

Notes of Sermons Preached by Pastor Henry Haddow at Brockham Green  
on Lord's Day March 26<sup>th</sup> 1911

Morning Sermon

*Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? Selah. And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. (Psalm 77:7-10)*

It was not until rather late last evening that these words arrested my attention. I was meditating upon the portion we had under consideration last Lord's Day, and I quite thought that we should read the words again by way of text. But we live to prove that our thoughts are not God's thoughts, and that our ways are not God's ways. *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts. (Isaiah 55:9)* I hope the Lord's hand is in this matter. Perhaps there is some special case to be met. The Lord leads His people, especially His servants, in the way that is pleasing in His sight. He answers their prayers, but it is at times in such a way as almost drives them to despair. I ask the Lord to make me a blessing to His redeemed. I tell Him I would be as clay in His hands.

*Under Thy forming hands, my God,  
Give me the frame which Thou lik'st best. (Joseph Hart)*

The great apostle was willing to suffer if the Lord would make him useful to a suffering people. He was willing to endure affliction so that he might comfort any that were afflicted or in tribulation.

As I retired to rest last evening, I felt truly thankful that the Old Testament saints were men of like passions as ourselves. O my friends, it is a solemn thing to have to do with God. It is not every professor that has to do with God. God does not have to do with every professor. He has to do with those that He takes in hand, and leads about, and instructs. And through sufferings He favours them with an abundant entrance into the kingdom of His grace. It is through tribulation that you enter into the kingdom of God's grace. You will find this, if you search the scriptures (much will be said today about searching the scriptures). In the scriptures, says Christ, *ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. (John 5:39)* They were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4) What should I do without the scriptures? What should I do unless it pleased the Lord at times to favour me, so that I can say: *Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of hosts. (Jeremiah 15:16)*

Do you, do I esteem the words of God's mouth more than our necessary food? I put the question, my dear hearers. Let conscience speak. If you are a gracious soul, I know there have been times when you have esteemed the words of God's mouth more than your necessary food. You have searched the blessed Book then for hidden treasure, and you are ready to part with everything for Jesus Christ. And your heart has gone out after the Lord, and you have said, Give me grace, or else I die. Jesus has engraven it on your heart, that He is the one thing needful. O it is a mercy to have a heart set on fire after Jesus Christ, and to have a heart fixed on Christ. *My heart, says the psalmist, is fixed. (Psalm 57:7)* Where? On Christ, on the righteousness of Christ. I will sing God's praise. And let me say this: there comes a time in the experience of every soul that seeks after the Lord Jesus Christ, when he sings God's praise. The Lord Jesus Christ finds him, and brings him into the banqueting house, as the church says: *Then was I in His eyes as one that found favour. (Song of Solomon 8:10)*

Asaph did find favour in God's eyes. The Lord had blessed him, and done great things for him, whereof he was glad. And yet you find Asaph giving utterance to the words of my text. O if the Lord had not left a record of the experience of His people, I should have no hope if getting to heaven.

Elijah shut up heaven by prayer. The Lord said to Elijah: *What doest thou here? (1 Kings 19:9)* I want to have the same teaching as His saints have had in all ages. It is no small mercy to have a right religion. O what will it avail me if others are right, and I am wrong? Or for those that have made profession to find that they have not a right religion? What ever it may cost me, I want a right religion. How men can think they can have a right religion without costing them something, I do not know. The soul that is born of God knows something of conviction of sin, and of repentance. Where is Christ? What is He doing? He is at the right hand of God, a Prince and a Saviour. What for? To give repentance. Men never have repentance unto salvation unless God gives it. It is the gift of God. He gives repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins. He has redeemed Israel, and He takes them in hand. *He shall see His seed. (Isaiah 53:10)* He deals solemnly with Israel, and He will give her repentance and salvation, which needeth not to be repented of. No heaven without repentance, and faith in the blessed Lamb. The apostle Paul puts it very blessedly: *By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8,9)*

Well, having been enriched with godly sorrow for sin, and faith in the bleeding Lamb, the soul finds salvation. The soul is apt to think that now it will be well with him. Now I shall go on my way rejoicing. And perhaps you are favoured to go on your way for a time rejoicing. The Lord will teach that man that, in and of himself, he can do nothing. The way to heaven is a way of tribulation and sorrow, but it is a blessed way. One moment's fellowship with God and His dear Son will make amends for all the tribulation He has called you to pass through. You would not have one thing altered. You will say: *Choose Thou the way, but still lead on.* Perfect that which concerns me, hold me up, and bring me honourably through, and land my soul on Canaan's shores of bliss. God will do it too. *He is faithful that hath promised.*

Then you will know something of what it is at times to have enemies to contend with. Inside enemies, I am more particularly about to refer to. The greatest enemies I have are **in me**. A man's enemies are those in his own house. There are enemies outside, but the greatest are within.

