

THE APPEAL AND PRAYER OF A WAITING SOUL

Preached on Tuesday Evening, August 3rd, 1852, at Eden Street Chapel, Hampstead Road

"And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in Thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish." Psalm 39:7, 8

This psalm was written under peculiar feelings, and whilst the Psalmist was passing through a peculiar experience. This indeed is the case with well nigh every psalm, though we cannot always so distinctly trace out the experience as in the one before us. Let none think that David could sit down at pleasure and throw off a psalm. Before he could pen one of these divine compositions, he must have been brought by the Spirit of God into a special experience; special feelings being thus wrought in his soul by the power of the Spirit, he must next have special words dictated by the same almighty Teacher. And when he was under such solemn impressions and such inspired feelings, and was taught such inspired words, he sat down and poured forth those heavenly strains which were first sung in the tabernacle, and then laid up with the other scriptures to be perpetual breasts of consolation for the exercised family of God. Nor let anyone think that he can understand the meaning, or use the words of the psalm, except as he is taught by the same Spirit and brought into the same experience. If he have not the same key, he cannot turn the wards of the lock.

By examining this psalm, we may, with God's blessing, gather some of the peculiar feelings of the Psalmist when it gushed warm from his heart and mouth.

1. It seems to me, then, that he was at this time *stretched*

upon a bed of sickness; for we find him dwelling much upon the uncertainty and frailty of life. "O spare me," he says in the last verse, as if the Lord were about to cut short his days, "that I may recover strength before I go hence and be no more." Again: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am," or, as we read in the margin, "what time I have here."

2. But besides the *bodily* affliction under which the Psalmist seems to have been labouring, it appears as if the Lord was at this time chastening him very heavily in *soul*, for he prays, "Remove Thy stroke away from me; I am consumed by the blow of Thy hand." He cries out here as one who was writhing under a sense of God's displeasure.

3. But further, these strokes of God's chastening rod, and these blows of His heavy hand, were *laying bare the iniquity of his heart*; for he says, "When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth; surely every man is vanity."

4. Lying, then, in this way under the double stroke of God, stricken in body, and smitten in conscience, he looks, so to speak, out of his chamber window, and *takes a survey of mankind in general*. Viewing with spiritual eyes their useless cares and vain disquietudes, and yet seeing how by all these they were kept from divine realities, from the true knowledge of God and of themselves, he bursts forth, "Surely every man walketh in a vain show; surely they are disquieted in vain: he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them."

5. Put besides this, it would appear that *his conscience was now made exceedingly tender*, so that he durst not speak lest sin should be stirred. "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth

with a bridle while the wicked is before me."

6. Coupled with this (not to enlarge further upon the point), we see also *a blessed submission to the will of God* wrought in his soul. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because Thou didst it."

Prostrate, then, in body and spirit under the afflicting hand of God, and having these divine impressions wrought in his soul by the blessed Spirit, he breathes forth the words of the text, "*And now, Lord, what wait I for? my hope is in Thee. Deliver me from all my transgressions; make me not the reproach of the foolish.*"

Our text contains four distinct clauses, which I shall, as the Lord may enable, attempt to open up one by one as they lie before me.

I. One reason why I have been endeavouring this evening to give a faint sketch of the Psalmist's experience whilst penning this psalm, was to show that David was not *always* in this frame of soul. He was brought into it by the Spirit of God working in and by those peculiar circumstances with which he was surrounded. *He* was not always able, nor are *we* always able, to say unto the Lord, "*What wait I for?*" His soul was not always thus chastened, always thus meek, always thus waiting upon God, always thus able to appeal to Him with simplicity and godly sincerity. The fan in God's chastening hand had first winnowed away the chaff and dust of self out of his soul before he could come to Him with that prostration of spirit, that brokenness and humility, and to crown all, that beautiful simplicity, "Now, Lord, what wait *I* for?" We may use the words; but that is a very different thing from possessing the same child-like brokenness, the same godly sincerity, the same filial tenderness, the same

bowing down of heart, in a word, the same heavenly frame of soul in which David was when he thus earnestly appealed to God. Before we can use the words as David used them, the Lord must take us by His own hand and mould us into the same experience as the potter moulds the clay. But if we are brought by the hand of God into this simple, child-like, tender, penitential frame—and this is for the most part only under the chastening, afflicting rod of the Most High—it will be sweet and blessed to walk in David's track, use David's words, and feel a measure of David's simplicity and godly sincerity in our soul.

