

The Mighty Arm (1866)

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon emphasizes that true spiritual strength and revival come solely from God's mighty and inexhaustible power, not from human effort.

Scripture: Psalm 89:13, John 15:5, Psalm 127:1, Acts 2, Jeremiah 32:17, Isaiah 40:28, Genesis 1:1, Romans 8:38-39

Topics: "Divine Power", "Prayer and Revival", "God's Sovereignty"

Description

In 'The Mighty Arm,' C.H. Spurgeon passionately reminds believers that all true spiritual power and revival originate from God's infinite and unchanging might. He exhorts the Church to abandon self-reliance and to depend wholly on God's strength through prayer and faith. Spurgeon illustrates God's power through biblical examples of judgment and deliverance, encouraging believers to expect great works from the Almighty. This devotional sermon calls Christians to boldness in prayer and trust in the sovereign God who never fails.

Transcript

BY C. H. SPURGEON, AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"You have a mighty arm: strong is Your hand, and high is Your right hand."

Psalm 89:13.

WE are, during the coming week humbly but earnestly to beseech of God for days of refreshing and seasons of revival. It is well for us at the outset distinctly to remind ourselves of the source from where all the strength must come. No genuine revival can ever arise from the flesh. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Human excitement at the utmost, and carnal zeal at its extremity, can do nothing towards the real conversion of souls. Here we are taught the lesson, "not by might nor by power."

Disappointments ought to have taught the Church of God this lesson long ago. The many revivals which she has had which have proved to be spurious—the puffing up of excitement and not the building up of Divine Grace—all these should have driven her out of the last relic of her self-confidence and have made her feel that it is not of herself to do anything in the Lord's cause without His help. "Our help comes from the Lord that made Heaven and earth." It is well to be constantly convinced of this. We must have God's arm laid to the work or else nothing will be accomplished which will stand the solemn tests of the last great day.

Wood, hay, and stubble we may build alone, but gold, silver and precious stones are from the King's treasury. "Without Me you can do nothing," was the Savior's word to His chosen Apostles! How much more applicable must it be to us who are "less than the least of all saints"! In vain your holy assemblies! In vain your earnest desires! In vain your passionate addresses! In vain your efforts of a thousand shapes! Unless God Himself shall step forth from the hiding place of His power and set Himself, a second time, to His own glorious work, no good can come of all your toils—

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

Having reminded ourselves, dear Friends, that our great strength lies in the God of Jacob, it is very comforting to notice how great this strength is. There is but one arm for us to rest upon, but blessed is the assurance—"You have a mighty arm." Oh, if that God upon whom we have entirely to depend were stunted in might and had a limit put to His strength, we might despair! If the answer to the question, "Is the Lord's arm waxed short?" were the doleful reply, "Yes, He is no longer mighty to save," then we might give up the work! But stupendous strength is with the Most High! The treasury from which we draw is inexhaustible! We may come to God with the cheering confidence that we cannot possibly ask what it is not in His power to perform!

We have the mighty God of Jacob to be our arm every morning and our salvation every night. I desire to speak of our God as the Almighty Lord so that you and I may be strengthened in the work in which we are engaged for His name's sake. In speaking upon the Divine power I shall have a few words, this morning, upon the power itself. Then a few words upon its manifestations. And then I will close up with the lessons to be derived from the power and its developments.

First, then, some few words about the POWER OF GOD itself, having as my drift the stirring up of Believers' minds to ask and to expect a great display of it. In the first place, God's power is like Himself—self-existent and self-sustained. Power in the creature is like water in the cistern. Power in the Creator is like water in the fountain. The creature is the moon which shines with reflected light—the Creator is the Sun whose light is not derived, springing from within Himself.

Naturally and spiritually this statement holds good. All the power that you and I have to serve God with must first come from Him! But He derives no power whatever from us. All our fresh springs are in God, but the rivers of our grace do not minister to His fullness. "My goodness extends not to you." The mightiest of men add not so much as a shadow of increased power to the Omnipotent One. His scepter is established by its own Omnipotence. He sits on no buttressed throne, and leans on no assisting arm. His courts are not maintained by His courtiers, nor do they borrow their splendor of power from His creatures.

