

The Lord Hears and Delivers

Sabbath Afternoon, January 20

While we review . . . the manifestations of God's great mercy and unfailing love, we shall praise far more than complain. We shall talk of the loving faithfulness of God as the true, tender, compassionate shepherd of His flock, which He has declared that none shall pluck out of His hand. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like clear-flowing streams, will come from God's truly believing ones. "Goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee." Psalm 23:6; 73:24, 25. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 367.

I would call your attention to the precious promises in the Word of God. . . I am glad indeed that our feelings are no evidence that we are not children of God. The enemy will tempt you to think that you have done things that have separated you from God and that He no longer loves you, but our Lord loves us still, and we may know [this] by the words He has placed on record. . . "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

God loves you; and the precious Saviour, who gave Himself for you, will not thrust you from Him because you are tempted and in your weakness may have been overcome. He loves you still. —*That I May Know Him*, p. 285.

We may keep so near to God that in every unexpected trial our thoughts will turn to Him as naturally as the flower turns to the sun.

Keep your wants, your joys, your sorrows, your cares, and your fears before God. You cannot burden Him; you cannot weary Him. He who numbers the hairs of your head is not indifferent to the wants of His children. . . His heart of love is touched by our sorrows and even by our utterances of them. Take to Him everything that perplexes the mind. Nothing is too great for Him to bear, for He holds up worlds, He rules over all the affairs of the universe. Nothing that in any way concerns our peace is too small for Him to notice. There is no chapter in our experience too dark for Him to read; there is no perplexity too difficult for Him to unravel. No calamity can befall the least of His children, no anxiety harass the soul, no joy cheer, no sincere prayer escape the lips, of which our heavenly Father is unobservant, or in which He takes no immediate interest. "He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds." Psalm 147:3. The relations between God and each soul are as distinct and full as though there were not another soul upon the earth to share His watchcare. —*Steps to Christ*, pp. 99, 100.

My Frame Was Not Hidden From You

In the creation of man was manifest the agency of a personal God. When God had made man in His image, the human form was perfect in all its arrangements, but it was without life. Then a personal, self-existing God breathed into that form the breath of life, and man became a living, intelligent being. All parts of the human organism were set in action. The heart, the arteries, the veins, the tongue, the hands, the feet, the senses, the faculties of the mind, all began their work, and all were placed under law. Man became a living soul. Through Christ the Word, a personal God created man and endowed him with intelligence and power.

Our substance was not hid from Him when we were made in secret; His eyes saw our substance, yet being imperfect, and in His book all our members were written when as yet there were none of them.

Above all lower orders of being, God designed that man, the crowning work of His creation, should express His thought and reveal His glory. —*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 415.

Our life is in the hands of God. He sees dangers threatening us that we cannot see. He is the Giver of all our blessings; the Provider of all our mercies; the Orderer of all our experiences. He sees the perils that we cannot see. He may permit to come upon His people that which fills their hearts with sadness, because He sees that they need to make straight paths for their feet, lest the lame be turned out of the way. He knows our frame, and remembers that we are dust. Even the very hairs of our head are numbered. He works through natural causes to lead His people to remember that He has not forgotten them, but that He desires them to forsake the way which, if they were permitted to follow unchecked and unreprieved, would lead them into great peril. —*The Upward Look*, p. 65.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to die that he might redeem man from the power of Satan; and will he not care for man, formed in his image? . . . God notices the fall of even the sparrows; not one of them falls to the ground without his notice. Our heavenly Father will not leave his children who put their trust in him, and venture out upon his promises although the outlook is dark and forbidding. He understands every circumstance of our life. He sees and knows how we are situated. He is acquainted with all our sorrows and griefs. He knows us each by name, and is touched with the feeling of our infirmities; for he has been tempted in all points like as we are, and knows how to succor those who are tempted. Jesus is our helper, and he will have a care for all those who trust in him. —*The Review and Herald*, August 25, 1885, "The True Standard of Righteousness," par. 12.

