

A REMARKABLE BENEDICTION NO. 3540

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*“And for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.”
Deuteronomy 33:16*

MOSES died blessing the people. This showed his meekness, for they had been his plague all his life, and yet his last word with them is full of blessing. He has a blessing for all the tribes, though all the tribes had in turn grieved his spirit. It is a graceful thing to die scattering benedictions—for the old man to feel that life is just about over, and that ere he dies he will distribute his legacies—legacies of benediction. It is the most graceful way of departing out of this life to another, leaving a blessing behind, while we ourselves are going into the fullness of the blessing to come.

But the blessing of Moses was graceful at the close of his life because it was constant with all of his life that went before. Had he lived cursing, it would have been absurd, if not impious, to die blessing. I would not wish to have that man's benediction in words on his deathbed who never gave a benediction in actions while he was in his life. But the whole course of Moses' life was that of blessing the people.

He had been a nursing father to them, he carried them in his bosom, often he stood in the gap between them and an angry God. He had spared them by acting as a Mediator when the sword of vengeance was drawn against them. Countless blessings had been bestowed upon them through him. Was it not his rod that wrought wonders in the field of Zoan? Was it not his hand which was stretched over the Red Sea, by which God made a way for his people? Did not his rod, when it smote the rock, bring forth the liquid stream? Was it not by his voice that God communicated to them that the manna should drop around their camps?

He had blessed them from the very first moment that he had come into contact with them, for he came forth from the palace of Pharaoh, giving up all the riches that might have been his, that he might side with his brethren, and began to fight their battles, smiting the Egyptian and hiding his body in the sand. It was from this cause that he was banished from the court, and when he returned again it was with the same resolute determination to abide with his people, and the same warm heart towards them.

Brethren, if you wish to give your children a blessing when you die, be a blessing to them while you live. If you would make your last words worth the hearing, let your whole life be worth the seeing. It is graceful to die blessing, but let it be always consistent with the blessedness of our former life.

The particular blessing which he gave to Joseph shall now have our attention, and first, we shall notice *the blessing itself*, which he wished to Joseph, and secondly, *the peculiar form in which he worded it*, and when we have thought that over, it shall be in our heart to *wish the same to all who are present here*.

First, then, let us look at—

I. THE GREAT BLESSING WHICH MOSES WISHED CONFERRED UPON JOSEPH.

The good will of God—“the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.” I would like any man's good will. The better the man is the more I would desire to have his good will. If it did not come to the *benefacit* or the good doing, I would like him to think benevolently towards me, to have his good will, if I never derived any particular good directly from him.

One does not like to go to bed and feel you have an ill will from any man. Certainly, it is well always to feel that we have no ill will ourselves towards any, but that our good will reaches out to all. One

would like to have the good will of wise men who could counsel us, and of great men who could help us. One would like to have the good will of angels, to know that they cheerfully obey the divine command to watch over us.

But how much superior to all this is the good will of God—the good will of Him whose will is power, whose wish is fact, who has but to will it, and the good that is willed becomes our good in very deed. Oh! 'tis a high blessing to have the good will of God. Beloved, our heart wishes this to every one here present, and every Christian wishes this for their children—wishes it for their household, wishes it for his neighbor, wishes it for his fellow countrymen. May the good will of God be with you.

For, beloved, in the first place, *this is the fountain of every blessing*. It is from the good will of God that every good thing which comes to us takes its rise. Election is according to the pleasure of His good will. He chose us because He would choose us—because He had a good will towards us. Redemption springs from that good will. What else but good will could give the Savior to such unworthy ones as we were? Our calling into the divine life is a work of His good will. Our preservation in that life, our growth in it, and all the blessings with which God loads that life to make it blessed—all these are fruits of His good will.

You cannot find a single blessing that comes to us by the way of merit. We may say of every blessing, it is according to His loving-kindness and His tender mercies. He forgave us because He had a good will towards us. He restored us from our wanderings because of His good will. He daily cleanses us, and He makes us meet for the inheritance of the saints in light, and all because of His good will. To what else can we ascribe the covenant of grace? To what else can all the blessings which are pledged to us by that covenant be attributed? It is according to His good will.

In wishing, therefore, to anyone that he may have the good will of God that dwelt in the bush, you are wishing to him the fountainhead of all mercies, you are wishing to him the infinity, the immensity, the immutability of the goodness and love of God. It is a comprehensive blessing, and who is he that shall tell all its heights and depths?

