

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

A NEW YEAR'S BENEDICTION.

A Sermon

PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 1ST, 1914.

DELIVERED BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

On Thursday Evening, September 3rd, 1868.

“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”—Hebrews xiii. 5.

OBSERVE the way in which the apostles were accustomed to incite believers in Christ to the performance of their duties. They did not tell them, “You must do this or that, or you will be punished; you must do this, and then you shall obtain a reward for it.” They never cracked the whip of the law in the ears of the child of God. They knew the difference between the man who was actuated by sordid motives and the fear of punishment, and the new-born man who is moved by sublimer motives, namely, motives that touch his heart, that move his regenerated nature, and that constrain him, out of affection, to do the will of him that sent him. Hence the address here is not, “Be content, or else God will take away what you have,” but “Be content, and have naught to do with covetousness, for he hath said, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

The promise is made the argument for the precept. Obedience is enforced by a covenant blessing. He hath said, “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee”; what then? Shall I be discontented and covetous? Nay! but for the very reason that he has made, by his promise, my very safety absolute and unconditional, assuring me, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” for that reason I will keep out of my conversation covetousness and every other evil thing, and will seek to walk contentedly and happy in the presence of my God. See, brethren, this gospel motive. It is a free grace argument. It is not a weapon taken from the arsenal

of Mount Sinai, but taken from the region of the cross, and from the council-chamber of the covenant of love.

Another thing in the text, to which I would call your notice is this: that an inspired apostle, who might very well have used his own original words, nevertheless in this case, as indeed in many others, quotes the Old Testament. "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Behold, then, the value of Holy Scripture. If an inspired man quotes the text, as of divine authority, much more should we so regard it, who are without such inspiration. We should be much in searching the Scriptures, and when we want to clench an argument, or answer an opponent, it would always be well for us to take our weapon from the grand old Book, and come down with "He hath said." Oh! there is nothing like this for force and power. *We* may think a thing, but what of that? Our thinkings are but of little worth. General authority and universal opinion may sustain it, but what of that? The world has been more frequently wrong than right, and public opinion is a fickle thing. But "*He* hath said," that is to say, God hath said—immutable truth and eternal fidelity have said; God that made heaven and earth, and that changeth not, though nations melt like the hoar frost of the morning; God who ever liveth when hills, and mountains, and this round world, and everything upon it shall have passed away—"He hath said." Oh! the power there is in this, "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." So, then, let us be much in searching the Scriptures, much in feeding upon them, much in diving into their innermost depths, and then afterwards much in the habit of quoting them, using them as arguments for the defence of truth, as weapons against error, and as reasons to call us to the path of duty, and to pursue it.

But now to come to the promise itself, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I shall call your attention, first of all, to:—

I. THE REMARKABLE CHARACTER OF THIS PROMISE.

Is it not a wonderful and arrestive fact that, whilst *others do leave us and forsake us, that God never does*? It is to each one of his own redeemed people that he says, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." How often do men play false, and forsake those whom they call their friends when those friends fall into *poverty*! Ah! the tragedies of some of these cruel forsakings! May you never know them! These so-called friends knew their friends when that suit of black was new, but how sadly their eyesight fails them now it is turned to a rusty brown! They knew them extremely well when once a week they sat with their legs under their table and shared their generous hospitality, but they know them not now that they knock at their door and crave help in a time of need.

Matters have changed altogether, and friends that once were cherished are now forgotten. In fact, the man almost pities him-

self to think that he should have been so unfortunate to have a friend who has so come down, and he has no pity for his friend, because he is so much occupied in pitying himself. In hundreds, and thousands, and tens of thousands of cases, as soon as the gold has gone, the pretended love has gone, and when the dwelling has been changed from the mansion to the cottage, the friendship which once promised to last for ever, has suddenly disappeared.

But, brethren, God will never leave us on account of poverty: however low we may be brought, there it always stands, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Scant may be your board; you may have hard work to provide things honest in the sight of all men; you may sometimes have to look, and look again, and wonder by what straits you will be enabled to escape out of your present difficulty. But when all friends have turned their backs, and when acquaintances have fallen from you like leaves in autumn, he hath said, "I will never leave, nor forsake thee." Then beneath his bounty you shall find a shelter, and when these other hands are shut his hands shall be out-stretched still in loving-kindness and tender mercy, to help and deliver the soul of the needy.

