

## **The Almighty Warrior**

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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,

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"Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Most Mighty One, with Your Glory and Your Majesty. And in Your Majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness: and Your right hand shall teach You terrible things. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under You." [Psalm 45:3-5](#).

[Another Sermon by Mr. Spurgeon, upon verse five, is #3039, Volume 53—THE KING'S SHARP ARROWS.]

THIS Psalm has been thought by some to be a marriage song for Solomon on the occasion of his wedding with the daughter of Pharaoh. It may be so, though I should be very loath to believe it. But even if that should be true, we will find in the Psalm a distinct reference to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to His marriage union with His Church. Under the Mosaic dispensation, when a man had married a wife, he was not to go out to war for a year, but when the Lord Jesus Christ entered into a marriage union with His people, that very union made it necessary that He should wage war on their behalf. He had to meet all their spiritual foes in terrible conflict—the Prince of Darkness and all the powers of evil set themselves in array against Him—and we know how He fought with them, overcame them and trampled them beneath His feet as the treader of grapes crushes the purple clusters in the winepress. And now, even though in Heaven, He is in a state of rest. Yet here, as the Head of the Church Militant, His mystical body, He is still warring against sin, struggling most strenuously to drive sin out of the world and to make the earth His own dominion wherein He shall reign in righteousness and peace.

The prayer of the Psalmist, as we have it in our text, is also a most suitable petition for us to present. We desire to stir up our almighty Champion to go forth to the war against evil. How gloriously He went forth with His first disciples in the brave days of old! They rode forth to battle and to death under His leadership, but it was to victory, too, in those glorious times of conflict and conquest. But we seem to have fallen upon days of peace—that false peace which arises from stagnation, lethargy and death. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, we have need to cry mightily to the great Captain of our salvation to gird His sword upon His thigh, to order His great war chariot to be brought to the front, again—that He may again ride forth to battle with all His attendant hosts—that His enemies may know that His power is as great as ever it was in the ages that are gone! While I am speaking upon the text, I trust that all Believers here will turn it into a prayer and that while you are praying, God

will give you the answer and bless the message to the salvation of sinners— which will be a true victory for Christ!

I am going to invite your attention, first, to the armed Warrior Secondly, to His filled chariot And thirdly, to His victory won.

I. So, first, I ask you to think of THE ARMED WARRIOR—"Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Most Mighty One, with Your Glory and Your Majesty."

Then Christ has a sword. What is it? Certainly not the sword of which soldiers and princes are proud, for it was concerning that kind of sword that Jesus said to Peter, "Put up again your sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." It was concerning that sort of weapon that Jesus said to Pilate, "My Kingdom is not of this world. If My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight." Christ could truly say that the weapons of His warfare were not carnal, but that they were mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. His was not

the kind of fighting that needs sword and spear and shield and buckler such as the world's warriors use. His wrestling was "not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wilderness in high places." The main weapon which Christ wielded was "the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The Psalmist prayed, "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh." But in the Book of the Revelation we read concerning Christ, "out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword." You know how constantly Jesus quoted the Scriptures in resisting Satan's temptations or the assaults of His human adversaries. "It is written," was His unanswerable argument at all times. This sword, which Christ wields, is not made of steel to cut heads, or arms, or legs—it is the sword of the Truth of God to pierce the hearts and consciousness of sinners. It is said to be sharp—"sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." No other sword wounds as the Sword of the Spirit does! It wounds so that none but God can heal. You may bring it down upon a heart that is harder than a millstone, but its edge will never be turned and it will cut the stone in two. It is a sharp, wounding sword—and it is a killing sword. Wherever it goes, it kills sin, cuts iniquity in pieces, slays self-righteousness and destroys the infirmities of the flesh! This sword is also "two-edged." A sword with only one edge to it has a blunt back, but there is no blunt back to the Sword of the Spirit—it has a front stroke and a back stroke—in fact, it cuts all ways and every part of it is keen as a razor's edge! Promises, precepts, Doctrines, threats are all sharp and penetrating—there is no part of the Word of God that is ineffective to produce the result for which it was given.

