

TOKENS FOR GOOD NO. 1559

A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Show me a token for good; that they which hate me may see it and be ashamed:
because You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.”
Psalm 86:17.*

I WOULD have you note, beloved friends, at the outset, how this man of God, in the hour of conflict, looks to his divine protector. He does not run about to consult with friends, nor does he set himself down to digest his bitter sorrow in solitude, but he gets away to the Lord, his God, who has covenanted to help him. That same God who in his brightest days was his great joy, is, in his darkest night, his surest consolation. Therefore he cries, “Lord, show me a token for good. Show it! Let it come from You. All other signs and tokens I can forego, but You show me a token for good, and my spirit will be revived at once.” You see, he looks *away* from the secondary to the primary, from the temporal to the eternal—from that which he could see with his eyes—to Him whom, having not seen, he trusted and rejoiced in. O mourner, learn wisdom from the father of the wisest of men! We need not hesitate to copy the pattern set by the man after God’s own heart! O you who are surrounded by persecutors, will you not imitate David? You cannot do better in every adversity than to look unto the Lord, the ever-merciful! I know you have been casting about to the right and to the left to find an anchor-hold, and still the vessel drifts. Now, throw the great bower anchor into the depths! Let it go right down out of sight, and let it get a grip upon eternal faithfulness, and your ship shall outride both wind and tide! Trust the quicksand of human confidence no longer. Look only to the Lord! It is a severance from man, a complete deliverance from the arm of flesh that God designs by our trouble, and the sooner we come to it the better for us. Certainly we shall the more quickly obtain the benefit designed by our trouble and probably we shall the sooner come to the end of it—

*“Trust with a faith untiring
In your omniscient King,
And you shall see admiring
What He to light will bring!
Of all your griefs the reason
Shall at the last appear;
Though hidden for a season
It will shine in letters clear.”*

Observe that in the case of David, all his troubles drove him *to* his God. I have noticed in the case of too many professors that they seem to have a fair-weather religion, a summer-season faith which shrinks and loses its color in a little rain or a sharp frost, or when the wind blows from the cold corner of affliction. I hear of some who, when they are very poor, do not come up to the house of God. They say they have not proper clothes to come in—as if the Lord had respect unto our garments which are nothing better than the covering of our shame! This is an idle excuse, and yet I know that poverty *does* drive some professors away from the God whom they profess to worship—they murmur, and become discouraged, and give all up in a minute—as if they only loved God for the sake of bread, as a hungry dog will follow a stranger who feeds him. There are others who say, “I cannot hold up my head among my brethren as I used to do, and so I stay away from the congregation.” As if God needed you to hold your heads up—as if He did not look most to those who hold *down* both their heads and their hearts! What? Will you turn away from the stream because you are thirsty? Will you leave the bread because you are hungry? Is not *godliness* meant to be a comfort to you in your time of trouble? Do not poor men need the gospel? Do you not require it all the more, now that your comforts are so greatly diminished? Above all things, seek the Lord’s face when trials surround you, or else, assuredly, you cannot be His own, for God’s people, though they cry to Him daily, are yet driven to Him more and more in proportion as they are brought low, and thrown into distress. “They cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses.” This is one of the sure marks of the children of God—they kiss the rod, and the more the

Lord chastens them, the more they cling to Him. When the Lord smites, the *ungodly* kick against Him—they are like the bullock that will not plow by reason of stubbornness, and when it feels a goad it kicks, and will not go on, but is bent on having its own way. But when the Lord has trained His people, and accustomed them to the yoke, they are obedient to the goad as soon as they feel it, and yield to His will as soon as it is made known. No, more than that—I think the more God chastens His people, the more they love Him! I am persuaded that the most whipped of the Lord's family are the best of His children. I do not say that any of you may *wish* for affliction—you will have enough of it without wishing for it—but I do avow my belief that the favorites of heaven are those who feel the most tribulation.