He is Himself the great central Source and Originator of all power. We must come, then, to His footstool, feeling that all must come from Him. We must bring nothing but our weakness, nothing but our sense of need, and come to Him crying, "O God, You are in Yourself all-sufficient. You do not need us, nor can we contribute anything to You. Now let Your ability flow into us and gird each of us poor weaklings with Your might!"

In the next place, God's power is comprehensive, including within itself all the power which resides in all the creatures in the universe. "God has spoken once. Twice have I heard this, that power belongs unto God." When the wheels of a machine revolve there is power in every cog. But all that power originally was in the engine which sets the whole in action, and in a certain sense is still there. In a far higher sense all power dwells in the Lord, "for in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

Whatever power there may be in the mightiest of God's creatures is still inherent in God Himself. So, my Brethren, if the Lord shall be pleased to teach some of you how to pray and others how to exhort. If He should gird you with might and send you into the midst of this Church to work spiritual miracles for Him, the power will still be His—to be in an instant withdrawn if it so pleases Him—and especially withdrawn if you begin to sacrifice unto your own self and say, "My own arm has gotten me this victory."

All power dwells perpetually and necessarily in the Lord Jehovah. The might which resides in any spiritual agency at this present moment, whether it is in the Book of God or in the ministry of truth, or in prayer, or in what else the Church serves the Lord—all that power is still comprehended in the Most High. Come then, Beloved, let us all draw near to Him and pray that as all fullness is in Himself, He would be pleased to give it to us! And since giving it does not impoverish, but the same strength remains in Him still, let us be bold to make great drafts upon the Divine storehouse!

The power of God, I would remind you in the third place, is immutable. Whatever He did of old He is able to repeat now. His arm never did increase in strength—what more could He be than Almighty? It never did decrease—what else can we conceive Him to be than God all-sufficient? We talk of changing ages, but we must not dream of a changing God! There was the age of gold, the age of silver, and we mournfully say that we have fallen upon the age of iron—but the God of all ages—like the finest gold, abides ever more most pure and glorious!

Our God is not the God of the past only, but of the present. Think not of Him as did the Syrians, that Jehovah is God of the hills and not the God of the valleys. The era of great men had no other God than He who watches over their humble sons. He is the God of us upon whom the ends of the earth have come. There is no change in the power of the Everlasting Father! Time and age work no decay in Him. His eyes have not waxed dim, neither has His natural force abated. He is still the Wonderful, the Counselor, the Mighty God!

Let this encourage us, then, in our earnest entreaties that He would do for us like wonders to those which He worked for the early Church. Let us plead for Pentecosts, for even mightier works than Apostles saw. "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it." Open your mouths according to the model of the olden times and sing unto the Lord's arm in your hearts as you sang with your lips just now—

"Again your wonted prowess show, Be You made bare again!"

It is for us to recollect, also that God's power is in the fullness of it perfectly irresistible. We grant that when God puts out but little of His strength, it is with Him as it is with a man when he plays with a child. He may suffer that child to overcome him. But when God puts forth His Omnipotence, who, who is there that can stay His hand?

Proud hearts are humbled, hard hearts are broken, iron melts, and rock dissolves when the Lord visits the host—none of the men of might can find their hands! At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, both the horses and the chariots are cast into a dead sleep. Let this encourage us—we have only to bestir our God and all things are possible! If we shall but behold His goings forth in the sanctuary, there is nothing that by any possibility can thwart the desire of our soul or frustrate our wishes. Only plead with the Most High till you can cry with Luther, "Vici!" and we have overcome, we have conquered in prayer, and conquered altogether!

Let your cry be heard in the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth—"Awake! Put on Your strength, O God! And go forth with our hosts to conflict for the glory of Your name." And if He deigns to answer, nothing can withstand Him. This thought ought to comfort those of us who feel our weakness and think that we can do nothing—remember His strength and remember that He can do everything! If you have any kinsfolk for whom you have prayed and no answer has come, and your own exertions have been mocked at and despised, come again to the Mighty God of Jacob, for He will do His good pleasure, and in answer to your prayers He will send forth the blessing! His power is irresistible! Lay hold upon it and prevail.