Sometimes, and very often, too, men lose all their friends if they fall into any *temporary disgrace*. They may really have done no wrong; they may even have done right, but public opinion may condemn the course they took, or slander may be propagated, which casts them into the shade, and then men suddenly grow forgetful. They do not know the man; how should they? He is not the same man, to them at any rate, and as the world gives him the cold shoulder, his friends serve him the same. The old proverb, "The devil take the hindmost," seems to be generally the custom with our friends when we get into seeming disgrace. They are all off, seeing who can run away first, for they fear that they shall be left to share in our dishonour. But it is never so with our God. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Thou mayest be put into the dungeon, like Paul and Silas, but God will make thee sing there, even at midnight. Thou mayest be set in the stocks, but even there God will cause thee to rejoice greatly. Thou mayest be cast into the fiery furnace, but he will tread the flames with thee there. Thou mayest be so dishonoured that men shall treat thee as they did God's only Son, and lift thee up upon the cross of shame, and put thee to death; but thou shalt never say, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" Thy Lord said it when he bore thy guilt, but thou shalt never need to say it, for thy guilt is put away for ever, and Jehovah will stand by thee in all thy dishonour. And let me here say, that there is never a child in the family that is dearer to the great Father than the child that is suffering shame and contempt from others. He loves them dearest when they suffer reproach for his sake. These are nearer to his heart than any other, and he bids them rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great shall be their reward in heaven if thus they bear and endure for his name. "I will never leave thee, my persecuted one: I will

pour such joy into thy heart that thou shalt forget all the dishonour. I will send an angel to minister to thee: yea, I will myself be with thee, and thou shalt rejoice in my salvation, while thy heart is glad and calm in the midst of the tumult and the strife around."

Blessed be God, all the shame and spitting that men can put upon us can never put our God away, for "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Alas! sad is it for human nature that we must say it—how many have been forsaken when they have been no longer able to *minister to the pleasure and comfort* of those who admired them while they profitted by them! Some are thus thrown aside, just as men throw away household stuff that is worn out, and is of no further use. Depend upon it, men will not forsake us while they can get anything out of us; but when there is no longer anything to profit by, when the poor woman becomes so decrepit that she can scarcely move from her bed to her chair, when the man becomes so laid aside by accident, or is so weak that he cannot take his place in the great march of life, then he is like the soldiers in Napoleon's march, he drops out of the line to die, and thousands either march over him, or if they are a little more merciful, march by and round him, but few are those who will stop to care for such, and attend to them. How often are the incurable forsaken and left! But he has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." If we should get so old that we cannot serve the church of God, even by a single word; if we should become so sick that we are only a burden to those of our house who have to nurse us; if we should grow so feeble that we could not lift our hand to our lip, yet the eternal love of Jehovah would not have diminished, no, not so much as by a single jot, towards the souls whom he had loved from before the foundation of the world. However low your condition, you shall find God's love is ever underneath for your uplifting. However weak you are, his strength shall be revealed in the everlasting arms that will not permit you to sink into disaster, and your soul into perdition. This, then, is a very precious text. Others may forsake us, for different reasons, too many to be mentioned now, but he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Well, then, let the rest go. If the Lord Jehovah standeth at our right hand, we can well afford to see the backs of all our friends, for we shall find friends enough in the Triune God, whom we delight to serve.

Again, this is a very remarkable promise, if we *think of our own conduct towards God*. "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." And have not we often said the same to him? We were like Peter: we felt we did love our Saviour: we were sure we did, and we did not, could not believe that *we could ever be so false, so faithless, as to forsake him*. We almost longed for some temptation to prove how true we should be. We felt very vexed with other professors that they should prove so untrue. We

felt in our heart that we could not do like that, and that we should stand firm under any imaginable pressure. But what became of us, my brethren? Charge your memories a moment. Did the cock that accused Peter never accuse you? Did you never deny your Lord and Master, and at last, hearing the warning voice, go out and weep bitterly because you had forgotten him, him whom you had declared so solemnly you never would forsake? Oh! yes, I fear we, many and many a time, we have said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and yet under some sarcasm, some ridicule, or some pressing trial, we have been like the children of Ephraim, and, though armed and carrying bows, we have turned our back in the day of battle. If the voice has never denied Christ, has the heart never done so? If the tongue has remained silent, has not the soul sometimes gone back to the old flesh-pots of Egypt, and said, "I would fain find comfort once again where I did find it, with my old companions and in the old ways"? Ah! well, as you think of this, how unkindly and ungenerously you have treated your Lord, let this text stand out in bold relief, "He hath said, I will never leave *thee*, nor forsake *thee*." Although you have often forgotten him, yet his loving-kindness changes not. Though you have been fickle, he has been firm; though you have sometimes believed him not, yet he has remained faithful, glory be to his name.