*My own bad heart creates a smart  
Which none but God can know.*

*They that go down to the sea in ships...these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep. (Psalm 107:22,23)* Asaph, and the psalmist David knew what it was to do business in deep waters. Jeremiah said: *Let me talk with Thee of Thy judgements. (Jeremiah 12:1)*

How is it that the wicked prosper? Asaph was envious of the wicked, until he went into the house of the Lord, then he understood their end. And he said: *Surely Thou didst set them in slippery places: Thou castedst them down into destruction. (Psalm 73:17,18)* They are brought into destruction in a moment. Then he goes on to speak of being continually with the Lord: *Nevertheless I am continually with Thee: Thou hast holden me up with Thy right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee. (v.23-25)* Asaph could not always understand God's dealings with him, neither can His people, neither can we. It is a mercy, as it has ever been a mercy to His saints in all ages, that He is of one mind, and none can turn Him. *He performeth, says Job, the thing that is appointed for me. (Job 23:14)* God has determined every step of the journey. Don't you think there is such a thing as time with the Almighty. A thousand years are but as a day with Him, a day as a thousand years. He dwells in His own eternity. He does not borrow leave to be. That God is not God who does not know all things from the beginning. It is all ordered and determined, and comes to pass according to God's determination.

Sometimes you sing – do you believe it? No, neither do I – but we do when faith is in exercise:

*Plagues and death around me fly;  
Till He bids, I cannot die;  
Not a single shaft can hit,  
Till the God of love sees fit. (John Ryland)*

God is love. He is all love, nothing but love to the church. God is love. Men quote the words, but they do not seem to realise that God is love in Christ. Out of Christ He is a consuming fire. There was a time, friends, when you could not bear to think of God out of Christ. I look back to that time. I could find no comfort.

*Till God in human flesh I see,  
My thoughts no comfort find;  
The holy, just, and sacred Three,  
Are terrors to my mind. (Isaac Watts)*

But God in Christ is love. He rests in His love. Look at what Zephaniah says concerning this: *He will rest in His love. (Zephaniah 3:17)* He hates putting away. He is silent in His love. Sometimes God is silent in His love to you. You know it and realise it, experience it, and therefore you testify of it. His love is the same from eternity to eternity.

*My soul through many changes goes;  
His love no variation knows (William Hammond)*

A father may vary in his dealings with his children, but he loves all his children alike. So does God, though His dealings vary. He knows what is best. Perhaps the weakest of the family is indulged most at times. Look at John – he speaks for himself as *the disciple whom Jesus loved*. When the love of God is sweetly shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, then it is that we **know** the love of God. God's dealings are very solemn and mysterious. He *moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform*. And when He does this, what is it for? To make His wonders better known.

So far as your feelings are concerned, you cannot see how it is for your good. He promised Jacob He would not leave him until He had done all the things He had promised for him. Look at Jacob when they wanted Benjamin. He said, "No. Joseph is dead. Do you want Benjamin also?" *Blind unbelief is sure to err*. Look at Joseph in prison. Until the time came, the word of the Lord tried him. There is a set time, and until that set time, the word of the Lord will try you. I know when the Lord spoke to me, and said: *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*, I believed it at the time. But last night I could not put into words what I felt. Then these words came to me: *Will He cast off for ever?* Unbelief works, and says He will cast off for ever, but faith says, No, He will not. Faith says: *His promise is Yea, and Amen, and never was forfeited yet. (A M Toplady)*