The good will of God is also *the sweetener of all other blessings*. It is the source of them, it is the sweetener of them. Everything that comes from God to us derives a double blessedness when we feel that they are the fruit of His good will. Take spiritual mercies, and though they be in themselves so rich that none can estimate their value, yet is there a peculiar brightness put upon them when we know these come from God's love, these are all tokens of His favor towards us, His people.

And truly, brethren, the lower mercies of daily life become more blessed to us as we know they come from His good will. As you cut that loaf, each slice of it is flavored with His good will. When you put on your garments tomorrow morning, though they are those in which you exercise your toilsome labors, yet are they tokens of God's good will as much as those coats of skins which God gave to our first parents.

Yea, beloved, sitting here tonight, this air we breathe, the power to breathe it, and the health which enabled us to come up to the house of prayer, and this house, itself, and the ears with which we hear the words, and the good tidings which are given us to hear—all these are of His good will, and are the sweeter because we recognize the favor of God in them.

Oh! to have temporal blessings with a curse—that is a dreadful thing. I hardly know a text more fearful to contemplate than that one, "I will curse your blessings." Oh! if God makes any bitter, how bitter the wormwood and the gall must be! If He puts death in the pot in which the broth is made to sustain life, what death must there be when He shall deal out the poisoned cup of His eternal wrath to the ungodly. Sweet, indeed, are blessings when they are thus honeyed with His love, but would they be if, instead thereof, they were seasoned and salted with His wrath?

Be thankful, Christian, for I will venture to say that this makes even our trials pleasant to us when we know that they also are the fruits of His good will. We cannot always make our hearts believe that the rod is a good thing, we cannot always persuade our unbelief that our dark, heavy, gloomy hours are really for our good, but they are so, and we shall believe this when we perceive that they are sent out of

good will to us—not out of anger, but out of love—love to us that He may love us right up out of our sins, and love us away from our infirmities, and love us into a higher state of grace, attracting us by His divine love till we become like Himself. Note, then, the two things, it is a great blessing because it is the source of all blessings, and the sweetener of all blessings.

But the next consideration about this is—and let us carefully notice it—that, nevertheless, *it surpasses all other blessings*. The good will of Him that dwelt in the bush is a greater blessing than all the blessings in the world—what if I say in heaven itself!—besides, brethren, all the blessings in the world without this are less than nothing, and if they were all gone, if that were conceivable, and yet we had this left to us, we need not regret the loss of all, since we should find all in God.

You remember how the old Puritan put it? He had been rich, and then was brought to poverty, and he said he didn't find much difference, for, he said, when he was rich he found God in all, and now that he was poor he found all in God. Perhaps the latter is the higher state of the two. Without God, alas! my soul, if you were in paradise! But with God, oh! joy and bliss if you were in prison!

All these things put together shall perish in the using, like leaves of the forest, they shall wither before long, but You, my God, are an unwithering tree of life, and under You I shall always have shade, I shall sit down beneath Your shadow with great delight, and I shall always have food, for Your fruit is sweet unto my taste. I will rejoice in You, for Your good will is better than all things.

I will tell you what it is—you that have not this good will, if you should lose everything else, you have to win it, you would make a good bargain. If you have not God's good will, and could not have it except by losing the sight of your eyes, and the hearing of your ears, and the renouncing of all your bodily and mental faculties, if you could not have the good will of God without losing house, and home, and friends, you might cheerfully, gladly, at once close in with the negotiation and say, "Let me have God's good will, and I will take what'er He pleases, or lose what'er He takes!"

But let me remind you that you have not to lose these things to get His good will. If you have His good will, you may know it by this, will you accept the gift which He presents to you in His dear Son? Having nothing, will you take Christ to be yours? Being naked, and poor, and miserable, will you let Him be to you your raiment and your riches? If so, you have God's will, you have God's good will, for you have Christ, who is the good will of God towards us, incarnated in the flesh. The Lord grant each one of us, then, this blessing, to have His good will.

