

## **A Sweet Silver Bell Ringing in Each Believer's Heart**

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Delivered by

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"My God will hear me." [Micah 7:7](#).

WHAT a charming sentence! Can you say it? Only five words, but what meaning! Huge volumes of poetry have appeared from Chaucer even to Tennyson; but it seems to me that the essence of poetry lies hid in a marvellously condensed form within these few words. It shall take you many an hour to suck out all their sweetness. There is an almost inconceivable depth of meaning in them: and of richness of assured experience and of sweet conclusions of a hallowed faith they are full to the brim.

"My God will hear me." There is more eloquence in that sentence than in all the orations of Demosthenes. He that can speak thus can say more than if he were able to declare truthfully that all worlds were his own; for he grasps God himself, and holds the present and the future in the hollow of his hand.

"My God will hear me." It is prophetic; but the prophet has taken upon himself no unusual power, neither does he intend his prophecy to be true of himself alone. He puts this divine sentence into the mouth of every believer; every child of God may dare to say that his God will hear him, for he may dare to say the truth. I feel as if I could not preach from the text, and did not want to do so. It needs no aid of wit or words; for myself I would be well content to exhibit this diamond with many facets by merely holding it up and letting the light fall on it, and flash back from it in variety of brilliance.

"My God will hear me." It is a choice song for a lone harp, which is half afraid of the choir of musicians, and loves to have its strings touched in solitude. I feel as I repeat it that I want to sit down and quietly enjoy it. As I see the cows lie in the meadow quietly chewing the cud, so would I ruminate on these few but precious words. Let me hear the sounds again and again, till my tongue, learning their rhythmic melody, repeats as matter of habitual delight the assurance "My God will hear me."

A charming sentence, as I have said; but in what a queer place we find it! Just as they find gold in the dark mine, and as we see stars in the black night, so do we find these rich words in the midst of floods of grief and woe. The man of God is pricked and torn by the briars of the age in which he travels; he is vexed and wearied with the bribery and corruption all around him; he cannot find peace either at home or abroad, nay, not even in the bosom of her whom he loves. He is everywhere disquieted and driven to and fro; and yet it is just

at that time that he cries, "My God will hear me." From this I gather—and I gather it not from this alone, but from my own personal experience—that it is generally when things are at the worst that we know most about the best. When we are disappointed of men, then become we most contented with our God. When earth-born springs are dry, then the eternal fountain-heads flow more freely than ever, and as we drink of them our soul is more satisfied than ever it had been before. God is good when goods are fewest. Heaven is warmest when earth is coldest. It is a great blessing for you, dear friend, that, you can say, "My God will hear me." I do not mind much about your surroundings; they may be grievous and trying; but if they have helped to bring you to this pass, that you have a solid confidence that God will hear you, I congratulate you upon the priceless consequences, even though I may condole with you for the sufferings that have brought them to you. We do not weep over the mud which bespatters the gold-digger when he finds his nugget, neither will we fret over the affliction which makes God to be more precious to our friend.

Again, come back to the short and sweet sentence of the text, and may it be inexpressibly delightful to our hearts while we meditate upon it for a while. "My God will hear me."

I. The first thing I shall note at this time is THE TITLE. This is the bottom of the whole text really, the true foundation of the confidence which is expressed in it. The title is "*my God*": it is not God alone, but God in covenant with me, to whom I look for help. I shall be heard by "my God."

I am afraid that some of you will have to draw back a little from the text at the very commencement. As I remarked the other day, to say there is a God is not much. It is the same as to say, there is a bank; but there may be a bank, and you may be miserably poor. There certainly is a God, but that God may be no source of comfort to you. The joy of the whole thing lies in that word "my." "*My God will hear me.*"

Begin then with the enquiry, put to your own soul,—Can I truly think of God, and call him "my God"? If so, that means *election and selection*. There were many gods in the day of the prophet Micah; at least, men spoke as if there were. Men talked of this god, and of that, and each nation had its own peculiar deity, and each man walked in the name of his god, and gloried in it. But the prophet in effect says of Jehovah, the one living and true God, the God that made heaven and earth—"This God is my God. Others may worship gods of wood, or of stone, or of silver, or of gold; but as for me, my heart shall only worship the great Invisible, whom none hath seen, to whom none can approach. The eternal Creator alone will I adore."