*Lord, in trouble have they visited Thee, they poured out a prayer when Thy chastening was upon them. (Isaiah 26:16) In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord.* Do you know what it is to have trouble enough to bring you to the Lord? Soul trouble. Spiritual trouble. You may have had many temporal trials, but if you have had five minutes' soul trouble, that will be heavier than all temporal trouble. The psalmist says: *I cried unto God with my voice...In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. (Psalm 77:1,2)*

*Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,  
And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song! (John Newton)*

My soul refused to be comforted, and then I remembered His former visits, and then the candle of the Lord shone upon me. O what trouble the dear man of God had. *Oh, says Job, that I knew where I might find Him! (Job 23:3) Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the*

*night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search. Will the Lord cast off for ever? (Psalm 77:4-7)* O what solemn language! Does God cast off? Yes, He does. What do I mean? God does cast off – there are some He will cast off, and He will cast them into hell, according to His Word.

It is not fashionable to speak of these things in the day in which we live. You must excuse my warning you. What damnable doctrines are taught in these days! My daughter brought to me a sermon that was put through the letter-box yesterday. My hearts sinks within me when I think of it. For men to profess to believe that this Book is the Word of God, and then to preach such damnable doctrines. Yet it is in harmony with the Word, that men shall hate the Word of God, and the teaching of God. They put their own construction upon the Word, so that they may not offend men. I would rather offend all men than take from, or add to, the Word of God. Then, men will be cast off. *Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven. Depart from Me...I never knew you. (Matthew 7:21,23)* He will cast them off.

But does He cast off His own people? Yes, He does, in a sense – that is, when He hides His face from them. Think of Christ under the hiding of the Father's face. Did He not taste this cup? Take the prophets who have suffered in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, patience, and affliction. They have known something of the hiding of God's face. Christ said: *My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? (Matthew 27:46)* There may be some in this house of prayer, perhaps the Lord has cast you off, that is, He has hid His face. You cannot find Him, and because you have this path to tread, unbelief is ready to say: "He will cast me off for ever." I want to be instrumental in helping those that are really in the school of Christ. We would cast up the highway, and speak of God's leadings and dealings, and of His teachings, and of how He has brought His people along in all ages. He is bringing you safely along, though He is dealing with you in this solemn way and manner. God will not cast you off for ever, though He does hide His face. Will He cast off for ever? Unbelief says, Yes. But faith says, No. God does, for the moment, forsake His people, that is, He withholds from them the manifestation of Himself. But He never forsakes them. The disciples' eyes were holden that they should not know Him. But the Lord is ever with His people. He never leaves them. It is impossible. I speak it with reverence – He cannot leave His people. He cannot forsake the work of His own hands. He hides His face, and you cannot behold Him.

Did God cut Job off for ever? The devil tried to touch Job, and he tries to touch every child of God. The Lord permitted Satan to touch Job's property, but he did not gain his ends. Job had to pass through solemn things, but he did not lose his life. His wife said: *Curse God and die. (ch.2:9)* No, says Job. When the Lord did permit Job to give utterance to solemn things, He did not forsake him. No, He was ever with him, and He gave him great help and support, and the lower Job sank, the lower were the arms of love, until, you know, he sank right into them. His last days were his best days.

Will He cast off for ever? No, He will not. Thou hast cast us off. But the Lord has not cast you off for ever, though you have been ready to think He would. In the bitterness of your soul, you have said: "I am cast off for ever." The devil takes advantage, and he comes with his –

*– Buts and ifs and hows  
To sink you with the gloom  
Of all that's dismal in this world,  
Or in the world to come. (Joseph Hart)*

But God will help you. Will the Lord cast off for ever? No, friends, He won't! This may be your path at 12.30, but before 1 o'clock you may know something of loving Him graciously. You know, sometimes the thing is done suddenly. I remember one circumstance in my own experience, when I thought I should sink to rise no more. I said, "I am on the very border of despair. The Lord has cast

me off for ever.” No! *I know*, says the Lord, *the thoughts that I think toward you...thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. (Jeremiah 29:11)* And we were brought again into His embrace, and He put round about us the arms of His love, and then we could say, and did say:

*How can I sink with such a prop?  
And bear the world and all things up.*

*He turneth the mourning of His saints into dancing. In His favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. (Psalm 30:11,5)*