Nor will it be ill for me to remind you that this power is entirely independent. I mean that it needs nothing extraneous or beyond itself to enable it to work. This power is independent of place. Do you think there was any sanctity in the upper room at Jerusalem? Behold this room is quite as sacred as that filled by the Spirit in years gone by. Dream not that the city of Jerusalem of old, in the days of the Savior, was a more proper theater for Divine working than this is. He can make London rejoice even as He did Jerusalem of old! Equally is the Divine power independent of time. Do not dream that the ages have changed so that in this day God cannot do His mighty works!

Beloved, if you can conceive of an age that is worse than another, so much the more is it a fit platform for the heavenly energy. The more difficulty—the more room for Omnipotence to show itself! There is elbow room for the great God when there is some great thing in the way and some great difficulty that He may overturn. When there is a mountain to be cast into the valley, then there is almighty work to be done! And our covenant God only needs to see work to do for His praying people and He will shortly do it. God is not dependent upon instruments any more than upon times and places. He who blessed the world by Paul and Peter can do His good pleasure by His servants now.

The Christ of the fishermen is our Christ, too! Talk not of Luther, and Calvin, and Zwingli as though they were specially powerful in themselves and therefore accomplished so marvelous a work! Oh, Brothers and Sisters, there are humble men and women among us whom God may just as well bless as those three mighties if it so pleases Him! Dream not that there was something about the Wesleys and Whitfield which made them the only instruments for evangelizing this nation! O God Almighty, You can bless even us!

And among the thousands of ministers who up to now may have plowed as upon a rock and labored in vain, there is no one whom God may not take and make him as a two-edged sword in His hand to smite through the hearts of His foes! Beloved, I have sometimes prayed, and do often pray that out of that little band of men whom we have in our own College—some ninety or so—He would find for Himself His arrows and fit them to the bow and shoot them to the utmost ends of the earth! And why not? Unbelief has many mournful reasons, but faith sees none!

This power, I must not forget to say, as a gathering up of the whole, is infinite. Power in the creature must have a limit for the creature itself is finite. But power in the Creator has neither measure nor bound. I am sure, Beloved, we treat our God often as though He were like ourselves. We sit down after some defeat or disappointment, and we say we will never try again—we suppose the work allotted to us to be impossible. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Why limit the Holy One of Israel? God is not man that He should fail, nor the son of man that He should suffer defeat. Behold He touches the hills and they tremble! He touches the mountains and they smoke.

When He goes forth before His people He makes the mountains to skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs. What, then, can block up His path? You divided of old the Red Sea, O God, and You did break the

dragon's head in the midst of the many waters—and You can still do according to Your will—let any hinder who may. Oh, Beloved, if I may but be privileged to lift up your hearts and mine to something like a due comprehension of the infinite power of God, we shall then have come to the threshold of a great blessing! If you believe in the littleness of God you will ask but little and you will have but little! But enlarge your desires! Let your souls be stretched till they become wide as seven heavens and even then you shall not hold the whole of the great God! But you shall be fitted to receive more largely out of His fullness.

Ask of Him that He would give the heathen unto Christ for His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession—that the scepter of Jehovah shall go forth—and the monarchy of Christ shall be extended from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. It were not right, perhaps, to leave this point without observing concerning this Divine power that it is all our own, for we are told that this God is our God forever and ever. "The Lord is my portion, said my soul, therefore will I hope in Him."

Christian, the potency which dwells in Jehovah belongs to you! It is yours to rest upon in holy trust and yours to stir up in earnest pleading. That little sinew moves the great arm—I mean the sinew of the Believer's prayer. If you can pray, God will work. "To him that believe all things are possible." It is not, "Can You work, O God?" But it is, "Can you believe, O Christian?" You have a mighty arm, O God, but that arm is Your people's arm, for it is written, "He is their arm every morning, and their salvation every night." Come, then, with confidence, you who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice, for this God is our God forever and ever, and He will help us. Yes, He will help us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him!

II. Having given utterance to these few words upon his power in itself, I shall direct your attention to THE MANIFESTATIONS OF THIS POWER which are very varied in character and altogether innumerable in multitude. Following the leading of the Psalm rather than the natural order of things, I will remind you of God's tremendous power in destruction. You have this in the Psalm. "You have broken Rahab in pieces as one that is slain. You have scattered Your enemies with Your strong hand."