Notice that the Psalmist prays, "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh." The Bible is not your Bible or mine, alone. It is God's Bible, it is Christ's Bible, it is the Holy Spirit's Bible.

Truth is no monopoly—it is not the priest's truth—it is the people's truth! It is everybody's truth, but it is most of all Christ's truth. Why is it that the Word of God is Christ's sword? Surely it is because that Word tells us about Him—He is the text of which the Bible is the sermon! The Bible is like a script pointing to Him and saying, "This is the way to Jesus Christ." Holy Scripture gives you a wardrobe full of choice garments and they all smell of myrrh and aloe and cassia because Christ has worn them! The Word of God is especially Christ's because He has used it and still uses it. My use of the Word or any other preacher's use of it will have very little effect unless Christ uses us as the instruments by which He shows what He can do with it. Someone looked at the sword of a famous conqueror and, after examining it closely, said, I do not see anything particular about it." "No," was the answer, "perhaps not, but if you could see the brawny arm that wielded it, you would understand why it is so notable." So is it with the Sword of the Spirit—this Divinely-Inspired Book—it may not seem to you as though it could work such wonders as it is continually doing, but if you could see the hand of Christ that wields that sword, then you would understand where the Glory and the Majesty of the Truth of God are found—and where it derives its power to convince and convert the sons of men!

The Psalmist's petition is, "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Most Mighty One." When a soldier intends to use his sword, he puts it where he can easily get at it. He hangs it by his side so that he can readily draw it from its scabbard when he needs it either for attack or defense. So the prayer of our text means, "Lord, use Your Word! Put power and energy into the Truth as it is proclaimed." The preaching of a sermon may be like the drawing of a sword from its scabbard, yet it will not be really effective until Christ puts His hand to the work! The soldier's sword kills nobody until he grasps its hilt with a firm grip and deals the deadly blow with it. Here is the Sword of the Spirit, like some ancient weapon hanging on the wall of an old castle, but O You blessed King of kings, will You not take it in Your almighty hand and prove again what You can do with it? Right and left will You not cut and thrust with it and so get to Yourself a glorious victory over all the powers of evil? Ah, Sinner, if Christ shall send His Word home to Your heart, you will soon perceive that is a very different thing from what it is when we poor mortals only preach it in your ears! When we blow the Gospel trumpet at Ear-Gate, you take no notice. But if the Prince Emmanuel shall bring the great battering ram of His Cross up to Heart-Castle and smite it, blow after blow, the posts will rock, the bars will snap, the gate will fall and the Prince will ride in and reign forever over the soul that He has won by His Grace—as long ago He bought it with His blood! Oh, that He would do it this very night!

Notice the title that the Psalmist gives to the Almighty Warrior—"Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Most Mighty One." Christ is not only mighty, but He is most mighty. There have been mighty men in prayer, but He is the

most mighty Advocate with His Father on His people's behalf. There have been mighty preachers of the Word, but "never man spoke like this Man." There have been many friends of sinners, but there has never been such a Friend of sinners as Jesus is! Your sins are mighty to destroy, but He is more mighty to save. I will grant you that your passions are mighty—that is positive! I will grant you that they are more mighty than you are—that is comparative! But Jesus is most mighty to overcome them and that is superlative! The superlative might of the love of Christ as exhibited in His death upon the Cross is infinitely greater than the positive and comparative might of our actual sin—and the depravity of our nature. May He prove Himself most mighty in winning many of you unto Himself!