i. In examining these words, it may be as well to see *first* what David *did not wait for*. This may somewhat clear the way to see what he was waiting for. One thing seems pretty plain; he was not waiting for any *temporal, earthly advantages*, or anxiously expecting any measure of *worldly happiness*. Those carnal desires and earthly longings which engage the hearts of thousands had been, for the time at least, winnowed out of him by the breath of God's displeasure. Doubtless he wished to live a little longer; he clung to life, as all men, even God's children, do cling to it, till the Lord is pleased to dissolve that last tie which binds them to earth. "Spare me," he cries, "that I may recover my strength." But though he clung to life, he did not *wait* for life. Eternal things had such a firm place in his heart, and lay with such weight and power on his conscience, that there was no room for earthly wants, no, not for life itself.

But did he wait, under these circumstances, for *wealth and temporal prosperity*? As he looked out of his sick room he saw "all men walking in a vain show." Men, he saw, were generally walking, not in the possession and enjoyment of what was substantial and eternal, but only of what was shadowy and delusive. He perceived, therefore, how "they

were disquieted in vain; heaping up riches, not knowing who should gather them." Could he, then, be waiting for that about which he saw men were disquieting themselves in vain? Longing after realities, could he pant after shows?

Or was he breathing after *human applause*? Did he pine for the perishing breath of dying worms? We may be sure, when he was lying under the afflicting hand of God in body and soul, human praise and human dispraise, whether his name were on the lips of admiring thousands, or he sank into the grave unnoticed and unknown, were to him matters of indifference. But not to enlarge further, was there anything of a *temporal nature* that he was waiting for? Nothing, absolutely nothing.

Now a man does not very easily nor very often come into this spot. It needs some, I might say much, furnace work before a man can really come into this experience. So closely, so firmly, does nature cleave to us, that it is rarely thus put off; so pressing are its desires, so importunate its wants, that its voice is rarely thus so dumb.

ii. But having seen what David did *not* wait for, let us attempt to gather what he *did* wait for.

1. First and foremost, we may lay down as an object of his waiting heart, *a clear manifestation of the love of God*. I do not mean to say that he had not enjoyed this before; but when the Lord was correcting him for iniquity, rebuking him with His heavy strokes, and consuming him as the moth consumes the garment, all sensible realization of it was gone. The cloud upon the throne hid the face of the Lord. It is indeed this only which can really comfort and support the soul with death in prospect, eternity in view, and the hand of God upon the troubled conscience. This alone can give solid

peace, and dispel those gloomy doubts and fears which, like night birds, flap their dismal wings over the soul as death seems to draw nigh. By this alone the sting of death is removed, the mouth of hell is closed, and the gates of heaven are opened. Well then might he say, "Lord, what wait I for?" The manifestation of Thy pardoning love to my heart.

2. But was there anything else besides that he waited for? David at this time was lying under the rebukes of God; the chastening hand of the Lord's displeasure lay heavy upon him. "Remove," he cries, "Thy stroke away from me; I am consumed by the blow of Thine hand." He was therefore waiting for *the removal of the chastening hand of God*; or, if the Lord still continued to chastise, to be enabled to feel that the rod was dipped in love. Languishing in body, troubled in mind, with a load of guilt on his conscience, well might he plead that these strokes might cease, or that he might be able to regard them as fatherly chastisements, which were working together for his spiritual good.

3. But was he waiting for nothing else? He was waiting also to have *his sins subdued*, his powerful lusts and corruptions overcome by the grace of God, that they might no longer, as they had been accustomed, tease and distress his soul. The corrections he was receiving for iniquity would necessarily make him desire the subduing of iniquity; for unless subdued, a repetition of sin would draw down a repetition of chastisement.

4. But was he waiting for nothing else? O yes; he was waiting for *a word to be spoken to his soul*. We cannot read the 119th Psalm without seeing David's intense love for and desire after God's word. It was to him sweeter than honey and the honeycomb, his daily delight, and his nightly meditation: "The entrance of Thy word giveth light." "I

opened my mind and panted, for I longed for Thy commandments."

5. But was he waiting for nothing else? Yes; he was waiting for *a smile from God's gracious countenance*; to behold all the clouds that shrouded His face from view dispersed, and to see the beams of the Sun of Righteousness break forth from behind those clouds and shine with brightness into his soul. The frowns under which he was lying made him pant after a smile: "Lord, lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon me."