Look back with solemn awe upon the works of God in the overthrow of sin. See the whole earth deluged with destructive floods. "You have a mighty arm, O God." You have unloosed the gates that shut in the sea. Greater than Samson You have borne away both posts and bar and all and set free the hosts of waters that they might overthrow Your foes. Up from their cavernous prison house the furious waters leap to desolate the sin-polluted world. Noah might have sung as he floated on that shoreless sea, "You have a mighty arm."

Cast your eyes yonder to the East, to the well-watered plain of Sodom, and mark how God's anger smokes. He comes down to see if it is altogether according to the cry thereof, and when Justice has proved her point, then Judgment follows with swift feet. He rains Hell's torments out of Heaven upon sinners—fiery hail and brimstone cover the cities of the plain—and the smoke goes up to Heaven. "You have a mighty arm."

Let your eyes glance along the banks of the Nile where haughty Pharaoh vaunts himself against the Most High. Remember how He smote the first-born of Egypt, the chief of all their strength! Let the terrible overthrow of the Red Sea never be forgotten. See how He scattered Amalek as chaff before the wind. Mark how He drove out the Hivites and the Jebusites and gave their necks to the feet of His children who were His avengers. Talk to one another and tell how He smote Philistia, how He made the sons of David cast forth their shoes upon Edom and gave Moab to be the wash pot of their feet.

Let the name of Sennacherib come up before you and think how the Lord thrust a bit into his mouth and a hook into his jaws and made him go back the way by which he came. Remember Babylon and the heaps thereof! Nineveh, and the owls and the dragons that haunt her ruined walls. Remember the proud cities of Greece, cast down and destroyed because they worshipped idols! And Rome, herself, only living like a widow in her weeds, weeping because God has bereaved her of her glory. "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He has made in the earth. He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in sunder. He burns the chariots in the fire." Who is a God in might to be compared unto Him?

As we survey the works of His power in destruction, let the subject make us grateful. What a marvel that He has not struck us! My Soul, remember when you did defy Him? When you did scorn His Grace, break His Sabbaths and blaspheme His name? Yet He who breaks the ships of Tarshish by His strong east wind has not shipwrecked you, but on the sea of life you sail securely still. O Sinner! Remember that this long-suffering will not last forever! Beware, lest He tear you in pieces and there be none to deliver you! He is strong to destroy and condemned souls feel that He is so.

If I could catch the distant sounds that rise from Hell, I think they might be rendered into this one line—"You have a mighty arm!" Oh, how He destroys! Imagination fails to picture the terror of His blows. The day of mercy is over with the condemned and they writhe in extreme agonies! While with almighty hands, armed with an iron rod, He smites, and smites, and smites again. "You have a mighty arm." Oh, bow before Him, you who have not loved Him! Tremble at Him! "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry, and you perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little."

You cannot face it out with Him—neither can you escape Him. You cannot set yourselves in battle array against the Almighty. Let the thorns set themselves in battle against the fire, but do not attempt to stand against Him—

"O sinners, seek His face Whose wrath you cannot bear! Fly to the scepter of His Grace, And find salvation there."

Looking at this part of the subject, here is a very strong argument for the people of God to stir them up to pray. The fearful nature of the sinner's doom should arouse us to vehement and abiding earnestness. Must we not plead with God when we think of our fellow creatures who are liable to prove the terror of the Almighty's arm?

Will you not cry, you that have hearts not altogether turned to stone? Will you not plead with all your hearts, you who have any loving tenderness and generous pity within you? Will you not cry aloud and spare not, that He would be pleased to give men right reason to see their danger and turn them to Himself, that they may be washed in the Savior's blood and escape the terrible wrath due their iniquities?

Turning from the subject, the Psalm reminds us of the manifestation of God's power in creation. "The heavens are Yours, the earth also is Yours: as for the world and the fullness thereof, You have founded them. The north and the south You have created them." Now, Beloved, it is well to remember the mighty power of God in creation. Man wants something to work upon—give him material and with cunning instruments he straightway makes for himself a vessel. But God began with nothing, and by His word alone out of nothing made all things. He used no instrument except His own word. "He spoke, and it was done as He commanded, and it stood fast."