Now every man at this present time has a god. Alas, how many make their belly their god! The golden calf is never without its crowds of devoted worshippers. Gods to-day are as numerous in England as in any heathen country: let me then ask,—have you taken the God who is your Maker, your Preserver, your Redeemer to be the great object of your life? That is your god which rules your nature—that which is your motive power—that for which

you live. Do you live for Jehovah as your God, or are you only living for yourself or for some temporary end and purpose? Will the object of your life die with your dying, and be buried in your grave? Or can you say unto the living God, "O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee. Thou art my God for ever and ever: thou shalt be my guide even unto death!" If so, it supposes your election of this God beyond every other; and I put it to you—is this election made? and made once for all? Can you cry with Joshua, "As for me and my house we will serve Jehovah"? Is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ your God for all time? Be it so; you shall never regret the choice.

"My God," that supposes *an appropriation by faith*. Have you taken Jehovah to be your God? Have you made bold to take him for your very own? In the covenant of grace God gives over to his people himself, and all that he is, and all that he has, by a covenant of salt. As the believer becomes God's portion, so the Lord becomes the believer's portion. He declares himself to be ours and puts himself at our disposal, exercising a boundless condescension of love in so doing. Our part in it is, that we do accept this covenant gift, and by an act of faith say, "This which God gives me, I, unworthy though I be, do freely accept. Though I deserve it not, yet as he has given himself to me, I, with gladness, receive him, to be my God, my portion, world without end." Well do I remember the joyous day when first my heart took this possession to herself. It had appeared to be like a land of fire and terror, and I desired it not; but when the Spirit of God had instructed and renewed me, then I perceived that God was as the land of Goshen—ay, as the land of Canaan, that floweth with milk and honey; ay, as the land Beulah, where the sun goes no more down for ever, where all is joy, and peace, and love; yea, as heaven itself, for God is the very soul, and center, and source, and fullness of bliss. My heart annexed this blessed territory with trembling joy; yea, she seemed to have no other possession left except her God. From that hour she grew rich and remained so. What is there more for me but my God? How can I go an inch beyond "my God, my heaven, my all"? Now, beloved hearer, have you thus appropriated the Eternal God to be your own? Can you say to-day, "First and foremost among my possessions is my God. I will not say that I have this and that, and ever so many other things, but I will sing, 'My God, thou art mine!' Perhaps I could not say that I have much of this world's goods, but I have the highest Good. If I have not all, yet I have the All-in-All, who is more than all, and he is everything to my spirit"? I trust you can say "my God," first, by your choice of him; and, secondly, by your appropriation of him through faith. Wherever this is the case it is the work of the Spirit of God, and he must have our reverent love for thus enriching us.

"My God," this signifies *knowledge and acquaintance*. Does it not? For unless the words are meaningless, you know who it is that you are talking of, and you have had some acquaintance with him, and dealings with him. If I say, "So-and-so is my friend," I give you to understand that I know him; and if I say, "Jehovah is my God," I profess that I know him and have fellowship with him. You remember the inscription which Paul discovered upon an altar

at Athens, "To the unknown God." I would not have you worship there, my brother; but I would have you understand that word of the apostle, "After that ye had known God, or rather were known of God." There is an intimate knowledge subsisting between God and his people. "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and all his people know him, so that among them no one has need to say to his brother, Know the Lord, for they all know him, from the least even to the greatest.