6. But was he waiting for nothing more? Yes, he was waiting for *the will of God to be accomplished in his soul*; for the Lord to manifest His victorious power, to dethrone his idols, subdue his creature affections, and take such complete possession of his breast that there might be room there for God and God alone. Inordinate affections had been alike his sin and sorrow. Lust after women had drawn him into adultery and murder; and an idolised son had well nigh cost him his life and his throne.

7. But was he waiting for anything else? Yes; for *the mind of God to be stamped upon his soul*, that he might be cast into the mould of the divine image, having no thoughts but the thoughts of God, no desires but the desires of God, and no will but the will of God. To be teachable, patient, submissive, humble, child-like, tender, obedient, watchful, prayerful, spiritually-minded; to have the power of vital godliness brought into the heart, dwell on the lips, and be made manifest in the life; to be purged from hypocrisy, pharisaism, covetousness, pride, and worldly-mindedness; to speak, act, and walk in the fear, faith, and love of God; to live a believer's life, and die a believer's death, and then exchange earth for heaven, and sin and sorrow for perfect holiness and

endless bliss—O what a store of such and similar spiritual desires are crowded in the words, "Lord, what wait I for?"

But the very words themselves clearly imply that he had no power to produce these heavenly realities in his own soul. He groaned out his desires after them, supplicating God that He would bestow them upon him; and yet he was utterly unable to bring the least portion of them into his heart. But he knew that God, according to His revealed will, must be waited upon, inquired of, supplicated unto; and he knew also that, for the most part, He delayed His answers until He saw that the soul was in a fit state to receive them.

But what *kept* him waiting? for we need to be kept waiting as well as to be put, in the first instance, in a waiting position. What kept him close to the footstool, made him persevere, and wrought this feeling in his heart, that he would take no denial? What fixed him to the throne, in spite of all opposition and all obstacles, the workings of invisible agency, Satan's suggestions, infidel doubts, and the surmises and suspicions of his own evil heart? The greatness of the blessing that God was able to bestow upon him.

All these things it was working together in his soul, which wrought in him that experience which he poured forth in the simple yet most expressive words, "And now, Lord, what wait I for?"

The *words* are easy; anybody can make use of them; and the more that men's consciences are hardened, the more freely do they make use of them. They are used all over the kingdom, in all the churches and chapels of the land. Catholic and Churchman, Puseyite and Methodist, the Sunday school child and University student, all take the words as freely and unconcernedly into their mouths as they would so much

water. But who can enter into their solemn import? Who can come with the same child-like simplicity, and appeal to a heart-searching God with the same godly sincerity? Who can thus lay out his whole soul before God, and prostrate his spirit before the footstool of Jehovah? Only he in whom the blessed Spirit is working in the same manner as He wrought in the soul of David. Only he can really say, "Now, Lord, what wait I for?" It is indeed a blessed posture to be lying thus at God's feet, and to be able to tell Him that we are only waiting for Himself. Such a soul is indeed precious in God's sight, and such an experience is indeed wrought by His own hand in the heart.

II. "*My hope is in Thee.*" These words plainly show how completely David had been stripped and emptied of all creature sufficiency. He had ceased to hope in himself; and no man can hope in God until he has ceased to hope in himself. But every man will, nay, must hope in himself, till all creature hope has been burned out of him in the furnace. David did not then hope in *his own righteousness*. That had been held up before his eyes with all its rags and tatters, moth-eaten, as he speaks, and therefore dropping to pieces from its own rottenness. Nor had he any hope in any *resolutions* he might make that matters would be with him at some future time better than they were now. He must have felt, doubtless, by painful experience, that all such resolutions are but as the tow when it meets the flame. Nor could he hope in any *promises* or *vows* he might make that he would never again transgress, never again be entangled in evil, never again rebel, never again murmur, never again doubt or fear. Nor could he hope in anything of *human manufacture* or creature production. As every man did but "walk in a vain show," realities, soul-sustaining realities, were not to be expected from those who were themselves not real personages, but mere walking actors in a theatrical

pageant. Thus he had no hope either in himself or others. Nor could he hope in the *bare naked letter of God's Word*; without the Spirit's application it fell short of his case. Nor could he hope in the mere *doctrines of grace*; in the external sound, without the internal testimony. Nor could he hope in *Christ at a distance*, without any manifestation, union, or communion. When I say *David* did not thus hope, I am assuming him as a pattern of a believer in similar circumstances now; for his views of Christ and the gospel were, from the very nature of the dispensation under which he lived, less clear than I have laid down.