Darkness and chaos lay in the way before Him, but these soon gave place to the excellence of His might when He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." "In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them." He garnished the heavens with the crooked serpent and the bear, and led forth Arcturus with his sons. How rapid was that work, and yet how perfect—how gloriously complete! Well might "the morning stars sing together, and the sons of God shout for joy!"

Now, Christian, I want you to draw living water out of this well. The God, who in the old creation did all this—can He not work today? What if in the human heart there is nothing to help Him? He made the world out of nothing—can He not make new creatures without the aid of human will? Even out of these stones, can He not raise up children unto Abraham? His word fashioned the creation of old, and His word can still work marvels. Spoken by whomever He pleases to send, His word shall be as potent now as in primeval days. There may be darkness and confusion in the sinner's soul— a word shall remove all—and swift and quick, requiring not even six days!

God can make new creatures in this House of Prayer and throughout this city! The Lord has but to will it with His Omnipotent will, and the sinner becomes a saint and the most rebellious cast down their weapons. Oh let creation encourage you to expect a new creation! The old creation had no blood upon it to plead with God to work, but we have the blood of Jesus to be our plea when we come before Him with regard to the new creation. We may cry, "O God, since You have given Your dear Son to lay the foundations of this new earth and these new heavens, wherein righteousness does dwell, come and build up Your Church, and complete the last and noblest work of Your hands."

Again, God's power is manifest, dear Friends, to our joy in works of sustentation as well as of creation. The next stanza of the Psalm seems to hint at that: "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Your name." That is to say, when the showers come dropping upon Tabor and Hermon, they send forth the perfume of their flowers and produce the abundance for the flocks. Now, Beloved, God's power has been seen, I am sure, not only in holding up the world, but in preserving His Church in the world all these years.

He would be thought to be a mighty man who held up the monument of London on the palm of his hand. But You bear up, O God, the pillars of the heavens! And he who should take up St. Paul's and turn it uppermost as though it were but a cup in his hand would be exceeding mighty. But You take up the isles as a very little thing! What must be the power of God in sustaining and supporting all worlds? But as I have said, the spiritual power which preserves the spark of the Truth of God in the midst of a sea of error is equally great! To keep His sheep alive in the midst of wolves is equally marvelous!

The mighty arm of God has been conspicuous in supporting His Church in years gone by. How the Lord has been in that gallant vessel! Never a boat more tempest-tossed than she! No voyage more dangerous than hers! She has tracked a narrow channel between threatening rocks and hidden quicksand. As for her crew, they have been a feeble folk, little able to cope with boisterous elements and furious tempests. Often the good vessel of the Church has mounted up to Heaven upon the crown of an outrageous billow, and then has gone down again into the depths of a yawning sea while her sailors have reeled like drunken men, staggering to and fro, being at their wits' end! But they have cried unto the Lord in their trouble and He who was strong to stir up the deep from its very bottom and make it boil like a pot has been equally strong to speak the word and still the raving of its waves.

Let us be, then, of good comfort. Why should not God bless and succor His well-beloved Church now? Why should He not make her in these peaceful days to be a Palace Beautiful for Himself to dwell in? For

the fair edification of His Church new converts are needed. There can be no building up of her walls except by the quarrying of fresh stones. O God, we have confidence in You that You will help us! Strong is Your hand. You have a mighty arm! Oh come, for the sustaining and increase of Your Church, even in this, our day!

But, Beloved, the most striking manifestation of Divine power is found in the fourth form of it, namely, in works of redemption. Typical of these was the great redeeming work at the Red Sea, and hence the song of Moses is joined with the song of the Lamb. It was by Moses' rod that God brought forth the hosts of His beloved, and in mightier fashion and to a nobler tune shall the elect sing when they have been redeemed from all their enemies. Think, dear Friends, of the mighty arm of God in working out the means of our salvation. That was no light labor which Jesus undertook. Hercules cleaned the Augean stable, said the fable, but what an Augean stable is this world!

Yet Christ will purge it. He is purging it! He did purge it by His death! This Aceldama shall yet become an Elysium. The field of blood shall be transformed into a garden of delights. Christ came to bear a load upon His shoulders compared with which the burden of Atlas is as nothing! Atlas, according to the heathen mythology, bore the world between his shoulders—but Jesus bears the world's sin, and that is more! Can you see Him there in the garden? Great drops of sweat prove what a tremendous toil He has undertaken!