The choicest plants in God's garden are those that are watered with affliction, and made wet with the night dews of grief. His rarest vines are those which feel most of the knife, and are cut back almost down to the root. There is no fragrance as sweet as that which distils from a flower which the great farmer has bruised. And when He seems, even, to have trod upon it as though He despised it, He has been secretly blessing it, for the broken and the contrite heart He prizes above all things! Therefore, dear friends, let all your griefs send you in prayer to God, and you will then grow in blessing by every tribulation! When big waves of trouble come, pray that they may wash you on the Rock of Ages, and they will do you no harm. When you lose anything, try to make a gain of it by going to your God, that He may sanctify the loss. Whenever you are afflicted, instead of running away from Him who smites you, run inwards to His bosom! If a man is very weak, and he is contending with a strong adversary, he will do well to get close to him. The farther off, the heavier is the blow when a strong man deals it. But when the weak man closes in with him, how can the strong man smite him? What does God say? "Let him lay hold on My strength, and I will make peace with him." Fly in spirit to your God! Fly to Him even when He seems angry! Run onto the point of His sword, for He will not harm the soul that confides in Him! It cannot be that humble trust should meet with a repulse. Jesus declares, "Him that comes to Me I will in no wise cast out." And if you will but trust Him, and when He seems angry, will *still* fly to Him, you shall find rest unto your souls. You children of God, mind this!

Once more, notice that the psalmist, while he thus looks to God, and is driven to Him by his troubles, manifestly looks only to God. There is not, in this Psalm, a word about friends, allies, or helpers. He has but one request and this is, "Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me." His heart is evidently saying—

*"My spirit looks to God alone;
My rock and refuge is His throne;
In all my fears, in all my straits,
My soul on His salvation waits."*

Only God! Oh, that is a word to be learned, to be learned by experience, and most assuredly none will ever know it unless they are taught by the Holy Spirit! I do not think we often learn it till we hear it in the thunder of divine power when the deep-throated tempest within the soul mutters—"Only God! God alone!" In fair weather we are for mixing our trust, but when the whirlwind is abroad, none but God will serve our turn. O my brothers and sisters, if you set one foot upon the rock of divine faithfulness and the other foot upon the sand of human confidence, you will go down with a great fall! Both feet on the rock! Remember that! Your whole confidence must be fixed upon your Lord. Hang only upon that sure nail upon which hangs the whole universe and hang nowhere else. What does David say? "My soul, wait only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." Beware of setting up a rival in the temple of your trust. Who is it that you would yoke with God? What helper is there that you would put side by side with Him? If you could depend upon an angel—does it not make you smile at your folly to think of saying, "I trust in God and an angel"? Why there is no pairing such disparities! The infinite Creator of all is not to be yoked, even, with the most glorious of His creatures—and yet you would put your fellow man into the yoke with God, and trust in these two!

Go, yoke an angel with an ant if you will, but never think of joining *God* with man, and making the two your confidence when God is all in all. Oh to be cut clear of all visible supports and props and hold-fasts! You have seen a balloon well filled, struggling to rise—what kept it down? It longed to mount above the clouds into the calm serene, and yet it lingered. What hindered it? The ropes which bound it to earth! Cut clear the ropes, and then see how it mounts! With a spring it leaps upward while we are gazing into the open sky. O for such a clearance, and such a mounting for our spirits! Alas, we are hindered and hampered! What are the bonds which detain us? Are they not our visible supports and reliances? O my soul, your human confidences have been to you like the iron chain which binds the captive eagle to

the rock! If that confidence of yours were gone—if that chain on which you do dote so much were broken, even though it were with a rough blacksmith's hammer—then you could stretch your wings, and be a child of the sun, and dwell aloft amid the eternal light! Oftentimes the things which we most dread prove to be our grand necessity—by being deprived of earthly comforts we are cut clear of everything except our God! The Lord bring us into this state of high spiritual emancipation!

With this as a preface, I now come to notice the particular prayer which David, in this state of mind, puts up. It was necessary to give you this preface as a kind of guard against the very common tendency which exists among God's people to depend upon signs and tokens. Especially as we are going to preach a little upon this prayer for a "token," it was essential to begin aright lest we should add to the too common craving for signs and wonders. We will dwell, first, upon the request for a token, and then, if we have time, we will touch upon the result which David says would come of having such a token—that those which hated him would see it, and be ashamed because God had helped him and comforted him.