Now, what knowest thou of God? Hast thou ever spoken with him? Has he spoken to thee? Hast thou told him thy secrets? Has he revealed himself to thee, as it is written, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant"? Now, I am not talking about fancies. If any of you deem this to be fanciful, it is because you are strangers to the covenant of promise; but I am speaking now to a people who know more than I can tell them of what this means. As for myself, I know something of nature, and of the works of God's hands, but my soul cares little for that knowledge compared with knowing HIM. Willingly and gladly I would forget all else I know if I might but know more of *him*; for well am I persuaded that when old age comes on, and memory fails me, that which my soul shall hold as with a death grip, will not be historical remembrance, classical love, or theological learning, but what she knows by inward experience of the Lord her God. When the veil shall drop upon all mortal shadows, to be uplifted upon eternal realities, then my heart shall care nothing for what she knew of things terrestrial; but she shall value beyond conception what she shall then know of the Immortal, the Invisible, the only wise God, her Savior. I am sure that I am speaking to many of you who can use the expression, "My God," and mean by it that the God in whom you live and move and have your being is your friend, and your Father; that he dwells in you by the Holy Ghost, and that in him you dwell as you hide yourselves in the wounds of Christ. Oh happy men and women that can with knowledge and affection say, "My God." Unhappy you who have neither part nor lot in this matter. Your sorrows shall be multiplied which hasten after another god, for your vanities will fail you: but as for you that know the Lord, to you shall joy increase even as the growing light of the rising sun.

If you have come as far as this, I am sure that you can follow me farther by admitting that the title, "My God," implies *an embrace of love*. You know God as you know your child; but as you look at your boy, you cry, "My child, my child," and you mean a great deal by that, because your child is much more yours on account of the affection that you feel for him than any other possession that you have upon the face of the earth. You would lose everything else sooner than lose the darling of your bosom. The expression, "My God" has an inexpressible amount of sweet affection wrapped up in it. I delight in that line of our old Psalm:

"Yea, mine own God is he."

He is my very own. My God belongs to me as much as if he belonged to no other. My heart has twisted her tendrils round about him as fast and firm as if no other tiny plant had dared to grasp the same upholder. The divine Father—oh, what joy lights up the soul when we think of that splendid fatherhood, that infinite relationship of the Divine One to us, whom he has "begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." How have we sometimes sung with David,

"Such pity as a father hath  
Unto his children dear,  
Like pity shows the Lord to such  
As worship him in fear."

We love the Father, and call him "My God." And as for Jesus, the second person in the Divine Unity, Incarnate God, does not your very heart leap at the sound of his name? Is there not all music condensed into two syllables in that name "Jesus"? I know that it is so to you. He is your very own Christ, your Savior, for ever and ever. And the blessed Spirit—do we not with equal affection lay hold upon him, the Paraclete, the Comforter, the Quickener, the Illuminator, the best of friends, bearing with our ill behavior and still abiding in us, making us meet for the eternal kingdom? Yes, beloved, we do love our God. Do not our hearts say in our prayers, "O Lord, do not believe our actions, for, disobedient as we are, we do love thee. Do not believe our forgetfulness, do not believe the lukewarmness which occasionally creeps over us; for thou knowest all things, thou knowest that we love thee"? Such affection makes us cry, "My God." We cannot comprehend him, but we apprehend him with the grip of hallowed love. We feel that we can never give him up, even as he will never give us up. I am not what I ought to be, but I cannot give up my God. Hard as my heart feels, yet it melts with love to him who has loved me from before the foundations of the world. Who shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, my Lord?

What a deal there is in the title! But we have not exhausted it by a long way—let us have another drink from the well. You feel that now *the obedience of your life is rendered to him most cheerfully*, for this is a sure outcome of the heart's crying, "He is my God." A man cannot call God his God in truth unless he desires to obey him; for God is a name to adore, to reverence, to worship. He who speaks of God but never obeys him is a practical atheist; he has no God. That man who talks about God in the synagogue, but who has no regard for him in the market, makes Jehovah to be no better a deity than the idols of the heathen, who are only gods in their own temples, even if there. The man upon whose heart and hand the Godhead has no kind of influence—such a man is a liar and knows not God, but renders to him lip service, which is to God's dishonor, and not to his glory. Yes, beloved, if you are what you profess to be, you can declare, "With all my infirmities and imperfections, I desire that my whole life should be obedient to the divine precept. I wish in all things to do that which is right and good, and true and kind, according to the mind of Christ, in which I see

the mind of God my Father." Concerning these things let there be great searchings of heart. Come and look in this glass and see if you bear the features of "imitators of God as dear children"; for it will go hard with you if you turn out to be pretenders.