Again, this promise is a very remarkable one, if we notice how *it overrides all the suggestions that might arise from a mere view of strict and severe justice*. It might be said, "Surely a child of God might justly be forsaken: he might so sin against God that it would only be just to leave him utterly to himself." Now, I am free to grant that a child of God might do so, nay, that all the children of God do so, and that God would be just if he acted upon the stern principle of law, to forsake his children as soon as ever they were converted, for it is not long after their conversion that they sin, and that sin is a special kind of treason against God. He would be just, even if he cast them away. But what I desire to enforce is this, that the promise is remarkable because it makes no kind of provision for this in any sort or degree, and under no imaginable circumstances. It does not say, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, if—" as certain brethren are prone to put it—"if—thou dost not forsake me." Nor does it say, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, if thou doest so-and-so and so-and-so." It is an absolute promise without any peradventures, ifs, buts, conditions, or promises. "I will *never* leave thee, nor forsake thee."

He that believeth in Jesus shall never be so left of God as to fall finally from grace. He shall never be so deserted as to give up his God, for his God will never give him up so far as to let him give up his confidence, or his hope, or his love, or his trust. The Lord, even our God, holds us with his strong right hand, and we shall not be moved, and even if we sin—sweet thought!—"If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ

the righteous." Over the heads of all our sins and iniquities, this promise sounds like a sweet silver bell, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Now, there are some that would make licentiousness out of this, and go into sin, but in doing so they prove themselves not to be the children of God. They show at once that they know nothing of the matter, for the genuine child of God, when he has a promise which is unconditional, finds holiness in it. Being moved by gratitude, he wants no buts, and ifs, and conditions, and racks, and scourges, in order to do right. He is ruled by love, and not by fear, governed by a holy gratitude which becomes a stronger bond to sacred obedience than any other bond that could be invented. Hence to the child of God, the knowledge that God will not leave nor forsake him, never suggests the thought of plunging into sin; he were an awful monster, indeed, if he did any such thing, but he hates it, and he says:—

"Loved of my God, for him again
With love intense I burn;
Chosen of him ere time began,
I choose him in return."

Observe, then, how remarkable is the promise—so contrary to the manner of men, so contrary to our own conduct, and so absolute and unconditional, that it is, indeed, marvellous that such a word should be on record. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

I cannot leave this part of the subject without remarking that such a promise as this seems to me that *it makes a clean sweep of every suggestion to the child of God to be depressed in mind*. You tell me you do not feel just now as you did some time ago: you are not anything like so earnest and lively in the divine ways.

When a believer is in this state, it is sometimes suggested to him that doubtless he is not a Christian at all, and that he must go back altogether to Egypt, in order to get gospel liberty, which is foolishness. But this promise comes in, and says to him, "God has not left thee, nor forsaken thee"; whatever may be your present state of thought and feeling, however low you may have fallen, the Eternal God is still faithful: he has not forgotten you. Go to him now: ask for revivings and refreshings, for he will surely give them to you. Conscience will, perhaps, say to some child of God to-night, indeed I hope it will, "There has been much to-day in business that has not been what it should have been, and as you look back upon the day you will see much to mourn over," and then, perhaps, conscience will add, "Therefore, God will leave you." Now, if you come to believe that, you will live worse to-morrow than to-day, and the next day worse still. But if you can answer, "No, he has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,' and can go with child-like confidence to your God, and confess the sin of the day, and begin again, washing once more in the precious fountain

filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, to-morrow there will be a better day. The joy of the Lord will be your strength against the sin, and your confidence in your Father's immutable affection will inspire you with zeal to trample down your temptations. Perhaps the devil may be injecting into your soul to-night all sorts of strange things, that God has forsaken you quite, and that he will be gracious no more to you, and other lies of that kind. But he has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and if you can get hold of this, it will be a sufficient refutation of all the suggestions of your own fear; and of the infernal power. No, Satan! I will cast myself upon the precious blood of Jesus, and if God should take all my property away, yet he has not left me, nor forsaken me. I am sure of that, and if my spirit sinks so low that I dare not look up, yet still he has said he has not left me, and he never will. If my sins should roll over me, like a big billow, and my conscience should cry out against me, and I should feel no rest and no peace, yet still I will hold on to Jesus, sink or swim, for he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," and let God be true, and every man, and every devil, and even my own conscience, prove a liar, sooner than God's Word should for a moment be placed in doubt. We now pass on to ponder upon:—

II. THE REMARKABLE COMFORT CONTAINED IN THIS PROMISE.

See how it abounds! I note, first, *its constancy*. "I will *never* leave thee, nor forsake thee." That is, not for a day, not for an hour, not for a minute. There are no breaks in the divine love. God does not depart from his people to return to them by-and-by, but he assures, "I will never, no never, leave thee." Perhaps that dear child of yours that is sickening is soon to die: well, God will not leave you in the moment when she is taken from you. Possibly that dear one who is now your comfort and delight, your husband, may sicken, and it will be a terrible stroke for you to be visited with, but "I will never leave thee, not even for an instant, then: in that trying time thou shalt prove the power and solace of my presence."

Perhaps, business man, that great commercial project, that great transaction, of yours may prove to be a losing one; that bill may be dishonoured; you may come to bankruptcy without any fault on your part, but "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Yes, you may have to go to Australia, and you may greatly dread the leaving your native land, but even then "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It may be you may be so misrepresented as to become suspected by those whom you love best, and you may be even put out of the church of God, without any fault, but entirely through error. Well, but then, even then, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," not even for a minute. Oh! brethren, what would be the consequences if the Lord left us for one-quarter of an hour? I solemnly believe that, if God were to leave his

people even on their knees for one twenty minutes, they would be brought to the deepest hell; but he will not leave them even there. And if it were dangerous to leave them on their knees alone, how much more so in the market, or in business, amidst enemies—seeking to catch them in their speech and deed! But he will never for a moment leave his people, nor forsake them. He will be at all times, at all hours, at all seasons, in all days of emergency, at their right hand, and they shall not be moved.

I notice in the promise, next to constancy, *endurance*. As there shall be no breaks in God's love for his own, so there shall be no end to it. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Yes, it may not be desirable to live to extreme old age, when infirmities may abound, and all strength may decay, but if you should reach it, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It certainly is a painful thing, that last stroke, to pass to the throne of God, but "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." There shall never be a time when the Lord will cast away one of his people. He shall never grow weary of them. He has espoused them unto himself, married them, taken them into eternal union with himself, and never, let the ages revolve as they may, and time change as it will, never will God leave or forsake his people. Comfort yourselves, therefore, with the confidence of the endurance, as well as the constancy of this love.

We are most pleased, however, with *the fulness of the promise*. The text means, manifestly means from its connection, a great deal more than it says. We are told not to be covetous. Why? Why should we be covetous? God has said he will never leave us, and if we have him we possess all things. Who has need to be covetous when all things are his, and God is his? We are told to be contented, not to seek to hoard up so much for the future, because God has provided for the future in the very promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." God guarantees to his servants that they shall have enough; well, let that guarantee prevent both covetousness and discontent. How shall this promise apply to temporal things? "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," does not look at first sight as if it had anything to do with our ordinary expenses, but, according to the text, it has, for we are told not to be covetous, but to be content with such things as we have. So, then, the text applies to the ordinary working-man, to the merchant, to every Christian, even in his money matters, as well as in his soul matters. "I will not leave thee, even in these." He that doth not let a sparrow fall to the ground without his permission will not let his children want. If they should for a little time be in need, that shall work their lasting good, but they shall dwell in the land, and verily they shall be fed. The fulness that lies in the promise is perfectly unbounded. When God says he will be with his servants, he means this, "My wisdom shall be with them to guide them; my love shall be with them to cheer them; my Spirit shall be with them to sanctify them; my power shall be