I. David puts up A REQUEST FOR A TOKEN. It was a token from *God*, mark you, and it was a token entirely according to God's will. Never forget that it was a token asked in *faith*, and not in unbelief, for there is a great distinction here.

Dear brothers and sisters, we have no right to say, "My God, I will believe in You if You will give me a token, and, if not, I will remain in hesitating unbelief," for the English of that is, "I will reckon You to be false unless You show me a sign according to *my* will." If God is true, you are bound to believe Him, whether He gives you a token or not! And you are not permitted to suspend your faith upon conditions of your own inventing. Whether He will or will not give you a token must be according to His own mind. He may give or withhold as He pleases, but you are bound to believe Him since every man is bound to believe the truth of God. God has never been false to you! You have, therefore, no cause to doubt Him. If He gives you the light, be thankful, but as His child you are bound to trust Him in the dark. If He speaks to you a favorable word, you are to be glad, but you are bound to trust Him even if He speaks nothing but rough words to you, for He is just as true. His truth and your belief in that truth must not be thought to depend upon signs and tokens—His Word is very sure, and may not be questioned.

Moreover, we have known some who professed to be the children of God who have picked out certain tokens according to their own whims, and fancies, and follies, and they have spoken as if God must do this or that at their dictation. I fear that in some this is a wicked presumption not to be tolerated for a moment. At best it is a childish folly which men in Christ Jesus ought, long ago, to have outgrown. I do not doubt that the Lord has indulged some of His little children with wonders and signs while they were very, very feeble, which He will never give them again, and which they ought never to seek again—which, indeed, now that they have grown up to riper years, and to more strength of grace, they ought, themselves, to put away as childish things. Not a few of these signs they may even suspect, saying, "Perhaps, after all, there was not so much in those signs and tokens as I thought there was. They helped me just then, but I could not rely upon them now—I prefer that which is better and surer." The apostle Peter, after he has described Christ upon the mount as manifesting Himself to His servants in the transfiguration, declares, "We have a more sure word of prophecy." What? More sure than the transfiguration? Yes, surer, even, than the evidence of their eyes when they saw their Lord glorified upon the holy mountain! If you have ever been upon the mountain with Christ, and if you have seen all His brightness, you are still not to compare, even, the sight of your eyes when they see the best and brightest that they can see, with the word of testimony which must be sure—a light that shines in a dark place! All the heavenly experiences which we have ever had are not to be trusted in comparison with the Word of God in the Bible! I say it advisedly—even the sweetest communion we have ever had with Christ may, after all, be suspect, and indeed, it is upon such ripe fruit that Satan soon sets his hand that he may rob us of its savor, if possible, for he is not slow to cast doubts upon the holiest joys of God's elect. There may come a time when we shall fear that we were carried away by excitement, or deluded by fanaticism, but He who speaks the Word of Scripture cannot lie! And when His Spirit speaks that same truth of God into the soul, we have, therein, a testimony which can never be doubted, but must be accepted over the head of everything. "Let God be true, and every man a liar"—*ourselves* and all—all liars as compared with the eternal truths of the revelation of God the Holy Spirit! The *basis* of faith is not our experience, but the testimony of God, and we must mind we do not make the feet of our image partly of God's gold, and partly of our clay. Our experience may be in error, but the infallible word of God cannot be, and it is upon that, alone, which we must stand.

Yet we may ask for tokens in a subordinate sense. Trusting in the Lord, token or no token—believing His word, evidence or no evidence—we may, then, humbly ask confirmatory seals to our souls. Taking His promise as it stands, and believing it, though the heavens, themselves, should seem to rock and reel—we may then say, “Yet Lord, inasmuch as I am but dust and ashes, and therefore, weak and trembling, show me a token for good.”