The Psalmist not only prays to the Lord to gird His sword upon His thigh, but he also adds, "with Your Glory and Your Majesty.." Did you ever see Christ in His Glory and His Majesty? I know that you have never seen Him thus unless you have first seen yourself in your degradation and shame. There, where the poor broken-hearted sinner lies prostrate in the dust, feeling himself to be less than nothing, the great Conqueror comes in His Glory and Majesty, and says to him, "I am Your salvation. I have loved you with an everlasting love and laid down My life that I might save you." You remember how John Bunyan pictures Prince Emmanuel's entry into Mansoul after He had captured it from Diabolus?—"This was the manner of going up there. He was clad in His golden armor. He rode in His royal chariot, the trumpets sounded about Him, the colors were displayed, His ten thousands went up at His feet and the elders of Mansoul danced before Him." They might well rejoice at His coming in Glory and Majesty to take up His abode in their midst, and to prove to them how fully He had forgiven their rebellion now that they had repented of their sin and accepted Him as their rightful Lord and Savior! So will it be with all here who welcome Christ into their hearts and no longer yield allegiance to the Prince of Darkness!

II. Having thus shown you the armed Warrior, I am now going to bid you look upon THE FILLED CHARIOT—"And in Your Majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness."

The Eastern monarch stood erect in his war chariot and rode forth in great splendor in the midst of his troops. To my mind, the preaching of the Gospel is the chariot of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel itself is His sword and the preaching of the Gospel, the distribution of the Word, by which Christ is made known to the sons of men, may be likened to His chariot of salvation! This chariot appears to have four wheels or, if you like, you can call them the four milk-white steeds that draw the Gospel chariot. Their names, according to our text, are Majesty, Truth, Meekness and Righteousness. These are the four supports of the Gospel, or the four motive powers by which the Gospel of Christ is brought into the hearts of sinners!

The power of the Gospel lies first, then, in the Majesty of Christ. Sinner, Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary, is also the Son of God, who could truly say, "I and My Father are One." He

who died on Calvary's Cross is the King of kings and Lord of lords! That very Man who cried in agony, "I thirst," is the Almighty God who holds the waters in the hollow of His hand! Does not this move you to trust Him? The Majesty of Christ ought to win not only your admiration, but also your affection. He whose face was more marred than that of any other man, was the One of whom Isaiah said, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Oh, does not this fact melt your heart and woo and win you to Him, that He, against whom you have sinned, should have suffered for your sins and borne the curse and penalty that were due to you? Surely the Majesty of Christ should lead you to trust Him!

Then, the next wheel of the chariot, or the second of the noble steeds drawing it, is Truth. Sinner, the Gospel which is preached to you is true! Whatever there is in the world that is false, this certainly is a positive fact—"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." It is also true that He will receive you if you come to Him—come and trust Him and see if He will not welcome you! It is true that He can forgive the blackest offenses and that He does forgive all who sincerely repent of their sin and trust in His atoning Sacrifice. It is true that He can uproot sin from the heart, make the unholy holy, and cause the disobedient to become obedient to God's commands! This is not a matter of conjecture on our part—it is no guesswork, no dream of an excited imagination—many of us have proved the sanctifying power of the Doctrines of the Cross and we, therefore, urge you to prove this for yourselves so that the Truth of the Gospel may commend itself to you.

The next wheel or steed of the chariot is Meekness. Jesus said, "Learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart." It is no proud Savior who invites you to come to Him! Let me remind you working men that Jesus Christ belonged to your rank in life and probably toiled at the carpenter's bench with Joseph, the husband of His mother, Mary. He was no domineering aristocrat, looking down with contempt upon men and women in a lower stratum of society. The Lord says concerning Him, "I have exalted One chosen out of the people." He is the people's Christ. [See Sermon #11, Volume 1—the

PEOPLE'S CHRIST.] He is a condescending Savior who took little

children up in His arms and blessed them, and said, "Allow the little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not: for of such is the Kingdom of God." Notwithstanding all His Glory and Majesty, He disdains not the poor and needy, and His ears are always open to the cry of the humble and contrite! He takes pity upon the prisoner, He hearkens to the wail of the sorrowful, He has respect unto the broken in heart and is always tender and compassionate to any who seek His aid. Surely this meekness of the Savior must commend the Gospel to you!