Assurance of God's Care

Could our spiritual vision be quickened, we should see souls bowed under oppression and burdened with grief, pressed as a cart beneath sheaves, and ready to die in discouragement. We should see angels flying quickly to the aid of these tempted ones, forcing back the hosts of evil that encompass them, and placing their feet on the sure foundation. . . .

He who slumbers not, who is continually at work for the accomplishment of His designs, will carry forward His work. He will thwart the purposes of wicked men and will bring to confusion the counsels of those who plot mischief against His people. He who is the King, the Lord of hosts, sitteth between the cherubim, and amidst the strife and tumult of nations He guards His children still. When the strongholds of kings shall be overthrown, when the arrows of wrath shall strike through the hearts of His enemies, His people will be safe in His hands. —*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 175, 176.

Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Isaiah 26:4.

What a source to which we can look in all times of trouble; the heart can have no misgivings! Man is erring, stubborn, rebellious, and defiant even against God; but the Lord is kind and patient and of tender compassion. He has heaven and earth at His command, and He knows just what we need even before we present our necessities and desires before Him.

We can see only a little way before us; "but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." He never becomes confused. He sits above the confusion and distractions of the earth, and all things are opened to His divine survey; and from His great and calm eternity He can order that which His providence sees is best. —*My Life Today*, p. 10.

The presence of God is guaranteed to the Christian. This Rock of faith is the living presence of God. The weakest may depend upon it. Those who think themselves the strongest may become the weakest unless they depend on Christ as their efficiency, their worthiness. . . .

The strength of every soul is in God and not in man. Quietness and confidence is to be the strength of all who give their hearts to God. Christ has not a casual interest in us but an interest stronger than a mother for her child. Our Saviour has purchased us by human suffering and sorrow, by insult, reproach, abuse, mockery, rejection, and death. He is watching over you, trembling child of God. He will make you secure under His protection. Our weakness in human nature will not bar our access to the heavenly Father, for He [Christ] died to make intercession for us. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 77.

The Lord Is a Refuge in Adversity

Everyone will meet with trials. If you look to Jesus, if you believe in Him as your personal Saviour, you will be brought through every trial, and enduring these trials with patience, you will become stronger to endure the next test, the next trial.

It is only the narrowness of our vision that prevents us from discerning God's loving-kindness in the discipline to which He subjects His church, as well as in the great blessings which He provides. In all times of distress and confusion, God is a sure refuge to His people. In the shadow of His protection they may safely keep His way. In the affliction designed to purify them, the power of the gospel is to be their consolation. In His sure word they have a fortress. —*Our High Calling*, p. 317.

"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." Christ did not fail, neither was He discouraged, and His followers are to manifest a faith of the same enduring nature. They are to live as He lived, and work as He worked, because they depend on Him as the great Master Worker. Courage, energy, and perseverance they must possess. Though apparent impossibilities obstruct their way, by His grace they are to go forward. Instead of deploring difficulties, they are called upon to surmount them. They are to despair of nothing, and to hope for everything. With the golden chain of His matchless love Christ has bound them to the throne of God. It is His purpose that the highest influence in the universe, emanating from the source of all power, shall be theirs. They are to have power to resist evil, power that neither earth, nor death, nor hell can master, power that will enable them to overcome as Christ overcame. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 679.

Divine pity marked the countenance of the Son of God as He cast one lingering look upon the Temple and then upon His hearers. In a voice choked by deep anguish of heart and bitter tears He exclaimed, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem . . . how often I would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" . . .

The gems of truth that fell from Christ's lips on that eventful day were treasured in many hearts. For them new thoughts started into life, new aspirations were awakened, and a new history began. After the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, these persons came to the front, and fulfilled their divine commission with a wisdom and zeal corresponding to the greatness of the work. They bore a message that appealed to the hearts of men, weakening the old superstitions that had long dwarfed the lives of thousands. Before their testimony human theories and philosophies became as idle fables. Mighty were the results flowing from the words of the Saviour to that wondering, awestruck crowd in the Temple at Jerusalem. —*Lift Him Up*, p. 337.

Defender and Deliverer

When Jesus was awakened to meet the storm, He was in perfect peace. There was no trace of fear in word or look, for no fear was in His heart. . . . He trusted in the Father's might. It was in faith—faith in God's love and care—that Jesus rested, and the power of that word which stilled the storm was the power of God.