But what brought David, and what brings every child of God with David, to have no hope in himself? The afflicting hand of God in his soul, breaking all his dreams of earthly happiness, all his webs of creature righteousness, all his confidence in man, all his hopes from the past, all his expectations from the future. Like Noah's dove, he could find no rest for the sole of his foot on the floating carcasses; he could only hope in God, for there was none else left to hope in. This was the only spot on which the soul of his dove-like heart could rest; fluttering backwards and forwards over the wreck of a deluged world, no rest could he find till he alighted upon the ark.

But, though so much dust and rubbish had been swept away, and room thus made for a gospel hope, something was still wanting. The removal of a false hope does not give a true one; the pulling down of an old hovel does not build up a new house. Before, therefore, David could confidently say, "My hope is in Thee," he must have had some clear manifestation of Christ to his soul. We cannot hope in an unknown God, nor in an unseen Saviour, nor in an unfelt salvation; we can only hope in these divine realities as they are revealed to the soul, and brought into the heart by the

power of God Himself. Hope, in Scripture, is compared to "an anchor, sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." But of what use is an anchor whilst lying in the dockyard? It must be brought into the ship, and united to it by a strong cable; then, when the wind rises and the storm comes on, it is let go from the bow into the sea, and, grasping with its tenacious fluke the firm bottom, it holds the ship's head from off the breakers. An anchor, with a cable, is salvation; without one, an incumbrance. So a hope that brings salvation must be a hope in union with God. A hope that stands in the naked letter, in the bare promise, is an anchor in the dockyard, and not an anchor in the bottom of the sea. We want union with God through Christ to bring salvation into the heart. "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they also may be one in Us." This union is personal, vital, spiritual, experimental, eternal." I am the vine, ye are the branches." Now, when there is a manifestation to the soul of the mercy, grace, and love of God in Immanuel, this produces a vital union; and this is the entering of hope as an anchor "within the veil." Then we ride at anchor; then we are safe amidst the billows; and then we shall not concerning faith make shipwreck.

The words are simple, so simple that a child may use them. In fact, as scarcely anyone is without some dim or distant hope in God's mercy, it seems as if almost anybody might say unto God, "My hope is in Thee;" but when we dive a little below the surface of this outside religion, what a fund of Christian experience is implied in the words! How the soul must have been brought to see the fearful depth of the fall! How much must have been pulled down, and how much built up! What a death must there have been to self, and what life to God; what sights of sin, and what views of grace, before a man can really take into his lips these five monosyllables—in word, a sentence for an infant's primer; in deed, the

experience only of an exercised believer: *"My hope is in Thee!"* People talk about hope, just as if it could be picked up in the streets, or found at well-nigh every corner; but this blessed grace of hope, this "anchor of the soul," is not so easily got at. It is the result of the manifestation of God to the heart, and therefore no man has any solid, well-grounded hope in God, who has not ceased to hope in himself, and who has not had, more or less, some manifestation of Christ.

III. But David adds, *"Deliver me from all my transgressions."* Sin had been deeply opened up in his soul. Lying under the chastening hand of God, writhing in body from pain, and in soul from a sense of God's displeasure, he had had deep and solemn views of the awful nature of sin. This forced from his heart and lips the cry, "Deliver me from all my transgressions." Ah! how rarely it is that we see sin in its true colours; that we feel what the apostle calls, "the exceeding sinfulness of sin!" O how much is the dreadful evil of sin for the most part veiled from our eyes! Satan and a deceitful heart so gloss it over, so excuse, palliate, and disguise it, that it is daily trifled, played, and dallied with, as if this beautiful viper had no poison fang. "When the wine" of sin "giveth its colour in the cup," how rarely is it remembered that, "at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder!" It is only, then, as God the Spirit is pleased to open the eyes to see, and awaken the conscience to feel "the exceeding sinfulness of sin," and thus discover its dreadful character, that we have any real sight or sense of its awful nature. But let a man lie, as David lay, under the afflicting hand of God, smiting him with rebukes, and making his "beauty to consume away like the moth," he will soon cry out with him, "Deliver me from all my transgressions." Sins of heart, sins of lip, sins of life, sins of omission, sins of commission, ingratitude, unbelief, rebellion, lust, pride, worldliness! as all these transgressions, troop after troop,

come in view; as our backslidings, inconsistencies, carelessness, carnality, sins long buried and forgotten, but now rising up like spectres from the grave, appear, well may we bury our head beneath the bed-clothes, and cry with stifled voice, "Deliver me," O deliver me "from all my transgressions!"