Then the fourth wheel—or the fourth steed if you prefer that metaphor—is Righteousness. O Brothers and Sisters, what a righteous Savior Jesus is and what a righteous Gospel His Gospel is! A man might well fall in love with the Gospel for this reason, if for no oth-

er—that it sets forth so clearly the Majesty of Divine Justice. God determined to save sinners, yet He would not save them at the expense of justice. He delights in mercy, but He would not indulge even His darling attribute to the detriment of His righteous Law! Christ gave His back to the smiters and His cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. He hid not His face from shame and spitting. He yielded up His hands and His feet to the cruel nails, His body to indescribable pangs and His soul to agonies so terrible that He cried, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." He bore—

"All that Incarnate God could bear, With strength enough but none to spare"—

in order that He might fully vindicate the justice of God. Righteousness well completed the number of the wheels of the chariot of salvation, or the steeds that draw that chariot wherever God wills it to go! May they, by His Grace, draw it just where you are, poor Sinner, and may that same Grace compel you to enter that chariot, that you may ride in it to everlasting Glory!

But dear Friends, a Gospel without Christ is like a chariot without a rider in it—and of what use is an empty chariot? In the front of the chariot of the Gospel stands Jesus Christ in all His Glory and His Majesty! I wish that all preachers would always remember this. Some of them seem to me to preach the Doctrines of the Gospel, and others of them proclaim its precepts—and in that way they bring out the chariot, but there is no rider in it! They have left out the Christ who is its Chief—indeed, its only Glory! But whatever else the preacher may forget, he should never forget his Master, but always give Him His rightful place. He should say to his Lord as the Psalmist said to Jerusalem, "If I forget you, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember you, let my tongue cleave to the roof my mouth." What is there for any man to preach about if he leaves Jesus Christ out of his sermon? A discourse without Christ in it is delusion and a sham—a mere playing with immortal souls, a mockery both of God and man! Jesus Christ and Him Crucified should be the Alpha and the Omega of every sermon! Even if the preacher is not preaching Christ directly, he ought to be preaching Him indirectly, proclaiming the Truths of God in such a way that it shall either draw the sinner or else drive him to the heart of Christ! In the chariot of our ministry I hope that we all, without hesitation, say that Jesus Christ rides in His Glory and in His Majesty.

But, although Christ may thus ride in the chariot of our teaching, He must always be there in His Omnipotent might and in the power of the ever-blessed Spirit. So I want you who love Him to pray the Psalmist's prayer, "Gird Your sword upon Your thigh, O Most Mighty One, with Your Glory and Your Majesty. And in Your Majesty ride prosperously because of truth and meekness and righteousness." There is a fine old Welsh hymn which I wish I could turn into English without spoiling it—it runs somewhat to this effect—"O Jesus, come forth! Leave the ivory palaces! Your chariot waits for You, Come forth, come forth! Hell trembles before You, all Heaven adores You, earth owns Your sway, men's hearts

cannot resist You. Come forth, come forth! Bars of brass You break, gates of iron give way before You; come forth, come forth, O Jesus for Your chariot awaits You now!"

III. Now we are to close with our third head, THE VICTORY WON. "Your right hand shall teach You terrible things. Your arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under You."

Many representations of Eastern monarchs picture them not only as wearing a sword upon the thigh when riding in the great war chariot, but also as bearing a battle bow. And the artists, wishing to flatter their royal masters, represented the king's arrows as going right through the hearts of the king's enemies! Our Almighty Warrior has a sure

aim—He never misses the heart at which He shoots His arrows! That same Gospel which is like a two-edged sword is, in another aspect, like sharp arrows shot from the bow of a mighty archer. Arrows, you know, can do nothing until they are shot. The arrow is useless without the bow—and the bow, itself, is useless without the hand and arm of the man who bends it and speeds the arrow to the mark he wants to hit! It used to be said of William the Conqueror that no man in England except himself could bend his bow—and so is it with the bow that belongs to our Great Conqueror—no one but He can bend it. When He fits the arrows to the string and draws the bow with His Almighty hand, the missile flies with irresistible force and buries itself in the heart at which the King took such unerring aim!