And now, secondly—

II. THIS BLESSING IS PUT IN A VERY PECULIAR FORM.

He says, "The good will of him that dwelt in the bush." And why did he put it so? Was it, first, because Moses looked back to the appearance of God in the bush with peculiar delight on account of its being *the first manifestation of God to his soul*? I have no doubt that Moses had fellowship with God before, but we do not read that he ever had an appearance of the Divine Being to him until he was at the back side of the desert near to Horeb. And there he saw God in the burning bush. Beloved, we always set most store—at least, I do—in our memory upon the first appearance of God to us. It brings the tears to my eyes when I recollect those words of the old hymn—

*"Dost mind the place, the spot of ground,
Where Jesus did thee meet?"*

Ah! I do mind it, and always shall, while memory holds her seat. I may forget anything else, but I shall never forget that, and though I have had many, many manifestations to the comfort of my heart, yet that first one has peculiar charms. And I do not marvel that Moses called his God the God that dwelt in the bush.

Now, have not some of you remembrances of the first days when the love of your espousals was warm in you, and when the manifestations of Jesus were bright to you. Well then, wish to others that the good will of God, who appeared to you behind the hedge, or out in the field, or down in the saw pit, or at

your bedside in your chamber—the good will of Him that said to you, “I have blotted out your sins like a cloud”—wish that that good will may rest upon your kinsfolk and your friends.

Is it not also very likely that Moses mentioned that peculiar circumstance in his blessing because *God on that occasion pledged Himself to him*? He gave that burning bush to be a token to Moses, and a sign, and that token had been redeemed, and that good old man, at the end of the last forty years of his life, remembered how God had appeared to him when he was eighty years of age and given him that pledge, and now that he was a hundred and twenty years old, God had redeemed it, He had been true to him for forty years.

Have not we some pledges and tokens? Have not you some place where the Lord appeared to you and said, “Certainly, I will be with you, and will bring you again unto this place”? Are there no remembrances in your soul in which a faithful God has pledged His promise to you, and has redeemed it? If so, each man will know his own case, and each man, if he speaks naturally, will wish a blessing for others, according to his own experience of the blessed God.

I do not wonder that after Moses had seen God redeem the token of the burning bush, when he wished to convey the idea that the good will of a faithful covenant-keeping God should rest upon His servant Joseph—the tribe thereof—should say, “The good will of him that dwelt in the bush.”

Moreover, at that time, in the bush *God did show Himself as a covenant God*. He began thus, “I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” He was a covenant God. Brethren, may you have the good will of a covenant God. I often wonder what those do who do not know the covenant of grace. It seems to me to be the richest well of consolation that God has ever dug—the covenant ordered in all things and sure. It was the stay of David on his deathbed, it is the comfort of many of God’s Davids in the battle of life.

I wish tonight with all my heart, dear friends, that you may not look for the good will of an absolute God out of Christ, but look for and enjoy the will of God, who has pledged Himself to you in your representative, Christ Jesus, in the eternal covenant of His love. I think that is another reason why Moses put it in that form.

And perhaps, Moses looked upon that bush *as the place of his call to a more active life*, and regarded God in a different light from that time forth from what he had ever regarded Him before. His own name was Moses, he was drawn out of the water, and now he might have changed his name, for God had called him out of the fire. Now he saw the God of fire.

Oh! there are some believers that have never got to this. They, I hope, have renounced the world as Moses did when he counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt, they have got also into the wilderness where Moses was, they are separated, they love contemplation, and they live near to God, but they have never been called into active service. That third forty years of Moses’ life was the crowning part of all his career. The forty years with Pharaoh, the forty years in the desert, all prepared him for the forty years in the wilderness with his people.

But some Christians have not begun that last period of their lives. I wish they had, and I shall be glad and rejoice if, tonight, the Lord should appear to any of His servants and call them, saying, “I have called you to bring sinners out of Egypt, and to set them free.” If He ever does, when you come in after times to pronounce a blessing upon others, you will put it thus, “The God that called me to preach the Gospel, the God that led me as His servant, be with you, each one of you,” and if that is the form in which you put the blessing, it will be a very rich one.

But now I will come back to the words again. What did Moses mean? We see why he used the term, but what did he mean by saying, “The good will of him that dwelt in the bush be with you”? Did not he mean, first, “May the *blessings of condescension ennoble you*”? What condescension for God to dwell in a bush! Had the Eternal dwelt in a cedar, it would have been a stoop, but for Him to dwell in the uncouth-shaped, worthless shrub—a bush—oh! this was matchless.

