss that we have remembered that ten minutes for ten years afterwards? When our blessed Lord has lifted the veil from His face and has also taken the scales off our poor blind eyes and brought us near to Him, we have been ravished with delight! And whether in the body or out of the body, we could not tell. This bliss, and more, we shall be able to endure forever. The sweet delirium of fellowship with Christ below has in it too much of strain for creatures in these mortal bodies often to bear, but, strip us of this house of clay and then we shall be able to drink in deep draughts at the wellhead itself! Draughts, which today would drown us, shall then only content us—and these draughts shall be ours forever and ever. This is glory for the soul!

But let it never be forgotten that as we are made up of *body and soul*, so *there will be also glory for the body*. Though this body may be, for a while, separated from our spirit unless the Lord shall speedily come, yet it is an integral part of our manhood and it, too, is to be glorified. Many of the children of God seem to forget the resurrection of the body. They who are already in Heaven are not yet perfect, as there is only a part of them there at present. The day of their perfection will be when the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised, incorruptible, and we who are then alive and remain shall be changed! Then our bodies will be no more capable of grief and anguish. Better still, they will never become the messengers and the servants of sin, for even this poor flesh shall be purified from all taint and from all possi-

bility of corruption! The body is sown in weakness—it shall be raised in power! As to what the power of the glorified body shall be, we will not indulge our imagination or attempt to guess, but it will be something extraordinary. There will be no lameness there, no failing sight, no gathering deafness, no infirmity of the flesh—you shall be clean delivered from all these imperfections and your body shall be raised in the image of your immortal Lord!

There will be no scars of age, no bald heads, no signs and tokens of the work of sin. That sin of your youth, which lies in your bones—you shall be clean delivered from it all, as though you had passed through a refiner's fire, for the grave shall be but a refining pot to the bodies of the saints—and they shall be raised like unto His glorious body who is their Covenant Head and Lord! When our entire manhood, spirit, soul and body shall be in Heaven, then will this promise be fulfilled, "The Lord will give glory."

"Glory" means, first, *recognition*. When Christ shall declare that He knows us and shall say to each one of us, "Well done, good and faithful servant." When He shall confess us before men when He comes in the glory of His Father, O Brothers and Sisters, when Christ shall call out His poor persecuted followers and, amidst such a scene as never was beheld before—when angels shall lean from the battlements of Heaven and a cloud of witnesses shall gather round about assembled men, when Christ shall say, "You were with Me in My humiliation, and I acknowledge you as My chosen, My beloved, My brethren—that will be "glory!" There is more glory in one word of recognition from the King of Kings than in all the Orders of the Garter, or of the Golden Fleece that kings are able to distribute among their loyal subjects!

Then the next meaning of the word, "glory," is *vision*. "Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty." With Job, each Believer can say, "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another." Yes, we shall behold Christ in all the splendor of His final triumph! We shall see the Father and rejoice in all His infinite perfections! And we shall have fellowship with the Holy Spirit! The one God shall fill all our faculties. "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for them that love Him." Perhaps neither eye, nor ear, nor heart will be needed then—but our whole spirit shall drink in the beatific vision of the Glory of God.

The third meaning of the word, "glory," is *fruition*. What the fruition will be, I will tell you when I have been there! Long ago we learned that "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever." Brothers and Sisters, we have enjoyed His Word. We have enjoyed His Day. We have enjoyed His Covenant. We have enjoyed His love. But what will it be to enjoy God, Himself, and to enjoy Him forever? The Psalmist spoke of "God, my exceeding joy," but that was for earth. It will be "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" to enjoy God forever! I had that text explained to me just lately during the week of the Conference. I was so happy, God was so gracious to me and to all the assembled Brothers, in answer to prayer, that I felt, each night when I got home and each morning when I woke, as if I was weighed down with a super-excess of joy! I said to myself, "I can guess, now, what is meant by a weight of glory."

It needs a strong man to stand under a weight of Divine Grace here below. It needs a robust constitution to bear the weight of Divine Love even here! It is almost enough to kill a man and one may as well die of excessive joy as of excessive grief—but what will it be when our souls are so enlarged and we are so strengthened that we can enjoy God *forever*? Five minutes in Heaven and then let me come back—but then, if I did come back, you know, I should have heard unspeakable words which it would not be lawful for a man to utter! As I have not been there, I cannot tell you of all the wondrous things that help to make up the glory of Heaven. And if I *had* been there, it might be unlawful for me to tell you, so I will not attempt to intrude upon that reserved ground! But what I have to say to you is, *Let us all go there and see for ourselves!*

"What is the way?" asks one. Jesus shows Himself before us and says, "*I am the way*. I am the way." You ask Him, "But are You sure of it?" "Yes," says Jesus, "for I am the Truth." "Oh, but Lord, how shall we traverse that way?" Jesus says, "I am the life." The first part of our text helps you on to the latter part, for the way of grace is the way to glory. O poor Sinner, that way is open to you! You need Divine Grace and you may have it, for, "the Lord will give grace." And He will give glory, too, and then what will you and I do? Why, we will give Him glory! When the sun shines on the moon, the moon shines back—and when the glory of God shines on us, then we shall glorify God. Meanwhile, as God is so gracious to us, let us act gratefully towards Him. You know that the word, "grace," sometimes signifies not only free favor, but also thanks. We often use the expression, "Let us say grace," when we mean to give thanks to God. So, here on

earth, let us *think* grace, let us *live* grace, let us *sing* grace and then, when we get to Heaven, we will *live* glory, and *sing* glory, and all the glory shall be ascribed to Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood!