with them to defend them; my everlasting might shall be put forth on their behalf so that they may not fail nor be discouraged." To have God with you were better than to have an army of ten thousand men, and a host of friends were not equal to that one name, the name of Jehovah, for he is a host in himself. When God is with a man, he is not there asleep, negligent, indifferent, regardless in his time of suffering, but he is there intensely sympathizing, bearing the trouble, helping and sustaining the sufferer, and in due time—his own good time—delivering him in triumph. Oh! precious word of heartening promise! Plunge ye into it, for it is a sea without a bottom, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Better still, perhaps, in the promise is *the certain truth of it*. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee," has been proved by God's saints in all the ages that are past. Turn to the pages of your Bibles, and see if ever a man was ashamed that put his trust in Christ: see if he that wrestled with the invisible God was ever confounded. Hath not the Lord kept with his people at all hazards—broken the necks of kings, and scattered empires like chaff before the wind, sooner than that one of his faithful ones should come to ruin?

It has been so, even in your own experience. You, too, have found the text to be true. You have gone through fire and through water, but he has never left you nor forsaken you. Your vessel scarcely had enough draught of water to keep off the bottom, but though she has almost grated on the gravel, yet she has kept afloat, and though, perhaps, you have been wrecked, yet you have come safe to shore. You have lost much, you say, but you have been a gainer by your loss, and where you are to-day you are by eternal mercy and covenant grace, and you could not well be in a better position than God has put you in. Goodness and mercy have followed you all the days of your life up till now, and you are obliged to confess it, and to say:—

"Streams of mercy never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

So fear not now that at this particular season God is about to alter his previous dispensation. Out with them, poor Little-Faith; away with thy doubts; put away those black suspicions. He is a God that changeth not, and, having helped you until now, he will help you even to the end. Why, how true this must be! "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." How can God forsake that which has cost him so much already? He has given his Son's blood to redeem us, and his Spirit's power to renew us, and if he were to leave undone the work which he has begun, why, a tower has been commenced, and he has not been able to finish it! A man who has spent much money upon one enterprise will spend yet more to finish it, because of what he has already spent. Now, God will not lose the work of Christ, and the precious blood of

his Son, but, having begun, he will certainly carry on, even to the end. Besides this, also: God cannot leave his people, because he calls them his children, and how could he leave his child? "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Even when the son has dishonoured his father's name, and lost his own character, that father's love still holds on, and follows that child still with tears of sorrow, but still with faithfulness and truth. And God will not cast away his own begotten sons, whom he has begotten again unto a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Beloved, Christ is married to his people, and therefore how can he leave them? He says, "As a young man rejoiceth over his bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee," and will he leave them to whom he is knit by so near and dear, so tender and affectionate a union? It cannot be. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Now, see, if he did leave his people, what would it be? It would be giving up the whole quarrel between himself and Satan. It is in his people's hearts that the great battle is being fought out between good and evil. To give them up would be to give up the battle-ground to his great enemy, and what laughter there would be in the vaults of hell, what mockery in the halls of Pandemonium, if it could be said, "God has forsaken his people, given up his elect, suffered his redeemed to perish, cast away his regenerate, and forsaken the souls that trusted him"! The very thought of it is blasphemy. Far, far from us let us put it away. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

I cannot enlarge further upon the promise, and need not do so, because it opens up itself, or rather God the Holy Ghost will open it up to you if you sit awhile in your chamber and meditate upon it. I do not know of a richer text, or one more full of consolation. It is a long skein of truth; unwind it. It is a precious granary, full as Joseph crammed the granaries of Egypt; open you the door, and feed to the full; there will be no fear of your ever exhausting it. "For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

Now, the third thing to be noticed concerning this promise is:—

III. THE REMARKABLE EFFECTS THAT SUCH A PROMISE SHOULD PRODUCE.

Surely the first blessed fruit of such a glorious promise should be *perfect contentment*. It is said to be hard to be contented. I have the pleasure of knowing some brethren who I am sure are perfectly content. They even say, and I think without the slightest mental reservation, that they have not an unfulfilled wish or desire so far as this world goes. They have all that heart could wish. And yet these are not the richest people in the world, and they are not persons who are much to be envied for their mere external circumstances: yet they are perfectly contented. The fact is that the grace of God makes the people of God to sing sweetly, where

other people would murmur. They are satisfied where others would find easy ground for discontent. But how easy it is, how easy it must be, for a man to be contented when he knows that God has promised to be with him in all circumstances and at all times! Surely, if anything could be a kind of conservatory, a hot-house, in which to grow the delicate plant of contentment to perfection, it must be this full belief that high or low, rich or poor, well or sick, God hath said, "I will never leave, nor forsake thee." Surely it was this that made Bunyan's Pilgrim sing in the Valley of Humiliation:—

" He that is down need fear no fall,
 He that is low no pride;
 He that is humble ever shall
 Have God to be his guide."