We may feel quite safe in seeking tokens of the kind which are mentioned in this Psalm. And first, we may beg for answers to prayer, because the Psalm begins with, “Bow down Your ear, O Lord, hear me” and farther on we read in the sixth verse, “Give ear, O Lord, unto my prayer, and attend to the voice of my supplications.” There is no fanaticism in expecting God to answer prayer, and there is no misuse of logic in drawing the inference that if He does hear my prayer in the time of trouble, this is a token for good to my soul. Has my prayer been accepted before Him? Have I received the gracious answer of peace? Then let me be comforted! Was I especially in deep distress where no man could help me, and did I cry to Him, and did He come to my rescue? Assuredly, this is a seal that is set to my soul that I am no hypocrite! This is a token that I am no stranger to God, and that I am not cast away from His presence! Answered prayers are hopeful arguments of acceptance. David fitly said, “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me,” and then he joyfully added, “But verily God has heard me.” Thus he proved the soundness of his heart before God! I ask you to look back and see whether you have, indeed, prevailed with God in secret prayer. Have you had your Jabboks and your Carmels? Do I not speak to many who are familiar with the great Hearer of prayer? Has He not often heard you? I am not too bold when I assert that the Lord has granted me, according to the desire of my heart, times without number! The devil himself can never dispute me out of facts—facts which shall forever stand on my memory, “engraved as in eternal brass,” for out of the depths I have cried unto God, and He has as distinctly answered my prayers as though He had torn the heavens, and come down to succor His servant! With overwhelming delight He fills me, for He has had respect unto my cry. His tenderness to me in this respect has made my life singularly happy though I have had a large share of pain and depression.

When I think over the seasons in which the Lord has specially answered me, I bid defiance to all the skeptics and scientists who haunt our footsteps. Brethren in Christ, you have, each of you, in your own way, according to your own need, had sure instances of the faithfulness of God to you, and these have been reviving tokens of love! At this present be of good cheer. Even if, for a while, the heavens should seem as brass, and prayer should not be heard, remember that He *did* hear you in times gone by, and He is the same God, and changes not, and therefore is hearing, still, and will answer, by-and-by. Therefore cry mightily to Him! It may be that your prayer is like a ship, which, when it goes on a very long voyage, does not come home laden so soon, but, when it *does* come home, it has a richer freight. Mere coasters will bring you coals, or such like ordinary things. But they that go afar to Tarshish return with gold and ivory! Coasting prayers such as we pray every day bring us many necessities, but there are great prayers which, like the old Spanish galleons, cross the main ocean, and are longer out of sight—but come home laden with golden freight! When prayer has tarried, the Lord our God has made up for the delays, and shown us why He delayed—to give us a richer and a rarer blessing through our waiting, and also to prepare us to receive it. Go on in prayer if you have no immediate answer, and let the answers you have had in years gone by be tokens for good to your soul at this time—

***“God lives still!
Trust, my soul, and fear no ill.
God is good. From His compassion
Earthly help and comfort flow!
Strong is His right hand to fashion
All things well for men below.
Trials often the most distressing,
In the end have proved a blessing.
Why, then, my soul, despair?
God still lives and hears prayer.”***

You meet with another class of tokens in the Psalm, and these concern the preservation of character. Kindly read the second verse—“Preserve my soul, for I am holy.” I know I am speaking in these dark and troubled times to many of God’s children who are tried in business, and sorely exercised by the general depression—your great fear arises out of a dread of failure to discharge your debts. You have been praying to the Lord about your business, and, perhaps, Satan has tempted you to a measure of unbelief

against which you are daily fighting. Now, has the Lord helped you to do that which is honest and upright before men? Has He preserved your soul because you are consecrated to Him? You have been a loser, but in that loss can you say, “No fault attaches to deceit—it is the act of God. Things have not prospered with me, but I have been diligent, and I have used my best discretion. I have curtailed every expense to save as much as possible. I have sought to eat my own bread, and not the bread of another man, and I would sooner come to labor with my hands in the most menial service than that any should say of me that I have forgotten the way of uprightness and integrity.” If such is the case, you will feel acutely the difficulties of your path, but you must not give way to despondency. Look up and play the man, and by no means give up! Fly to the Lord in this hour of need, and see what He will do. It is written, “Let integrity and uprightness preserve me,” and if such has been your case, it is a token for good. You have not lost much if your character remains untarnished. After all, “a man’s life consists not in the abundance of the things which he possesses.” And, “a good name is better than precious ointment.” When God gives a man grace to rejoice in his abundance, it is a great thing. But it is an equal favor when He gives to others of His people grace to rejoice that they are brought low. There is often more contentment in a narrower sphere than in a wider one, and a great deal less care and anxiety, and more fellowship with God in a cottage than in a broad mansion! If God keeps your character spotless, reckon that the smell of fire has not passed upon you. If the Lord enables you to do the right thing, let Him do what He pleases with you. If we can pay 20 shillings in the pound, and walk out of the house free from any charge of unjust dealing, we may feel that the worst grief of all is over, for to an honest heart it is a crushing trial to be unable to pay every man his own. May the Holy Spirit lead you in the path of uprightness, and you need not envy any among the sons of men.