Let me only add that this expressive phrase "My God" hints at a *joy and delight in him*. As men would say—"my love," "my choice," "my treasure," "my delight," so doth the prophet say "My God." The very name wakes all the music of his soul. As when the sleeping flowers, being touched by the first beams of the rising sun, open their bright eyes to look on him who is the foster-father of all their beauty, and seem each one to say "My King," so do our hearts rejoice in the presence of the Lord, and our quickened spirits cry "My God."

So much for the title. May it be written on your hearts by the Holy Ghost.

II. The second point in our brief text is THE ARGUMENT, for I believe the title contains within itself a secret logical force. "My God *will hear me*." As surely as he is my God he will hear me. Why?

Well, he will hear me first *because he is God*, because he is the living and true God. Those gods of stone cannot hear me, but my God will hear me. The gods that many men choose will not hear them in the day of trouble. To which of them will they call in the hour of their affliction? But my God will hear me. It is his memorial that he hears prayer. The oracles of the heathen were but liars. Those who sought unto the false gods did but dote upon falsehoods; they were deceivers and deceived. But my God will hear me. As surely as he is God he will answer prayer. If he does not answer prayer, then he is no more a God than Jupiter, or Saturn, or Venus. For us as Christian people and worshippers of the Most High, it is a truth never to be questioned, that Jehovah is the living and true God, whose memorial is that he heareth the prayers of his people. "My God will hear me."

You see in what a tone of confidence this prophet speaks, and why should not every child of God speak with the same confidence? The joy of religion lies in a hearty faith in it. You begin handling it with dainty fingers, criticising it everlastingly, questioning this and questioning that with anxious debate of heart; and the consequence is that you miss its sweetness. It is nothing to your comfort till it is everything to your faith. You must believe it, and the more thoroughly you believe it the more will it prove itself true to you. The proof of the gospel lies in the testing of it, by which I mean in the practical proving and enjoying of it. Suppose you try to pray, and do not believe in prayer: well, you do not pray. You get nothing by such praying: you work a dry pump. You must have confidence in the mercy seat, if the mercy seat is to be a place of refuge for you. "He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." To my mind it seems the right thing to believe in the living God right up to the hilt—to believe in his promise without stint or limit. His word is either true or false. If it is false, I will never preach it: if it is true, I will never doubt it. There let it

stand like a column of brass: *though all things else should fail, God must hear prayer.* He *may* do this and he *may* do that, but he *must* hear prayer. My God will hear me because he is a true God, and no liar; and he has himself declared, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." He has laid it down as unquestionable fact, "He that seeketh findeth, he that asketh receiveth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." How can he run back from this? Why should I imagine that he will lie or repent?

But why am I so sure, as a matter of argument, that God will hear prayer? The answer is in the title again, *"My God."* *Because he has made himself my God he will hear me.* O you that are familiar with your God, who can therefore call him by the dear title of "My God," you will see the overwhelming conclusiveness of this reasoning. To hear a petitioner is a small thing compared to giving yourself over to him. "My God will hear me," for doubtless, if he has given himself to be my God, he will hear me. He has done the greater thing, he will surely do the less. If, in infinite condescension, he permits me to call him "my God," and I perceive all through his gospel that he invites me to do so, then, surely he will hear me. He that hath said, "They shall be my people, and I will be their God," will do the much smaller thing: he will, without doubt, hear them when they call upon him. "Ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children. How much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Is not that clear enough? He has given us himself, and his Son; how can he shut out our cries? After what he has done for us in the past, we cannot doubt that he will hear us. What, give us cleansing by his blood, and then not hear us? What, give us the new birth, and then not hear us? Did he bless us when we did not seek him, and will he not hear us when we do seek him? What, look after us when we were like stray sheep, deaf to all his calls; seek after us till he restored us; and then not hear us when we become the sheep of his pasture? Impossible! The argument is irresistible: My God will certainly hear me.