Oh! beloved, may every one of us know what it is for God to condescend to dwell with us. We are as the bushes of the heath. There is nothing in us that fits us for God’s mercy. What are we, and what is our

father's house? Why should the Lord look upon us—perhaps as little in talent as we are in merit, low in our own esteem, but much more low in very deed and truth?

Oh! may the Lord deal with each one of you in His condescending way. He is wont to give His mercy condescendingly. “He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and he hath exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things, but the rich He has sent empty away.” After that fashion may He deal with you, and if He should do so, then how ennobled will you be, for that bush in Horeb had a greater glory about it than the cedars of Lebanon. It was but a bush, but it was a bush in which God had dwelt.

And you, too—you will have to say, “Thy gentleness hath made me great. He hath lifted the poor from the dunghill and set him among princes, even the princes of His people.” A drop of grace gives more honor than a world of fame. One spark of love of Christ is more ennobling to the heart into which it falls than though it were all ablaze with the stars and orders of all the knighthoods of the kingdom. The love of God makes poor men truly rich, and little men supremely great, and the despised to be honorable, and the nothing to be lifted up amongst the mighty.

I wish you, then, beloved, God's condescending love to ennoble you—“the good will of him that dwelt in the bush.” Or as we might read it, “the good will of the Shekinah of the bush,” for that is the very same Shekinah that shone between the cherub wings. The good will of Him that dwells upon the throne in heaven is the good will of Him that dwells in humble and contrite hearts today.

But Moses, however, meant something more than that. Did not he mean that he wished to Joseph's tribe indwelling and mysterious mercies—“*the good will of him that dwelt—dwelt in the bush*”? It was a strange dwelling. Can anyone understand how God, who is everywhere, can be in one place in particular, and shall anyone tell us how He, who is greater than all space, should yet dwell in a bush—*in a bush*? He that sets the heavens on a blaze with lightning, and kindles all the stars, comes down and sets a bush aglow with His Divine presence! It is mysterious.

Oh! may every one of us know the mysterious good will of the indwelling Spirit of God! Do you know it? Do you know it? Oh! beloved, as the fire was in the bush, is the Spirit in you? Do you know He is there? Search yourselves. If He be there, may He *dwell* there, and if He be not there, oh! may some sparks of that divine fire fall into your nature now—enough, at least, to make you desire more, and set you longing and praying for the wondrous blessing of an indwelling Spirit.

Ignatius of old used to call himself “Theophorus” or “the God-bearer.” Truly, every Christian is such—a God-bearer. “I will dwell in them and walk in them.” “I will put my Spirit within you, and ye shall walk in my way.” Surely Moses meant that—at least, the sense is in his words. May you enjoy the mysterious indwelling, and the blessings that come from it.

Further, did not the man of God mean that he desired that *Joseph might possess enlightening blessings*? “The good will of him that dwelt in the bush” means this, He set the bush alight, it became a luminary. It had light, it gave forth light, it had light more abundantly. It was a dark bush, God came into it, and it struck the attention of Moses, though it seems to have been daylight. He was watching his flock, but so bright was this that it outshone the sun, and Moses said, “I will turn aside and see this great sight.” A bush is not a great sight, it was God that made the bush so bright that it became a great sight.

May you, beloved, have the light of God's Spirit to reveal to you God's truth, and may that light be in you so brightly that others may see it and learn God's truth through you. What is the Scripture to us, unless God shine on it? The Bible is only like a country signpost at the turning of a road in a dark night. Unless there is the light to read it by, the signpost is of no service. We want the Spirit of God to shine on the Scriptures. O God, come into us, and give us Your light! We need You. Let this be a token of Your good will to us.

But that is not all. Surely Moses meant, “May the Lord grant you *the blessings of trial and the blessings of preservation*.” For all through the various branches and twigs of that bush, there went a fire, a devouring fire, a fire that would have licked it up as the blaze licks up the stubble in a single moment.

Yet that fire in its nature was preserving, as well as consuming, and through the goodness of God, the bush was as safe when it was ablaze as it had been before.