Now, there are five things respecting sin from which every child of God desires deliverance, and from which none but God can deliver him.

1. There is, *first*, the *guilt* of sin, when sin is charged home upon the conscience, and lies there as a heavy load! O the guilt of sin, when God brings the soul to book, when He squares up matters, when He holds out a long list of hideous transgressions, to bear with weight and power upon the conscience! Then is felt the *guilt* of sin; and David doubtless felt this when he said, "When Thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." From this guilt of sin none but God can deliver the conscience; and He delivers it only by the application of the atoning blood of Jesus to the soul—that precious blood which "cleanseth from all sin." Until, then, there is, more or less, such a manifestation of this precious blood to the conscience, the guilt of sin is not effectually taken away.

2. But then there is the *filth* of sin. O how it defiles the mind, the memory, and the imagination! Like an uncovered sewer, you can track its course by its smell and slime. This open sewer is a defiled imagination. How loathsome and filthy does a poor sinner feel "the earthly house of his tabernacle" to be, as this slimy ditch oozes up through the chinks and cracks of the well-washed boards, as I have read that a poor but clean country-woman literally was pestered in one of the courts of Whitechapel. Sin, horrid sin, defiles every word and

work, every thought and prayer. This makes the child of God cry out sometimes, in real distress of mind, "Deliver me from all my transgressions." "O deliver me from the filth of them! O wash me in the fountain once opened for sin and uncleanness! renew me in the spirit of my mind; purify and sanctify me by Thy grace."

3. But there is, *thirdly*, the dreadful *love* of sin which is so deeply rooted in the carnal mind—that most accursed desire after and delight in it. O that there should still dwell in the breast of one who fears God lust and sensuality, and a whole host of corruptions, better felt than described, better hinted at than entered into! O that these should so lurk and work, and kindle such desperate hankering desires after sin! How many sighs and groans does this draw forth from the poor child of God! And yet, after all his prayers and entreaties, convictions and sorrow for sin, he will still find an accursed cleaving to it in his carnal mind. And this makes him cry out, "Deliver me from all my transgressions," and especially from that dreadful love of sin which I feel so continually at work. But how is he delivered? By the shedding abroad of the love of God in his soul; by the Holy Spirit taking his affections and fixing them on things above, and thus subduing, or casting out, the love of evil.

4. But closely connected with the love of sin is the *power* of sin; for it is from the love of it that sin derives all its power. And who can honestly say before God that sin, in some shape or other, is never his master? Who can say with an honest countenance before God, the Searcher of hearts, that pride, unbelief, evil temper, covetousness, worldly-mindedness, and similar sins, in these or other shapes and forms, have not sometimes had dominion over him? This *power* of sin brings forth many a piteous groan from the oppressed bosom of the child of God, and his cry is for deliverance. Sometimes he

receives this answer: "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under the law, but under grace;" and as grace comes into the soul it subdues, while it lasts, the dreadful dominion of evil.

5. The *fifth* and last dreadful feature of sin is its *practical commission*. And who can say that he is altogether free here—that he is never, more or less, guilty of the commission of sin, at least in tongue, if not further? Who is free from hasty or idle words? Who can always "keep his lips as with a bridle, while the wicked is before him?" Who can say that all the day long his soul is so kept in the fear of God, that he never speaks a word, or does anything, that conscience testifies to be wrong? And if now kept, who can look back through the vista of a long profession and see nothing to be ashamed of? I know not the man—wherever he lives, I cannot tell the road to find him; he certainly does not live in my house.

These five things—the guilt, the filth, the love, the power, and the practice or commission of sin, are surely enough, when felt, to make the child of God grieve and groan, and exclaim in the language of David, "Deliver me from all my transgressions." O deliver me from the guilt of sin, the power of sin, the love of sin, the filth of sin, and the practice of sin: "Deliver me from all my transgressions" in every shape and form, here and hereafter, in their cause and in their consequences, as offensive to God, as wounding Christ in the garden and on the cross, and as grieving and dishonouring the Holy Ghost.