A third form of token for good is found in deliverance from trouble. We have that in the second verse also—“O You, my God, save Your servant that trusts in You!” And all through the Psalm David is crying for deliverance from trouble. I am addressing many who have felt the strokes of tribulation. You have been brought very low. In your horror it seemed to you like the lowest hell, but you have been brought up from it, and you can, at this hour, sing of delivering grace. We are not all hanging our harps on the willows—some of us are praising God upon the high sounding cymbals because of His delivering mercy, for He has brought our soul out of prison, has delivered our soul from death, our eyes from tears, and our feet from falling. When these things come, they are to be regarded as tokens for good if they come as the result of prayer and faith. Our personal testimony should be like that of David in the 34th Psalm—“I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.” When our distresses are ended, our songs should begin, even as the psalmist says of men rescued from peril—they pray and then they praise. “Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distresses. Oh that men would praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!” There ought to be praises where there have been deliverances. When we have gone to God in prayer with open mouth, and He has filled it, then should we go back again with the open mouth, to have it filled with His praises all the day long! Come, friends, look back upon the rescues and recoveries of the past, and rejoice in the Lord! One good old saint, when she heard one sing—

*“Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review,
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through,”*

said, “Why, my road, when I look back upon it, is paved with Ebenezers! I cannot take a step but what I step upon a stone of help, and on both sides I see so many records of the Lord’s goodness that the road seems walled up by them on both sides.” Many of us can say the same. Surely—

*“His love in time past forbids us to think,
He’ll leave us, at last, in trouble to sink.”*

If He has delivered us from the jaw of the lion and the paw of the bear, shall we be afraid of that uncircumcised Philistine? No, but the giant boaster shall fall before us! In the name of the Lord we will destroy all future foes because in His name we have destroyed the same before. That is fine language which Paul uses in the epistle to the Corinthians—“Who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver: in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us.”

These three forms of tokens for good are very sure and very sober—not at all like those which fanaticism seeks after, and yet they are most valuable! Answered prayers, preservations from sin, and deliverances from trouble are rich jewels from the Bridegroom’s hands—marks of His most costly love.

Those who have them should not forget them. “Shall a maid forget her ornaments?” Shall gifts of the Bridegroom be put away as though they were of no value? God forbid!

There is another form of token which must never be overlooked, and that is a sense of pardoned sin. This comes in the third and fifth verses. “Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto You daily. For You, Lord, are good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon You.” Even though we have been sustained in our integrity, we must, nevertheless, be conscious of many faults. You cannot go through either the joys of this world or the sorrows of it without incurring a measure of defilement. He who picks his steps the most successfully will yet gather soil upon his feet, and they will need washing by those dear hands which, alone, can take away the stain of sin! When that washing is given, it is a very choice token of love. If you feel that your conscience is purged from dead works—if you are walking in the light as God is in the light, and are enjoying fellowship with the Father while the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses you from all sin, then rejoice in the token for good which is given you! If you know the power of that word of God, “There is, therefore, now, no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus”—if you are, indeed, “accepted in the Beloved”—then know of a surety that one of the best tokens for good is in your possession! It may be that your purse is scant, but your sin is forgiven! It may be that disease is creeping over your flesh, but your sin is forgiven! What a bliss is yours, whatever your trial may be! Suppose yourself to be in danger of shipwreck—the ship is going down—the passengers are shrieking with terror, for there is nothing before them but the murderous waves. The boiling floods will soon conceal the last vestige of the ship. Grim death opens his wide jaws! The last moment has come! But what do I see? What was that which rose upon the crest of the wave? It was a lifeboat! Yes! Here comes a lifeboat, and *you* are put on board! What are your thoughts at the time? What must be your thoughts? What? Did you whine, “I have lost my best suitcase which I left in my cabin”? What a fool you would be if you talked like that! The boatmen would be ready to throw you back into the sea!