Beloved, how I wish to you that, whenever fiery trials may come, the consuming fire may spend itself upon your corruptions, but oh! may God grant that there may be nothing in it that shall touch your better nature. May it be a conserving as well as a consuming fire. We do, some of us, own to have been in the furnace when it has been heated very hot. Weary nights have been appointed to us, and days of anguish of body and of sinking of spirit. We have lain cast out even from the presence of God, sometimes in our apprehensions, in the very deeps of the valley of the shadow of death, and God—blessed be His name—He has sent the fire, and come with it, and we have not been consumed, but can sing this day of judgment and of mercy.

That mingled song is well set forth in the bush that burned, but was not burnt—burned, but was not consumed. I would not wish for any of you perfect immunity from trouble, lest you should miss the coming through tribulation into the inheritance of the kingdom, but I do pray for you that, when the trouble comes, the God that raised the trouble may come with it, so that you may be burned, but not consumed.

I will not tarry longer over this explanation of the text, but now most earnestly and from my heart I wish to you, beloved, this blessing. May “the good will of him that dwelt in the bush” dwell with you! In your dwellings, may His good will dwell. Whatever your homes may be, may God be with you there. May His good will be with your husband, with your wife, and your children, your servants, your business, your field, your estate.

May He that dwelt in the bush condescend to dwell in that little chamber and that narrow room! If a bush can hold Him, so can your poor room, if a bush revealed Him, so can your bed—ay, and your sickbed too. Believe in it—that God’s good will can perfume every chamber of your dwelling, can make your going out and your coming in to be blessed, and all your ways the same. I wish for you, beloved, that “the good will of him that dwelt in the bush” may dwell with you wherever you may be.

Are you like Moses just now, alone and solitary in a wilderness? Have you come into this great city, and are you yet feeling as if you were a lone person, as in a desert? May “the good will of him that dwelt in the bush” be with you, and may God reveal Himself to you in your solitude, as He did to the prophet at Horeb.

Perhaps you will be called from this day forth to conflict, as Moses stood before Pharaoh, and had to face the wrath of the king. May you confound your adversaries and be very mighty for your God. Possibly God intends to give you success in your service, like Moses, you will bring out Israel from under bondage.

May “the good will of him that dwelt in the bush” keep you sober in success and humble in prosperity. Peradventure before you there shall soon be a difficulty as great as that which met the children of Israel before Pi-hahiroth, you will come to the Red Sea, the rocks will be on either hand, pursuers may be behind you. May the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush and was with Moses be with you in the hour of stern trial. Through your Red Sea, may the Lord lead you, as He led the children of Israel like a flock.

Perhaps you will be subject to many provocations, as Moses was from the people whom he loved. They spoke of stoning him. They murmured against the Lord, and against His servant Moses. May you be as meek as Moses, because the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush shall overshadow you. Possibly you may have a long life of Christian service before you. It may be for forty years you will have to carry a people in your bosom, and nurture them for the Lord. My brother in the ministry, I wish the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush to be with you through all that toilsome task.

Perhaps you are soon to die. Old age is creeping upon you. May you die like Moses, blessing the people with the good will of Him that dwelt in the bush with you to your last moment, and may your spirit climb her Pisgah, and look from the top of Nebo, and have a view of the glory to be revealed, the brooks that flow with milk and honey, and the goodly land. May you see it, even unto Lebanon, and in

those last moments of yours, e'er your spirit melts into glory, may "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" still be with you.

Beloved, this is wished to you all, and I speak not my wish, but the benediction of the Lord upon all His servants, "The good will of him that dwelt in the bush be with you."

But, alas! all here are not servants of God. Yet even to them will I—

III. ANXIOUSLY DESIRE THAT THIS WISH MAY BE FULFILLED TO YOU ALL.

Oh, sinner, tonight may He that dwelt in the bush call you. Moses little thought of it. He was keeping sheep, but a burning bush was enough to attract him. These few simple, feeble, but affectionate words, may, perhaps, be like the bush to you. Or if not, perhaps, a trouble at home will come and be like a thorn bush to you. I pray it may, and may God be in the bush.

I do desire that God would in some way speak to you careless ones and arrest you, for you must come to know Him, or you will perish everlastingly. And may you be humbled in the presence of God, each one of you, as Moses was, for he put off his shoes from off his feet, feeling that the place whereon he stood was holy ground, and he was unholy. May you feel the solemnity of your position—a dying man soon to meet his Maker—a guilty man soon to meet his Judge—a despiser of Christ soon to see Christ on His throne.