Now let us close by singing just this one verse—

*“Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days!
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.”*

Sing it to the tune, “Cranbrook.” Sing it as you can sing when you praise the Lord with all your heart and soul!

EXPOSITION C. H. SPURGEON.

PSALM 84.

To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.

It is thought, by some interpreters, that Gittith signifies the winepress. They must have been a very godly people who sang such songs as this in the time of the treading out of the grapes. Oh, that the day were come when the common places of our ordinary industries should be sanctified by Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs! Alas, at the winepress, men too often sing loose and lascivious songs—but these ancient people of God did not.

This Psalm is a song to the chief Musician and it is mainly concerning the house of God and the pilgrimage to it. Every sacred song should be sung at its best. We should call out the chief Musician in every hymn that is dedicated to the service of the Lord.

“To the chief Musician upon Gittith, A Psalm for the sons of Korah.” I have often reminded you that these sons of Korah owed their continued existence to an act of special Sovereign Grace. Korah, Dathan and Abiram and all their company were swallowed up alive. They went down to the Pit because of their rebellion. But in the Book of Numbers we read, “Notwithstanding the children of Korah died not.” Why they were spared, we cannot tell, but, ever after, they were made to be the singers of the sanctuary. They who are saved by Sovereign Grace are the most fit to praise the name of the Lord! The sons of Korah also became doorkeepers to the house of the Lord and hence, probably, is the allusion to a doorkeeper which we find in this Psalm.

Verse 1. *How amiable are Your tabernacles, O LORD of Hosts!* “How amiable”—how lovely “are Your tabernacles!” The Temple was not then built. The Lord’s house was as yet only a tent, so that it is not the glory of *architecture* that makes the house to be lovely—the glory of it is the indwelling God. “How amiable are Your tabernacles!” That is to say, every part of it is lovely. The outer court, the inner court, the Holy of Holies, all the different parts in that ancient sacred shrine were lovely to the Psalmist’s eye. He does not tell us how lovely they were. He leaves off with a note of exclamation, as if he could not measure with his golden rod this city of the great King. “How lovely are Your tabernacles, O Jehovah of hosts’—lovely because they are Yours! They are our tabernacles if we gather in them, but they are Yours because You are there and, therefore, are they most lovely to our eyes.”

2. *My soul longs, yes, even faints for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.* His soul longed until, as it were, it grew pale—for so the Hebrew may be rendered—it grew white with faintness in the intensity of his desire to get up to the courts where God was to be found. God is a King. His ancient tabernacle was one of His royal palaces, so David longed to be a courtier there, that he might dwell in the courts of Jehovah. When he says that his flesh cried out for the living God, he does not mean flesh in the sense in which Paul uses the term, for in that flesh there dwells no good thing, but the Psalmist means to express here the whole of his nature, “My soul, my heart, and my flesh.” The combination of his entire manhood—spirit, soul and body—was moved with such intense agony of desire that it must express itself and it could only express itself in a cry, “My heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.” If it is so with you, my Brothers and Sisters, at this time, you shall have a feast of fat things! He who comes to God’s table with a good appetite shall never go away unsatisfied. It is lack of desire which often hinders us from spiritual delight, but when the desire is set upon God, it shall be satisfied! I fear that we often come to the wells of salvation and yet get nothing because merely *coming to the wells* is nothing. We read in Isaiah, “With joy shall you draw water out of the wells of salvation.” It is not the wells, but the *water* out of them which will refresh the weary one! Do not be content with being

here, in your pew, in the midst of this great congregation—long after the living God, Himself, for He alone can refresh and revive your soul and spirit! Say, with David, “My heart and my flesh cries out for the living God.”

3. *Yes, the sparrow has found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young, even Your altars, O LORD of Hosts, my King, and my God.* These little birds, so insignificant in themselves, were full of holy courage and, with sweet familiarity they came even into the sacred place. They hung upon the eaves of God’s house—they even dared to make their nests there!—

*“O make me like the sparrows blest,
To dwell but where I love!”*

O my Lord, give me the privilege of the swallow—not only to dwell with You, but to see my young ones, too, all round Your altars, that I may find with You, my God, a nest where I may lay my young! Is not this your desire, my Brother, my Sister, to have God for yourself, and God for your boys, and God for your girls—to be, yourself, God’s servant, and to have all your children His children, too? If so, God grant you the desire of your heart!

How sweetly does David address the Lord—“O Jehovah of Hosts, my King and my God!” The people of God are very fond of *mys*—they love possessive pronouns—“my King and my God.” God is good, but what is another man’s God to me if He is not mine? I must have Him for my King and my God, or else I shall not really long for Him, or cry out after Him, or delight in Him.