Moreover, *my God has heard me so many times;* therefore, be it far from me to doubt his present and future favor. A brother in prayer reminded us just now that we ought to have greater faith than the saints of the olden times, because we have many more centuries of the divine faithfulness to read of and to see. It is so; but I fear that observation seldom acts upon us so forcibly as actual personal experience. What shall I say to my beloved brothers and sisters here who are getting old? They have had such experience. God has heard your prayers many times, my aged brethren, and your faith is thereby confirmed. When we first began to pray, we were staggered if objectors questioned us. "You talk about God having heard your prayer." "Yes," we said, "he did hear us," and we stated our case. The sceptic sneered, and said "That was merely a coincidence." When we heard that remark for the first time, we were somewhat taken aback. We admitted that we could not draw an inference from two or three facts, for, perhaps, in after years there might be thirty facts which would

tell the other way. But, my veteran brethren, we are not in that condition to-night, for some of us have had thirty or forty years' experience of God's hearing prayer, and our facts are as many as the hairs of our heads. Do opponents say that these are coincidences? We do not care to answer such perverse janglings. If they were in our position, they would not wish to answer such remarks. They would laugh; and that is all that they would find in their hearts to do. A man puts on warm clothing and is not pinched by the frost. His acquaintance tells him that he does not believe in flannel and broad-cloth; he shivers in his unbelief, and tells the well-clad man that his comfort is a mere coincidence. Humorous, is it not? But if the objector gets frozen to death, the wit grows rather grim! When we have not prayed, and have not received a blessing, and have been ready to perish, I suppose our failure has been a coincidence! And when we have betaken ourselves to our knees, and have cried mightily to God, and pleaded the promises, and God has answered us as visibly as if he had rent the blue heavens, and thrust out his almighty arm to help us, that has been a coincidence! I call such things plain answers to prayer, but those who have never experienced the like think me a fanatic. I will therefore let them use their own terms. We will not wrangle over words, "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." As to the delivering mercy of God—you shall call it a coincidence if you like, but to us it will always be a blessed proof that the Lord hears prayer.

Using this sweet title, containing as it does within itself a whole century of logic, we say, joyfully, "My God will hear me." What bliss it is to have so sweet an assurance ever at hand! It is a versicle of heavenly music, "My God will hear me." The Lord has entered into covenant with us that he will not turn away from us from doing us good, and *in that covenant his hearing prayer is included*. He could not be our friend and be deaf to our appeals: he could not be in fellowship with us and shut out our cries. Listen, however, to some of his own covenant words: "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me": [Psalm 50:15](#). "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honor him": [Psalm 91:15](#). "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry, and will save them": [Psalm 145:18, 19](#). "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear": [Isaiah 65:24](#). "Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not": [Jeremiah 33:3](#). Do you need more than this? The Lord hath said it, and he will make it good. He has never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.

Were not the Lord to hear prayer, and bear his people through their troubles, *he would himself be a great loser*. He would lose all that his wisdom has planned, all that his sovereignty has ordained, all that his love has begun, all that his power has wrought, and all that whereon his heart is set. Did not Jehovah hear prayer it were to him as though a father no more heard the voice of his child: he would lose that which charms his fatherly mind, and



miss that which is a solace to his loving heart. If God doth not hear me, he will lose me; and this I feel he will not do, for he hath graven me upon the palms of his hands, that I may never be forgotten of him. O, yes, my God will hear me; his truth and honor cannot be imperilled by a refusal to hear the pleadings of his own child.

III. Bear with me while I invite you, in the third place, to notice the FAVOR ITSELF. "My God will *hear me*." You notice that in Scripture we do not often find the expression, "My God will answer me." We do read that he answers prayer, but more frequently God is said to be the God that *heareth* prayer. It is better for us to have a promise that God will hear us than a promise that God will always answer us. In fact, if it were a matter of absolute fact that God would always answer the prayers of his people as they present them, it would be an awful truth. I should shrink from ever praying again if I were absolutely sure that the Lord would answer my prayer, whatever it might be. I might curse myself seven times deep by a prayer within the next seven minutes, if there were no safeguards and limits to the promise of prayer being answered. It is neither desirable nor possible that all things should be left to our choice: so much do I feel this, that if my Lord should say to me, "From this hour I will always answer your prayer just as you pray it," the first petition I would offer would be, "Lord, do nothing of the sort." Because that would be putting the responsibility of my life upon myself, instead of allowing it to remain upon God. It were, in fact, to make me the master of the house, and to make me my own shepherd: the very first thing I should wish would be to strip myself of such a power. I would cry, "Lord, do as thou wilt about answering me; I will be well content if thou wilt hear me." I like that kind of hearing prayer of which Ralph Erskine says:

"I'm heard when answered, soon or late,  
Yea, heard when I no answer get:  
Most kindly answered when refused,  
And treated well when harshly used."