I take it that these arrows are not so much intended to represent the whole Bible as certain texts out of the Bible—sharp arrow from the quiver of Revelation. Sometimes one arrow will be shot and sometimes another, but they are all sharp. Have you, my Hearers, ever felt the pang that goes through the heart when one of these sharp arrows strikes it? So long as it lasts, there is no pain as keen as that produced by conviction of sin! And there is no cure for that pain except from that very hand which shot the arrow that caused it!

These arrows are spoken of in the plural because while there are arrows of conviction, arrows of justice, arrows of terror, there are also arrows of mercy, arrows of consolation. While there are arrows that kill sin, there are also arrows that kill despair, which also is a sin—and as there are arrows that smite and slay our carnal hopes, so there are other arrows that effectually destroy our sinful fears. And all these arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies—there is not a blunt one in the whole quiver.

Notice that all these arrows belong to the King. It is to the "Most Mighty" that the Psalmist says, "Your arrows." The Truth of God never comes home to our heart and conscience until the Holy Spirit convinces us that it is God's Truth. There are some Doctrines in the Scriptures which many are unwilling to accept as Divine although they are very clearly revealed in the Word and they are Truths which God has over and over again blessed to the salvation of souls. People have often said that the Doctrine of Election ought not to be preached lest it should prove to be a stumbling block in the way of sinners coming to Christ, yet I can testify that we have had scores of souls brought to the Savior and added to this

Church through sermons upon Election, Predestination and those other great Truths of God in which many of us believe and rejoice! They are certainly among the sharp arrows of our King!

Observe, too, where the King's arrows go. They all pierce the heart. "Your arrows are sharp in the hearts of the king's enemies." Some of you have been struck by an arrow in your head. Well, that would kill you if it were literally an arrow—but the King's arrows, when they metaphorically strike the head, that is, when there is a merely intellectual assent to the Truth of the Gospel, are not effective as they are when they enter the heart. Some of you have been struck by these arrows in your legs—that is to say you have gone limping upstairs to pray for a little while, yet there has been no such killing work as there is when the King's arrows pierce the heart. When they strike the sinner there, they inflict a mortal wound, for out of the heart are the issues of life. O Lord, smite the sinners heart! Kill his old life and give him a new life! Slay him as Your enemy, but cause him to live as Your friend! Shoot Your arrows right through the heart that loves sin and hates You, the heart that loves drunkenness, that loves lust, that loves Sabbath-breaking, that loves evil in any form! Kill that heart, O Lord, and then give a new heart and a right spirit!

Let me remind you that there is a time coming when Christ will go forth to war with all His armor on—that is the time of which we read in the Revelation, "out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it, He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron. . . In righteousness He does judge and make war." It will be a terrible thing for all who are the enemies of the King in that day! His arrows will indeed be swift and sharp to slay them. Do not long for that day to come, you unconverted ones, for to you it will be a day of darkness and not of light! It will be a dreadful day for those of you who have despised and rejected the Christ of God when He shall fit His sharp arrows to the string, draw the bow and pierce you to the heart. Where will you flee from the glance of His all-seeing eyes? Up to the loftiest mountains His shafts shall fly after you! In the trackless deserts, in the densest forests, far out upon the mighty ocean His arrows shall find you out! Try not to flee from Him, but flee to Him! If a man wanted to shoot me with a bow and arrow, I would try to clasp him in my arms and hold him to my heart, for how could he shoot me then? Close in with Christ in this fashion! Run not from Him, but run to Him and clasp Him to your heart and never let Him go!