As Jesus rested by faith in the Father's care, so we are to rest in the care of our Saviour. If the disciples had trusted in Him, they would have been kept in peace. Their fear in the time of danger revealed their unbelief. In their efforts to save themselves, they forgot Jesus; and it was only when, in despair of self-dependence, they turned to Him that He could give them help.

How often the disciples' experience is ours! When the tempests of temptation gather, and the fierce lightnings flash, and the waves sweep over us, we battle with the storm alone, forgetting that there is One who can help us. We trust to our own strength till our hope is lost, and we are ready to perish. Then we remember Jesus, and if we call upon Him to save us, we shall not cry in vain. . . . Living faith in the Redeemer will smooth the sea of life, and will deliver us from danger in the way that He knows to be best. —*The Desire of Ages*, p. 336.

Now do not worry yourself out of the arms of the dear Saviour, but rest trustingly in faith. He loves you; He cares for you. He is blessing you and will give you His peace and grace. He is saying to you, "Thy sins be forgiven thee." You may be depressed with bodily infirmities, but that is not evidence that the Lord is not working in your behalf every day. He will pardon you, and that abundantly. Gather to your soul the sweet promises of God. Jesus is our constant, unfailing friend, and He wants you to trust in Him. Look away from yourself to the perfection of Christ. —*That I May Know Him*, p. 285.

A life in Christ is a life of restfulness. There may be no ecstasy of feeling, but there should be an abiding, peaceful trust. Your hope is not in yourself; it is in Christ. Your weakness is united to His strength, your ignorance to His wisdom, your frailty to His enduring might. So you are not to look to yourself, not to let the mind dwell upon self, but look to Christ. Let the mind dwell upon His love, upon the beauty, the perfection, of His character. Christ in His self-denial, Christ in His humiliation, Christ in His purity and holiness, Christ in His matchless love—this is the subject for the soul's contemplation. It is by loving Him, copying Him, depending wholly upon Him, that you are to be transformed into His likeness. —*Steps to Christ*, p. 70.

Help From the Sanctuary

The temple of God is opened in heaven, and the threshold is flushed with the glory which is for every church that will love God and keep His commandments. We need to study, to meditate, and to pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the themes of song and thanksgiving of the heavenly choir round about the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and precious songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assemblies of the saints. Murmuring and complaining over little disappointments and difficulties will cease. As we apply the golden eyesalve we shall see the glories beyond. Faith will cut through the heavy shadow of Satan, and we shall see our Advocate offering up the incense of His own merits in our behalf. When we see this as it is, as the Lord desires us to see it, we shall be filled with a sense of the immensity and diversity of the love of God. —*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 6, p. 368.

Jesus knows the needs of His children, and He loves to listen to their prayers. Let the children shut out the world and everything that would attract the thoughts from God, and let them feel that they are alone with God, that His eye looks into the inmost heart, and reads the desire of the soul, and that they may talk with God. In humble faith you may claim His promises, and feel that although you have nothing in yourself whereby you may claim the favor of God, because of the merits and righteousness of Christ, you may come boldly to the throne of grace, and find help in time of need. There is nothing that can make the soul so strong to resist the temptations of Satan in the great conflict of life, as to seek God in humility, laying before Him your soul in all its helplessness, expecting that He will be your helper and your defender.

With the trusting faith of a little child, we are to come to our heavenly Father, telling Him of all our needs. He is always ready to pardon and help. The supply of divine wisdom is inexhaustible, and the Lord encourages us to draw largely from it. The longing that we should have for spiritual blessings is described in the words, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." We need a deeper soul-hunger for the rich gifts that heaven has to bestow. . . .

O that we might have a consuming desire to know God by an experimental knowledge, to come into the audience chamber of the Most High, reaching up the hand of faith, and casting our helpless souls upon the One mighty to save. His loving kindness is better than life. —*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 121.

Friday, January 26

For Further Reading

That I May Know Him, "Under God's Guardianship," p. 143;

That I May Know Him, "Quiet Rest in God," p. 268.