It is enough for a praying heart that it has a hearing God.

But notice, "My God will hear me." It means, first, literally that he will hear me *as a listener*. A good brother of my acquaintance, a minister of the gospel, going to preach from the text that God will hear prayer, called upon one of his poor people, who said when the visit was over that she had greatly enjoyed his call. He thought to himself, "I have scarcely said a word, and yet she says that I have done her good." Turning to her, he enquired, "Sister, how can I have done you good, for I have hardly spoken with you?" "Ah, sir," she replied, "you have listened so kindly; you have heard all I had to say, and there are very few who will do that." Just so. People in deep trouble like somebody to hear them all through: even little children are comforted by telling mother all about it. We are in such a hurry with poor troubled spirits that we hasten them on to the end of the sentence, and try to make them skip the dreary details. But to them this seems unkind, for their story is sacred; and, therefore,

they go slowly on with it, till we are quite tired. I have often hurried on a poor despondent creature till I have seen the uselessness of it: it is always best to let them spin on. It does them good. To tell out the heart to a patient listener is a great relief to a burdened spirit, and the heart must do it in its own way. Here is a sweet assurance, "My God will hear me." I may be very bad, and what I say may be very broken, and I may groan a good deal, and I may say the same thing over and over again, and my whole ditty may be very stupid; but, "My God will hear me." He is in no hurry: he is the God of patience. He will listen to my dreary talk, and endure each gloomy particular. I need not hold him as the Ancient Mariner held the wedding guest who was unwilling to hear his weary rhyme of the sea: my God will willingly listen to me right through, from beginning to end, groans and all. "My God will hear me."

And then the Lord will hearken *as a friend full of sympathy*. Some people listen but do not hear. You tell them your story, but it does not help you a bit, because their minds are no more moved by your case than if they were far away. They are just saying to themselves, "We will hear this poor old lady's story; it will please her." But it does not please her, because she perceives that they have no sympathy, no fellow-feeling. The kind of person you like to tell your story to is one who weeps with you—who is really afflicted with your affliction. It is greatly comforting to have a person with you who feels just as you feel, who when you are very stupid, seems to be stupid too, who frets as you fret, and groans in your groaning. "Mother," said a little girl once, "I cannot make it out; Mrs. Smith says I do her so much good. Poor Mrs. Smith has lost her husband, mother, and she is very sad. She sits and cries, and I get up and lay my cheek on her cheek, and I cry and say that I love her, and then she says that she loves me, and that I comfort her." Just so. That is the truest form of consolation: is it not? "Weep with them that weep." That is how God, my God, will hear me, feeling with me, sympathising with me." In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them." "I am with thee, saith the Lord."

"I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans,  
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones.  
In all thy afflictions thy head feels the pain,  
They all are most needful, not one is in vain,"

"My God will hear me"; he will listen to me, and he will sympathise with me.

"My God will hear me"; that is, he will turn it over and discriminate in his own mind, and he will not allow me to be condemned by the hurried judgment of men. He will hear me *as a judge patiently hears a case*. Others will come in and clamor against me, and refuse to listen to a word of explanation; but my God will hear me. That was a splendid utterance of the holy patriarch Job! He went a long way further than he knew he went when he said it,—"I know that my Redeemer liveth." His unkind friends charged him very terribly and Job spoke up for himself, but he did not get on at it. He could not plead his own cause success-

fully, and therefore, in his desperation, he cried, "I have a God that will yet plead my cause, and if he does not do it while I am alive, yet I know that he liveth; and though after my skin worms devour my body, yet in my flesh shall I behold him, and I shall be cleared from this misrepresentation; I shall be delivered from this suspicion. I know I shall. My God will hear me. He will hear my suit right through and do me justice, and I shall behold him whom my eyes shall see for myself and not another." Job felt assured of being cleared at last. Dear child of God, you may do the same. Your character shall not be injured by malicious tongues. They lie against you; they refuse you a hearing; they wrest your words; they empty the buckets of their contempt upon you; but your God will hear you.