If you yield to Christ, you will find that He will no longer be angry with you. He is loving and gracious and He delights to welcome penitents to His heart. Oh that He might receive you this very hour! He will if you only trust Him and then you will see Him riding in His chariot in quite another fashion. Perhaps at first you will be afraid of Him and ask, "Lord, what have You come here to do?" And He will reply, "I have come to kill your sins with My sharp arrows." One after another He will fit them to His bow and shoot at all He means to slay. He will kill your profanity. He will kill your self-righteousness. He will kill your self-



trust. All of those will be pierced through and through by His unerring darts! Then He will shoot at your pride and kill it, outright, and make you humble as a little child. He will shoot at your love of the world. He will shoot at all your pleasures which are not holy pleasures. He will shoot at every lust and every evil propensity within you—and down they will fall—everyone slain by His sharp arrows and blessed will it be for you when they are all slain! Who would wish to spare any one of these King's enemies? Rather rise up and help the King to slay them! Surely you will give no quarter to those that are your foes as well as His!

Finally, Sinner, trust the Savior. He died for sinners, bearing their sins in His own body on the tree. He died for all who trust Him—and they who trust Him shall find Him faithful and true! And He shall bring them Home to His Father's House to dwell with Him forever! Oh, that all of us might be in that blessed company! God grant it for Jesus' sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON: PSALM 103.

Verse 1. Bless the LORD, O my soul—Come, my Soul, wake up, bestir yourself, for you have a great work to do! Such work as angels do forever before the Throne of God on high!

1. And all that is within in me, bless His holy name. [See Sermons #1078, Volume 18—THE SAINTS BLESSING THE LORD and #2121, Volume 36—THE KEYNOTE OF THE YEAR.] Let no power or faculty exempt itself

from this blessed service! Come, my memory, my will, my judgment, my intellect, my heart—all that is in me is to be stirred up by His holy name to magnify and bless. "Bless the Lord, O my soul," for the music must begin deep down in the center of my being—it must be myself, my inmost self that praises God!

2. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits. This shall be the first note of our grateful song. "We love Him because He first loved us." We have not to go abroad for materials for praise—they are all around us at home. "Forget not all His benefits" to you, my Soul! His overwhelming, His innumerable benefits, which have to be summed up in the gross as "all His benefits," forget them not!

3. Who forgives all your iniquities. Come, my Soul, can you not praise God for forgiven sin? This is the sweetest note in our song of praise—"Who forgives all your iniquities," not merely some of them! The blessed Scapegoat has carried the whole mass into that "No man's land" where they shall never be found!

3. Who heals all your diseases. He is the Physician who can heal you, my Soul. Your diseases are the worst diseases of all, for they would drag you down to Hell if they remained unhealed! But He "heals all your diseases."

4. Who redeems your life from destruction. O my Soul, praise God for redemption! If you cannot sing about anything else, sing of "free Grace and dying love." Keep on ringing "those charming bells."

4. Who crowns you with loving kindness and tender mercies. What? Can you wear such a crown as this, which is made up of loving kindness and tender mercies, and yet not bless

Him who put it upon your head? Oh, let it not be so, but let us, each one, break forth in spirit in Mary's song, "My soul does magnify the Lord."

5. Who satisfies your mouth with good things; so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. This is heavenly feasting on heavenly fare! There is Divine satisfaction to be derived from the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ! O my Soul, pray to God to give you this satisfying food so that your youth may be renewed, so that your wing feathers may grow again, that you may mount as eagles do! Surely, dear Friends, this little list of mercies, though such a short one, comprises an immensity of mercy far beyond utmost comprehension! Let us bless the Lord for it all.

6. The LORD executes righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. Let the poor and the down-trodden praise the Lord who so graciously takes care of them! He is the Executor of the needy, and He is the Executioner of those that oppress them!

7. He made known His ways unto Moses, His acts unto the children of Israel Therefore let us bless the God of Revelation who does not hide Himself from His creatures, but who makes known both His ways and His acts unto His chosen

people. An unknown God is not a praised God, but when He reveals Himself to His people, they cannot refrain from blessing His holy name!