Do you see Him on the Cross? Not a bone is broken, but every bone is dislocated to prove how great the labor. But how greater still the strength which achieved the whole! O Lord Jesus! When we see that You have burst the gates of death, that You have trod on the neck of sin, that You have broken the head of Satan, that You have led captivity captive and opened the gates of Heaven to all Your people, we may, indeed, sing—

"You have a mighty arm."

Just now we have most to do with the application of this redemption by the Spirit of God, for it concerns that for which we pray. We have no reason to ask our Lord Jesus to finish the work of redemption, for He has completed it—on the Cross He said, "It is finished."

III. It is the application of it which concerns our souls. And, Beloved in the faith, it is a great joy to us to know that in bringing souls to Christ by the Holy Spirit, the Omnipotence of God is very graciously displayed. Let us just a minute or two think of some sure tokens of this, and this shall furnish us with the third point, namely, THE LESSONS FROM THE WHOLE.

There have been vouchsafed in the past very wonderful manifestations of Divine favor. Churches have grown very lukewarm, ministers very dull, doctrines have become unsound, the hearts of God's people have failed, the faithful have almost died out—but all of a sudden God has raised up some one man, perhaps some half dozen—and the face of the Church was changed from languor to energy! These men did but strike the spark and the flame flew over all lands.

The Reformation was a marvelous type of genuine revivals—God-given revivals—which have been frequent in all times. In England we have had them. In America they have been abundant. Ireland has not been without them. In the darkest day, when everyone said the cause of religion was growing hopeless, then the great Lover of the Church has appeared. Have you never read the story of Livingstone preaching in a heavy shower of rain, outside the village of Shotts, to the multitude of people standing there who would not stir from the hearing of the Word?

Or have you not heard the story of Whitfield's mighty preaching, when the people moved to and fro, as the corn is moved by the summer wind, and at last fell down beneath the Word as the sheaves fall before the reaper's scythe? Why may we not see all this again? Why not? And why not greater things than these? What hinders but our unbelief? O God, You have a mighty arm! Tens of thousands beneath one ministry have been made to feel the power of the Cross, and why not again? Let us proclaim a crusade! Let us gather together in prayer and besiege the Throne, and we shall see again a revival that shall make the age glad!

God has proven the power of His arm in the persons whom He has saved. Saul of Tarsus seemed to be a very hard case, but the light from Heaven, and the Voice which gently upbraided, had power over Saul and he became one of the ablest of God's servants. There is no heart so hard but what God's hammer can dash it in pieces. Let us never despair while we can say of our God, "You have a mighty arm." Beloved, if there should happen to come within these walls at any time, some of the worst of men, we must not think that God will not bless them. Oh no! "You have a mighty arm."

Lord, here is a great and hard rock! Now wield Your great hammer and the sparks shall fly, and the flint stone shall be broken into pieces! Quarry Your own stones, O God, and make them fit for Your temple, for, "You have a mighty arm." This is seen, sometimes, in the number converted. Three thousand in one day under Peter's sermon! Why not three thousand again? Why not thirty thousand? Why not three hundred thousand in a day? There is nothing too great for us to ask for, or for God to grant!

He could, if He willed, turn the hearts of men as He turns the rivers by His foot. His might has been manifested in the instruments which the Lord has employed. He has taken the base things and the despised to make them the medium of His power! And then we have said, "You have a mighty arm" to do such wonders by such puny things. Now, Beloved, when I recollect the past in these various tokens of Divine strength, I wish I had time to encourage your hearts to expect great things of God. We are certainly not straitened in Him. You will be straitened in your own heart, if you are straitened at all. And I do pray my mighty Master that He may not suffer this to be, but give us large expectations that we may have large realizations!

There is a friend here who says, "I have been praying very long to this mighty God for the conversion of one who lies very near my heart, but I cannot get an answer." No, Beloved, it may be that God has not yet put forth His power—it is certain He has not—or your friend would be healed. There may have been a reason why the Lord would not work, namely, because you were not prepared for so great a blessing. Perhaps, had He honored you to be the means of your friend's conversion, you would have grown proud. If you now feel your own utter powerlessness, now will be the time for God to work!