O Soul, may you put off your carelessness and have done with your neglect, and begin to pray, and as the Lord of the burning bush said to Moses that He knew the sorrows of his people, I do pray, oh! sinner, that when you stand humbly before the presence of God, you may see that God has pity upon you. May you look to Jesus on the cross, and see where He was like a bush that was burned with the anger of God, though not consumed, and may you, as you look, hear Him say, "I know your sorrows, for I have borne your sins and carried your transgressions for you," and may you find peace tonight.

Oh! it does not matter whether it is the back side of the desert, or the back gallery of the Tabernacle, or down below, beneath the galleries, or where it is—it will be a blessed spot to you if you find God tonight. Moses could never forget that spot near to Horeb, neither will you if the Lord should appear to you. It matters not who the preacher is, though he should be no more than a bush, yet shall he be an angel of God to you. The Lord grant that such an appearance may come to you by faith. May you look to Christ tonight, for, if not, you will have to see God by and by as a consuming fire.

And remember this word, "Beware, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver!" May you never know the meaning of that, but on the contrary, may "the good will of him that dwelt in the bush" be with you. Amen and amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

EXODUS 3

Verse 1. *Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.*

It must have been a great change for Moses, after forty years in the court of Pharaoh, to be spending another forty years in the wilderness. But it was not wasted time, it required the first two periods to make Moses fit for the grand life of the last forty. He must be a prince, and he must be a shepherd, that he might be both a ruler and a shepherd to God's people, Israel. He must be much alone, he must have many solitary communings with his own heart, he must be led to feel his own weakness. And this will be no loss of time to him, he will do more in the last forty years because of the two forties thus spent in preparation. And it is not lost time that a man takes in putting on his harness before he goes to the battle, or that the reaper spends in sharpening his scythe before he cuts down the corn.

2. *And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed.*

How near God seemed in those ages when He could be beheld in a bush or sitting under an oak! And is He not equally near to us if we are but prepared for His presence? Surely pure eyes are scarce, or sights of God would be more frequent, for “the pure in heart shall see God.”

3-5. *And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.*

God is not to be viewed by curiosity, He is not to be approached by presumption. A holy trembling well becomes the man who would commune with the most Holy God. We are not fit for communion with God without some measure of preparation. There is something to be put off ere we can behold the Lord.

6. *Moreover he said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.*

Partly because of the universal superstition that if God appeared to any man, he would surely die, but in Moses' case, perhaps more because of an appreciation of the holiness of God and of his own unworthiness. There is not a man among us but what must do as Moses did if we are in a right state of mind. They that think they are perfect might presume to look, but they that are truly so, as Moses was, would, as he did, hide his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

7. *And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows;*

Beautiful verse. God had seen and God had heard, as if their griefs had had two avenues to His heart. God sees not with eyes, and hears not with ears, as we do, but He speaks after the manner of men, and He says by two ways they had reached his very soul, “I have surely seen the affliction; I have heard their cries,” and then He adds, as if to show the perfection of His sympathy with them, “I know their sorrows.” Now it is quite true today concerning us and concerning our God, He has seen, He has heard and He knows—“I know their sorrows.” When the sorrow is known, then God begins to work. He is no passive spectator of the misery of His chosen, but His hand goes with His heart.

8. *And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites.*

“Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me,” and when the cry of God's children goes unto Him, depend upon it, there will be something moving before long. When a father hears the cries of his children, when a mother hears the cry of her babe, it is not long before there will be a movement of the heart and of the hand.

I am sure, brethren, there have been crises in English history which have been entirely due to the prayers of God's people. There have been singular occurrences which the mere reader of history cannot understand, but there is a number still alive who wait upon God in prayer, and they make history. There is more history made in the closet than in the cabinet of the ministry. There is a greater power at the back of the throne than the carnal eye can see, and that power is the cry of God's children.

9-10. *Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.*

I do not wonder that Moses opened his eyes when he knew what a poor creature he was for God to say, “Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh”—the very man whose life was sought by Pharaoh—“I will send thee unto Pharaoh”—the man that had been rejected by his own people when he took their part—“Thou mayest bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt.” Oh! let us be ready for any commission. If God were to say that He would build up heaven by the poorest and meanest among us, it would not be for us to draw back. Let Him do what He wills with us! Oh! for a faith to believe that in the midst of our weakness God's strength would appear.

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