Christian did thereby say that he was content, whether he had little or much, and that he left everything in his lot to his God. Oh! get then, my friends, my text fully into your souls, and keep it there, as marrow and fatness, and you will be content.

Well, then, in the next place, *it will cure your covetousness*. A man does not need to go on scraping; and to use that muck-rake for ever, when he knows "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." It was not a bad argument which one used with Alexander when he said to him, "When are you going to enjoy yourself fully?" Alexander did not answer the question, but the philosopher said, "What are you going to do next?" "First we shall conquer Greece." "Yes, and then will you rest?" "No; we shall then attack Asia Minor." "And when you have conquered that, I suppose you will rest?" "No; we shall then take Persia." "And when you have overcome Persia, what then?" "We shall march to India." "And when you have taken India, what then?" "Why, then we shall sit down and make ourselves merry." "Well," said the philosopher, "I think we had better begin before we go to Greece, or Persia, or Asia Minor, or any of them." And truly so, it were as well for us to be content with that moderate income which God gives us. Let us enjoy what God bestows upon us now, in gratitude to him, and give ourselves up to his service; lest, perhaps, in seeking more, we become spiritually poorer while literally richer, and become less content with the great load on our back than we are to-day, when we have enough and no more. It is a sweet quietus to covetousness when God saith, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

And, beloved, what a promise this is *to make a man confident in his God*. In his works, in his sufferings, in his enterprises, what a stay of soul is here!

I know what it is to fall back upon this promise sometimes to keep from depression of spirit, and to find reviving in it. Perhaps you may suppose that those of us who are always before the public,

and are speaking concerning the blessed promises of God, never have any moments of downcasting, and never any times of heart-breaking; but you are quite mistaken. We may have passed through all this, perhaps, that we may know how to say a word in season to any who are now passing through similar experiences. With many enterprises upon my hands, far too great for my own unaided strength, I am often driven to fall flat upon the promise of my God, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." If I feel that any scheme has been of my own devising, and that I seek my own honour in it, I know it must come to the ground, and rightly so. But when I can prove that God has thrust it upon me, and that I am moved by a divine impulse, and not by my own monitions and wishings, then how can my God forsake me? How can he lie, however weak I may be? How is it possible for him to send his servant out to battle, and not succour him with reinforcements in the day when the battle goes hard? God is not David when he put Uriah in the front, and then left him that he might die. He will never put any of his servants forward and then desert them. Dear brethren and sisters, if the Lord shall call some of you even to things you cannot do, he will give you strength enough to do them; and if he should push you still forwarder till your difficulties increase and your burdens become heavy, still, as your days, your strength shall be, and you shall go on with the tramp of soldiers, with the indomitable spirit of men who have tried and trusted the naked arm of the Eternal God. "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Then what matters it? Though all the world were against you, you could shake all the world as Samson shook the lion, and rent him as a kid. If God be for you, who can be against you? Though earth, and hell, and all their crew, come against you, and should combine together, yet if the God of Jacob stood at your back, you would thresh them as though they were but wheat, and winnow them as though they were but chaff, and the wind should carry them away. Oh! roll this promise under your tongue as a sweet morsel!

How I wish that it belonged to you all! Oh! that everyone of you had a share in it! But some of you, alas! have never fled to Jesus. Oh! that you would do so! Whoever trusts him to pardon by his atoning sacrifice, is saved. To look to the great Substitute, and depend upon him for salvation, this gives salvation, and then come the promises that belong to the saved.

The Lord of his infinite mercy bless you, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

BARBED ARROWS, from the Quiver of C. H. SPURGEON. A Collection of Anecdotes, Illustrations, and Similes. With Preface by Pastor C. Spurgeon. A Companion Volume to "Feathers for Arrows." Cloth. Published at 2s. 6d., **offered at 2s.**