8. The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. Praise Him for all this! At every mention of any one of His Divine attributes let your hearts beat to the music of praise.

9. He will not always chide: neither will He keep His anger forever Therefore let the afflicted praise Him, let the downcast and the despondent sing praises unto His holy name! If they cannot sing because of anything else, let them bless the name of the Lord that He will not keep His anger forever!

10. He has not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. Let us all thank God that we are not in Hell and that we are yet on praying ground and on pleading terms with Him—and some of us can praise Him that we shall never come into Hell, for He has saved us with an everlasting salvation! Truly, if we did not bless Him, every timber in this building and every iron column that supports this roof would burst out in rebukes for our ingratitude!

11. For as the Heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. Look up to the blue sky. Try to imagine what is beyond the stars and then say to yourself, "So great is His mercy toward them that fear Him"—and try to praise Him as He deserves to be praised.

12. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. Let us therefore praise Him for such boundless loving kindness and tender mercy!

13. Like as a father pities his children, so the LORD pities them that fear Him. [See Sermons #941, Volume 16—the tender

PITY OF THE LORD; #1650, Volume 28—GOD'S FATHERLY PITY and #2639, Volume 45—OUR HEAVENLY FATHER'S PITY.] He has an infinitely tender heart. He never strikes without regret, but His love always flows most freely. No earthly father or mother is half as full of pity as God is to His children.

14. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust. Our bodies are just animated dust and our souls are so weak and feeble that even they might be compared to dust in His sight—not iron or granite, but simply dust. What men call "the laws of Nature" are so stern that it is a wonder that men live as long as they do, for earthquakes and tornadoes and volcanoes are found that no man can bind! And when so many men are constantly crossing the sea it is a wonder that so many of them ever come to land again.

15. As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourishes. You are like the primrose by the river's brink, or the buttercup and the daisy in the meadow that is mown with the scythe. That is all we mortals are—not mighty cedars, not solid rocks, but just flowers of the field or as so much grass!

16. For the wind passes over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. The hot winds of the East blow over a meadow and it is immediately burned up. Even in the South of France, when the Sirocco has blown across from Africa I have seen the fairest flowers look in a short time as if they had been burned with hot iron—and such are we when pestilence, as we call it, comes. It is but a breath of poisonous wind and we are soon gone.

17. But—This is a blessed, "but"—

17. The mercy of the LORD—That is not a fading flower, that is not a withering wind! "But the mercy of the Lord"—

17. Is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children— Here are innumerable mercies all enclosed in the one mercy of the Lord! Everlasting mercy, Covenant mercy. If we do not praise God whenever we think of the Covenant of Grace, what are we doing? We must be possessed by a dumb devil if we do not praise Him whose mercy "is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him."

18, 19. To such as keep His Covenant, and to those that remember His commandment, to do them. The LORD has prepared His throne in the heavens; and His kingdom rules over all. Now, children of the King, will you go mourning all your days? You who dwell in the light of His Throne, will you not be glad? Rejoice, O Believer, for your King lives and reigns forever!

20. Bless the LORD, you His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. "Bless the Lord, you His angels." We cannot do it well enough, yet, so help us, you angels, "that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word." Your actions are our praises, O you mighty angels

of God! Oh, that we had learned to do His commandments as you do them! We are praying for this, "Your will be done in earth, as it is in Heaven."

21. Bless you the LORD, all you His hosts; you ministers of His, that do His pleasure. All living things and all the forces and powers of Nature are calling upon men to praise the Lord! And we cry to all the hosts of God, the ministers of His, that do His pleasure, "Bless you the Lord."

22. Bless the LORD, all His works in all place of dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul While all these glorious anthems are ascending to Heaven, I must not be silent! But I, too, must praise the Lord with my whole heart—"Bless the Lord, O my Soul."