No, your gratitude forgets all minor things, and rejoices in the grand deliverance. You cry, “My life is saved! My life is saved! Blessed be the Lord for saving me! My money, my very clothes—for I started up in my sleep, and leaped into the lifeboat—I have lost them all, but I am alive, and that is enough! Thank God I shall see my native land again!” Shall a man who is delivered from hell, and whose sins are forgiven go whining all the day long because he has lost his money, or some other trifle—for trifle it is as compared with his soul? “Skin for skin, yes, all that a man has will he give for his life.” And if our life is saved in Christ Jesus through the forgiveness of our sin by His most precious blood, how can we fret? Why, man, God has given you a mercy that may swallow up your troubles as Aaron’s rod swallowed up all the serpents. “Strike me, my God,” said one of old, “strike me as You will, now that You have forgiven me!” The pardon of sin is such a token for good that all ills disappear before it!

There is another token for good mentioned in the Psalm which you may well pray for. You will find it in the fourth verse—“Rejoice the soul of Your servant: for unto You, O Lord, do I lift up my soul.” This is support under trial.

It is a very blessed token for good when you are able to keep calm, quiet, and happy in the midst of losses, crosses, bereavements, and afflictions. All the water in the sea will never hurt the ship so long as it is outside—it is only that which enters the vessel that can sink it. And therefore the Savior says, “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God; believe also in Me.” In the world you shall have tribulation, but let not your heart be troubled. Now, are you, dear friend, conscious, at this time, while everything is going against you, that you never were happier than you are now? Can you give all up? Can you be resigned to your heavenly Father’s will? Does a sweet patience steal over you? Do you sometimes say to yourself, and to your friends, “I would not have believed that I could have passed through this as I am doing”? Well, that is a token for good, and you may take comfort from it. What does it matter to a man, after all, whether God increases the load, and increases the strength, or whether He decreases the load, and decreases the strength? If a man has to carry a pound weight, and he is so weak that he can only manage to carry eight ounces, well, he is an overloaded man. But if a man had to carry a ton, and God gave him strength enough to carry two, why, he would be a lightly-loaded man, would he not? It is not the weight of the burden, brothers and sisters, it is the proportion of the burden to the strength!

Now, the proportion of the burden to the strength was settled long ago—thousands of years ago. It is written, “As your days, so shall your strength be” and there was One who proved it 1,800 years ago, and exclaimed, “As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds by Christ.” You see the scale—if there is an ounce of suffering, there is an ounce of consolation. Almighty wisdom

keeps the measure exact! Let the tribulation abound! Put it into the left-hand scale. Heap it up! Put in more and more trial. What a weight it is! Yes, but there you see in the right-hand scale the balancing consolation—and I think if we were wise, we would be willing to accept—no, we would even *rejoice* in the abounding tribulations because of the abounding consolations! We shall always be little, I am afraid, while our trials are little. But when we get into the deeper waters, so that the Lord helps us to swim, and He makes men of us—then we begin to glory in tribulation because the power of God does rest upon us! Oh may the Lord give us faith to come up to this point, and this shall be forever a blessed token for good when we can say—

*“I stand upon the mount of God,
With sunlight in my soul!
I hear the storms in vales beneath,
I hear the thunders roll.
But I am calm with You, my God,
Beneath these glorious skies
And to the heights on which I stand,
Nor storms nor clouds can rise.”*

May God endow us with that token for good—for serenity in suffering, patience in tribulation, and joy in the very *prospect* of death—these are all as white stones which are the secret signs of divine favor!