IV. Now, closely connected with these breathings is the last clause of the text: "*Make me not the reproach of the foolish.*" Why should David couple this petition with the preceding? Because he knew what he was—his weakness and

helplessness under the power of temptation. He remembered the frailty of his nature, and the evils of his heart; he was no novice in the school of experience, but was deeply acquainted with the power of temptation and the sin that dwelleth in us; he feared, therefore, that in an unguarded moment he might be entangled in temptation, and he knew that if then left of God he must fall; and if he should fall, he knew that he would become "the reproach of the foolish."

But who are these "foolish?" I think the best answer to this question is given by our Lord Himself, in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. "The foolish" were those who had oil in their lamps, but none in their vessels. By "the foolish" in the text, therefore, we may understand those who have the light of knowledge in their heads, and the lamp of profession in their hands, but no oil of grace in their hearts. They are "foolish," because they know neither God nor themselves, neither sin nor salvation, neither the depth of the fall nor the greatness of the remedy. They are "foolish," as regards themselves, in thinking that light and knowledge will save them, without life and grace; and they are "foolish" as regards others, for want of an experimental acquaintance with the heart. They know nothing, therefore, of the temptations of a child of God; how he is beset on every hand; how Satan is ever thrusting at or enticing him; how his own heart is continually prompting him to evil; and how snares are in every direction laid for his feet. The "foolish" know nothing of these trials; they are Pharisees, who "make clean the outside of the cup and platter," who whitewash and adorn the sepulchre without, whilst within it is "full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." David knew well, and every child of God knows well, that if he were allowed to slip, if he were suffered to say or do anything unbecoming, these would be the very first to make him an open reproach. "The foolish" can, and will, make no allowance for the least slip of

tongue or foot, for they themselves are ignorant of the weakness of the flesh, the subtlety of Satan, the strength of sin, and the power of temptation. Were he to stumble and fall, "the foolish" would be sure to point the finger of scorn at him. In breathing forth, then, this petition, we may well suppose him to say: "Lord, whatever temptations I may be called upon to endure, whatever snares of Satan or lusts of the flesh may beset my path behind and before, O keep me, keep me, that I may not be the reproach of the foolish; that they may have nothing to take hold of, to make me a byword, and through me to reproach Thy name, cause, and truth."

To become in this open way "the reproach of the foolish," is one of the heaviest and most humbling strokes that can ever befall a child of God. That these "foolish virgins," these empty professors, who know nothing of God or themselves, should be able to point the finger of scorn at him who has contended so loudly and so long for the experimental possession of vital godliness, and spurt out all their venom, saying, "Aha, aha! so would we have it!"—O it is death! and indeed a man had better die at once than ever thus become "the reproach of the foolish."

True religion is a very simple thing. Simplicity is stamped upon all the works of God, and especially upon the work of grace. The more genuine, therefore, our religion is, the more simple it will be. To be simple is to be child-like, and to be child-like is to have that mind and spirit without which no man can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Can we, then, with this child-like simplicity, walk step by step here with David, and follow him throughout? Can we put our seal to these things, and say, "Lord, what wait I for?" Is your religion brought into this narrow point? "Truly, my soul waiteth upon God; from Him cometh my salvation." "My soul,

wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him." Such a frame of soul is indeed from the hand of God, for no man ever did, or could bring himself into it. And if we can enter into one part of these heavenly breathings, we shall be able also to enter into the others, and say, "My hope is in Thee." Feeling the weight and burden of sin, we shall be constrained to cry, "Deliver me from all my transgressions;" and feeling our own weakness, and the evil of our hearts, we shall add, "Make me not the reproach of the foolish." If, then, we can sincerely, before God, employ these petitions, may we not ask, Who produced them? Who wrought this experience in the soul? From whose hands did it come? Surely, surely, the same Lord that taught David must have taught us; the same power that wrought in him must have wrought in us—before we could, in sweet experience, enter into this feeling language, and adopt it as our own. Here, therefore, we see a little of what true religion is; here we see what are the genuine breathings of a child-like spirit, and what is the experience of a man of God; and it will be our mercy if we can see in his experience a sweet counterpart of our own.