Then, at the back of that, of course, comes the conclusion of every loving heart that, as God will hear the case right through, so he will certainly *hear as a Helper*. "My God will hear me."

Now, child of God, go away with this promise in your hand, and in your heart—"My God will hear me"; and then use it like a magic wand. Turn it whichever way you will and it will clear your path. You are going to preach the gospel in a distant country, perhaps; and your spirit sinks as you sigh, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Lift up your heart to God, and his grace shall be sufficient for you, and his strength shall be made perfect in your weakness, for your God will hear you. Or you have to go home to-night to a sick house, and to lose one that is dear to you. You shall be sustained, for in your ear is this word, "My God will hear me." Or, perhaps, you yourself have to sicken and die. Do you enquire—"What shall I do in the swellings of Jordan? Here is your happy answer, "My God will hear me." I shall cry to him, and he will answer me. He will have a desire to the work of his hands. Yea, though I go down into the valley of the shadow of death my God will hear me; and when I lie in the tomb my God will remember me, and he will call me up with sound of trumpet, and my body shall live again. My God shall hear me singing his praises before his throne. My God shall hear me, world without end, as my whole being shall lift up her joy-notes of "Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah" unto him who loved me out of the pit, and lifted me up to his own right hand.

IV. My only sorrow about this text is my fear that it could not honestly fall from some of your lips: you could not truthfully say, "My God will hear me." So I close by noting THE PERSON to whom it belongs—"My God will hear *me*." Will he hear you? Dear heart, are you cast down under a sense of sin? Do you seek forgiveness? He will hear you. Are you burdened because you cannot live without sin? Would you be free from all evil? He will hear you. Are you persecuted for righteousness' sake? Are the men of your household turned to be your foes? He will hear you, and cause you to rejoice in being counted worthy to suffer for Jesus' sake. Are you assured of the result of prayer? You shall not be disappointed; your God will hear you. Have you long been praying? Cease not from importunity, but solace

yourself with this sure belief—*My God will hear me*. Will you now come and cast yourselves into the arms of Jesus, the Crucified? Your God has heard you. Be of good cheer.

O, my dear hearer, have you a God? Strange question, but I press it even with tears, have you a God? If you have no God, of course you have nobody to hear you when the great water-floods prevail. My dear hearer, if you make the world your God it cannot hear you in the day of your trouble. You may be a very rich man, and have large estates, but I would sooner occupy the place of the poorest believing pauper in the workhouse than take your position without a God and without a throne of grace. How do people live that have no God to go to? If a man were to say to me, "I never get a morsel of bread to eat at all," I should wonder how he lived. But when a man says, "I never pray, and God never hears me," I am in equal wonder. How can the poor creature exist? These are hard times with a great many of you. You have not many worldly comforts; indeed, some of you cannot even find work. What can you do without a God to fly to? I suppose your head aches sometimes, like mine; I suppose cares and troubles eat into your mind as they do into mine; I suppose you have your difficulties, and your knots that you cannot untie, just as I have mine. How do you keep your souls alive without a God? I pray God that I may never live a day without prayer, and without trusting my God. However do you bear up, some of you? I do not wonder that you go and get drunk to drown your thoughts. I do not wonder that you want frivolities and theatricals, and all sorts of childish toys to put your cares out of your minds, for you need something or other to help you to forget the miseries which are coming upon you thick and heavy. Yet is it not madness to drive away wise thoughts? What a wretched business it must be to be in dread of your own thoughts! You dare not sit alone in your chamber for half-an-hour and think, because if you did you would begin to think of dying, and you could not bear to think of that without a God. You might even be driven to think of hell and of a judgment to come; and that you could not endure. If you dare not think of them, how will you bear them? Oh poor souls, poor souls, you are in a sad state, indeed! But you need not remain so. If any man wills to have God to be his own God, grace has given him that will. If you desire Christ, you may have him. What is the price? Nothing at all. Receive him freely. Believe in Jesus Christ; that is, trust yourself with him; and God is your God; and you may go on your way full of joy and thankfulness. God bless you and comfort you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Micah 7.

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK—622, 999, 981.