Cheering visits from Christ and fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit are also most sure tokens for good, and if not mentioned expressly in the Psalm, must not be omitted in our sermon. They are, however, here in such phrases as these—“Rejoice the soul of Your servant,” in verse four. “Unite my heart to fear Your name,” in verse eleven. “O turn unto me, and have mercy upon me,” in verse 16, and in the latter clause of our text, “You, Lord, have helped me and comforted me.” The Lord graciously visits His people, the clouds break, the night declines, and the day begins to dawn! Precious promises are applied to the heart with reviving power, hope is strengthened, and joy is renewed. Sweet communion is enjoyed under affliction, and Christ is seen sitting as a refiner at the mouth of the furnace. Sin is no longer allowed to burden the heart. Yes, the very memory of it, so far as it would cause pain to the mind, is utterly removed, and the glad spirit rejoices in the consciousness of full acceptance with God. Ordinances and the word become sweeter than honey or the honeycomb, and the man feasts in the house of the Lord as one who is an honored guest at a royal banquet where the banner of Jesus’ love waves over his head, and he leans his head on his Lord’s bosom! This is a token for good, the memory of which shall cheer him for many a long day, and being treasured up like some sweet smelling herb, shall serve to make his sick chamber or prison fragrant. O the joy of saints when the Bridegroom is with them! They cannot fast or be of a sad countenance, for their assurance of His divine love drives every care and fear away—

*“’Tis like the singing of the birds
When winter’s frost is fled!
And like the warmth the sun affords
To creatures almost dead.
’Tis like the comfort of a calm
Which stills a stormy sea
And like the tender, healing balm
To such as wounded be.”*

Of such tokens for good may we enjoy rich store, until the day breaks, and the shadows flee away.

II. I had many things to say, but I remember Paul’s mistake that he made when he preached until midnight, and Eutychus fell from the third loft, for he had gone to sleep. And as I could not possibly raise a sleeper from the dead, as Paul did, I will not try the experiment of preaching as long as Paul did! I cannot say anything as to THE RESULT OF SUCH TOKENS. The influence of these tokens upon our foes must be undescribed except that many a time the favor of God to His people has been so conspicuous that their most malicious adversaries have stood in awe of them. Their answered prayers have been like armor to them! Their patience has lit up their faces with an awe-inspiring splendor, and their integrity has been a wall of fire round about them. Even the devil has stood abashed in the presence of the favored ones when God has dressed them in their marriage robes! He has known that they were of that chosen race against which he can never prevail. As for other enemies—“When a man’s ways please the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with Him.” Like Pilate’s wife, even worldly people have pleaded that good men should be left alone—the Lord has made them dream of the glory of their virtue, and they have been afraid. There is a dignity which hedges about those who are kings unto God.

They that dwell in the uttermost parts of the earth are afraid because of the tokens for good which God sets on His saints.

Here we leave these words, only adding this—what an unhappy state must those be in who have troubles but have no God to go to! Those who have enemies, but no heavenly defender—darkness and no star of hope!

How poor must you be who cannot escape affliction, and yet have no helper in affliction! You run to your friends, do you? Ah well, they are a poor refuge to fly to, for mostly they are our friends when *we* can *help them*. When we need anything from them, they do not know us! You trust *yourself*, do you? Ah well, I thought little of your friends, but I think less of you, for you are dust and ashes, and nothing else—and if your trust is in yourself, it is a dream! And so you are a self-made man! Your own creator? You need not be so very proud of your work! As you made yourself, and keep yourself going, you will come to a frightful end, one of these days, when the inward force decays into weakness, and all the springs of nature fail! Whatever you make, your god is like yourself, and both you and it must pass away before long! Your hope shall be as a spider's web, and your expectation shall melt like the frost when the sun rises. The Lord is coming! The Lord is coming, and woe unto hypocrites in that day! It will go ill with self-confident men in that day! But as for such as trust the Lord, do you know what they say? And they speak as inspiration bids them speak—"I shall be satisfied." I am not yet, but I *shall* be satisfied. And when shall I be satisfied? "When I awake with Your likeness." When the archangel's trumpet sounds, and wakes me into immortal perfection, then shall I be satisfied!

Oh seek the Savior's face! Dear hearts, who have never sought Him yet, seek Him now! There is no satisfaction to be had apart from Him! Get away to Him! Get away to Him tonight! Cry unto Him, for He will hear you! Come unto Him, for He will receive you! May His divine Spirit lead you to cast yourselves on Him, for He will in no wise cast you out! The Lord bless you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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