The reason of delay may now have gone. Certainly the fact that God has not answered you is no reason why He should not ultimately give you your desire. If He has delayed a little time, remember He is never too late and certainly never forgets in the end. He may delay, but He cannot deny. Has your friend become worse and worse? Well, then, rampant sin often stirs up God. It is time for You to work, Lord, for they make void Your Law! I look upon the present age with very great comfort. Beloved, there never was a time in which Popery was so—I was about to say omnipresent everywhere. It is working everywhere—openly and by stealth.

The Church of England has become thoroughly putrid with Puseyism. Infidelity has grown very bold. Let all these powers of evil be developed and work their will, for good will come out of it in the end! All these

provocations will arouse our God. I thought within myself, when turning over these matters and seeing the signs of a breaking out of the old moderatism in Scotland, "Ah, Lord! You have not answered Your friends. Perhaps You will hear Your foes. And if Your children's prayers have not provoked You to bestir Yourself, perhaps the hard words of Your enemies will do it."

It is a good thing for Zion when her enemies begin to curse and to lift up themselves against God, for then He will take up His own quarrel. Let them throw down the gauntlet and God will take it up! And we know when He does come forth from His resting place, the victory is sure! It is for us, however, to cry unto Him and spare not till He proves His cause to be His own by the potency which He puts into it. Let us, then, discard our despondencies and be of good courage, for strong is His hand and high is His right hand—

"Lord, when iniquities abound, And blasphemies grow bold. When faith is hardly to be found, And love is waxing cold, Is not Your chariot hastening on? Have You not given this sign? May we not trust and live upon A promise so Divine?"

Beloved, I am encouraged to expect the visitation of Divine Grace among us for these reasons: It must be for God's glory to save souls—there cannot be two opinions about it. Will He not therefore do it? Secondly, It must be due to

Christ that souls should be saved. He cannot have seen the whole of the travail of His soul yet! I am sure He is not satisfied yet—He is yet to have many more! And shall He not have His seed and see His children? We can plead the blood and that is a prevalent argument with the Most High. I look upon our prayers as tokens for good. Some of us can say we came up here with prayer and our souls have been exercised during the week with groans and longings towards the mighty God of Jacob—that He would bless this congregation—and bless the world. This, too, is a token for good.

Our past history comforts me in cheering hope. "The Lord has been mindful of us. He will bless us." Who would have thought that the Lord would bless us as He has done? It is now twelve years and more since I first came up to this great city, a stripling. With what trembling did I come! You were but very few and feeble, but still there was the true life lingering among you and soon the blessing came! You remember our sore trials and troubles, when we went through fire and through water, and men did ride over our heads. But our God has brought us out into a wealthy place. This very house is, itself, a monument of what God can do!

Poor and feeble folk were we, and yet this house was built to His praise! And He has filled it and kept it full! Where else has He been pleased to gather the multitudes year after year, with never-failing, never-flagging interest and earnestness? Where else has He been pleased to add to the Church by hundreds in the year, till the only difficulty is the time to see the inquirers and to hear their confession of faith? In what other Church have there been four hundred and fifty souls added to the fellowship in one year? Where else has the baptismal pool been stirred with such a multitude of souls immersed into a profession of the Lord Jesus Christ?

We say this not—we trust we do not—with so much as a single grain of sacrificing unto self, for what were we and what were our father's house that He should have brought us up to now? But we beg you to regard the past as a type of the future! Oh, start not back, you men of prayer! Fail not now since God is still your arm! You carry bows, turn not back in the day of battle! You have the trophies of past victories before your eyes! Now for a mighty attack upon the Mercy Seat that you may win power to overcome the gates of Hell!

Let us be vehement—violent I was about to say—for, "the kingdom of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force." Let us cannonade the gate of Heaven! Let us rise up, each man and each woman, every soul that has power, and let us cry unto the mighty God that He would be pleased to give us such a blessing that we shall not have room enough to receive it! It must come, only be ready for it! It will come—it comes even now! Thank God! Take courage! Be on your watchtower! And may the Lord bless us for His name's sake. Amen.

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