4. *Blessed are they that dwell in Your house: they will be still praising You.* The nearer to God you are in your life, the sweeter and more constant will be your song to Him. They who dwell with God dwell where there must be singing—

*“Where God does dwell, sure Heaven is there,
And singing there must be.
Since, Lord, Your Presence makes my Heaven,
Whom should I sing to but Thee?”*

Blessed are they who always dwell where You dwell, O my God! “They will be still praising You.”

4. *Selah.* Tighten the harp strings, set the music to a higher key! Lift up the heart! Also let the soul rise to something still sweeter in praise of Jehovah!

5. *Blessed is the man whose strength is in You; in whose heart are the ways*—Or, “Your ways.” It is not every man who is in God’s house who is blessed. The blessed man is the one who has brought his heart with him. It is not every man who is in God’s ways who is blessed—but the man whose strength is in those ways, who throws his whole heart and soul into the worship. Half-hearted worship is dreary work. It is like a blind horse going round in a mill. But when the heart is in the service, we feel, then, as if we could dance for joy in the Presence of the Lord our God—“Blessed is the man whose strength is in You, in whose heart are Your ways.”

6, 7. *Who passing through the valley of Baca makes it a well; the rain also fills the pools. They go from strength to strength. Everyone of them in Zion appears before God.* We do not know, at this date, what that valley of Baca was, for the land has been, to a large extent, destroyed. This ancient song retains the name of the valley of Baca, but it does not explain to us where or what the place was. Perhaps it was a dry and thirsty valley in which, in order to pass through it at all, the pilgrims dug wells that there might be refreshment for their journey. There are many such valleys on the road to Heaven—dark and lonesome, dry and barren—but God’s people learn to dig wells there. Only mark that though we dig the wells, the water to fill them does not rise up from the bottom—it falls down from above. “The rain also fills the pools.” In the Kingdom of Heaven there are some analogies with the kingdom of nature, but there are a great many heavenly things that have no earthly analogy at all. And you cannot with any accuracy argue from natural laws into the spiritual world. For instance, we have “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,” and we throw that anchor *up*—“which enters into that within the veil.” Whereas earthly mariners *drop* their anchors down into the sea, we fling ours up into Heaven. That is odd, but it is true. So, we dig a well, but it does not get filled from the bottom—“The rain also fills the pools.” This is a new kind of well and it teaches us that we *must use the means*, but that everything depends upon God! We have not to depend upon the means, but upon the God of the means—“The rain also fills the pools.”

See, further, Brothers and Sisters, what the way to Heaven is. It is a growing way, an increasing way—“They go from strength to strength.” Those who begin in their own strength go from weakness to weakness, but those who know their own weakness and trust in the Almighty God shall go from strength to strength! In the natural world, as we grow older, we get weaker—but in the moral and spiritual world, when it is as it should be—the older we grow, the stronger

we become in God and in the power of His might! What a mercy it is to be on the road to Heaven, which is a road always upwards! From step to step, from hill to hill, from mount to mount, they climb who shall ultimately end their pilgrimage in the King's palace above. "Everyone of them in Zion appears before God."

8, 9. *O LORD God of Hosts, hear my prayer: give ear, O God of Jacob. Selah. Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed.* See what a rise there is in the music, here, from, "Hear my prayer," to, "Behold, O God our shield, and look upon the face of Your anointed." "When you cannot look on me, look on Your Anointed."—

*"Him, and then the sinner see,
Look through Jesus' wounds on me."*

When God looks at us, He may well be angry. But when He looks upon Christ, He must be glad and full of love.

10. *For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand.* That is, better than a thousand spent anywhere else. You see, we have not yet come to the country where we can stay at God's public worship all the year together—we have to get it a day at a time. Have you not often wished that there were seven Sundays in the week? I am sure that you have when God has fed your souls and made your spirits merry in the House of Prayer. Then have you sighed for the land—

*"Where congregations never break up,
And Sabbaths have no end."*

If you are a Believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall come there, by-and-by, but, at present, you must be satisfied with a day at a time in the courts of the Lord. Yet the Lord can crowd mercies into one day with such a marvelous compression of Divine Grace that we shall seem to get three years' food in a single day! The Lord make this day to be a sort of millennial day! "A day in Your courts is better than a thousand" spent anywhere else.

10. *I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* As I said before, the sons of Korah were doorkeepers in the house of the Lord and this Psalm is for them. You know that our poor doorkeepers generally have many to find fault with them—somebody or other is sure to feel disobliged. Door-keeping is no very remunerative work, no very easy and pleasing task. "Yet," says David—King David himself—"I would take off my crown of gold and turn pew-opener. I would wish to be even a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, so long as I might but be with my God. And that position would be far better than feasting and rioting in royal pavilions with the wicked."

11. *For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.* Take notice of the whole of that last sentence! Do not go and quote half of it and say, "God has promised that He will withhold no good thing." It is only promised to, "them that walk uprightly." And if you walk crookedly, the promise does not belong to you! It is upright walking that brings downright blessing! You shall lack no good thing from God when your whole heart is made good towards God.

12. *O LORD of Hosts, blessed is the man that trusts in You.* May all of us know this blessedness! Amen.

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