*Will the Lord be favourable no more?* He has been favourable. Do you believe that God has a favour toward His people? How the psalmist pleads with the Lord after this manner: *Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest unto Thy people. (Psalm 106:4)* And now he says: *Will He be favourable no more? O Naphtali, satisfied with favour. (Deuteronomy 33:23)* Is that your spot this morning? Perhaps before evening you will say:

*Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?  
Where is the soul-refreshing view of Jesus and His Word? (William Cowper)*

I have thought very much of late of the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter said: *Lord, it is good for us to be here: if Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for Thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. (Matthew 17:4)* You know, friends, there came a cloud and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered the cloud. Immutability is stamped on all the child of grace does here below. Look at the disciple of old. You may have a view of His majesty, and it might be gone in a moment. *Will He be favourable no more?* O He will be favourable again. He will not cast off for ever, or He will cast Peter off. He denied Him with oaths and curses. But He suffered Judas to go to his own place. If God was to deal with His people as they merit His dealings, He would cast them off for ever. Yet, you see, after His resurrection He appeared to them, and spoke to them. He is faithful, though we deny Him. He has sworn by Himself. He could save by no greater.

But I shall have to leave the subject. I see the time is fully gone. May the Lord add His blessing for His Name's sake.

#### Afternoon Sermon

*Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever? doth His promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies? Selah. And I said, This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. (Psalm 77:7-10)*

O how true it is, friends, as you have been singing:

*He'll bring me through,  
And He'll have all the glory too. (William Gadsby)*

He will not leave His redeemed to sink into despair. He will be with them as they pass through waters and through the fire. He will bring them through fire and water into a wealthy place. He will bring them to His heaven, the heaven He has prepared for them, and –

*There shall they see His face,  
And never, never sin;  
There, from the rivers of His grace,  
Drink endless pleasures in. (Isaac Watts)*

God is faithful that hath promised, and though we believe not, God **is** faithful. He cannot deny Himself. He will never forfeit the word He has spoken, but He will make it good in the soul's experience. He is our stronghold, and refuge, and our shelter from the stormy blast, and our eternal home. O what a mercy to have a God, and to know the power of God, and the salvation of God, and to be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. O to walk in the light of God's countenance. In His favour is life. Some of us have proved this. We have found life in His favour. The light of the King's countenance is life, and His favour is as a cloud of the latter rain. And we have known something of the favour of the Lord as dew upon the grass. He has come down into our souls, and He has lifted us up, and blessed us, and we have then said: *In Judah is God known: His name is great in Israel. (Psalm 76:1)* He gets to Himself a great name in the experience of His redeemed. He hallows His name in their hearts, and they say: *Hallowed be Thy Name*. Is it not sweet when He does this? Then you fall at His feet, and with a feeling heart you say: *Hallowed be Thy Name*.

These are moments of refreshing from the Lord, times that will never be forgotten in time or throughout the countless ages of a never-ending eternity. He blesses the soul; He communes with us. He communed with Abraham, but when He left him, Abraham returned to his own place. Some of us have had a solemn experience of these things; our rejoicing has been turned into mourning, and our sins have caused us much distress. The Lord has hid His face, and Satan has taken advantage, and we have given utterance to the very language of our text: *Will He be favourable no more?* Ah friends, it is a trying path that the saints of God are called to tread.

*Will He be favourable no more?* Perhaps you cannot forgive yourself when the Lord appears, for your unbelief. You would not harbour one hard thought in your right mind, and yet there are moments when you do harbour hard thoughts, and there are such solemn questionings going on in your mind as to whether He will be favourable again. You know what the Lord said to His disciples: *Ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (John 16:22)*

*Will He be favourable no more?* I would be thankful for the unbelief of those that have gone before. Do not misunderstand me, when I say that; we have these words here and I am glad that Asaph could give utterance to such words as we are dealing upon at this moment. We have known what it has been to use such language. In ourselves we have used it, and to friends we have questioned whether He would be favourable any more. Is it like the Lord to withdraw Himself, and never reveal Himself to the soul any more? No, friends! The Lord, having been favourable, though He hides His face, it is to make the purpose of His grace better known.

*Will He be favourable no more? Is His mercy clean gone for ever?* Asaph had known something of God's mercy, or else he had not made this enquiry. *Is His mercy clean gone for ever?* God's mercy is sweet; Asaph had tasted it. And some of us have tasted the mercy of God. Sometimes, perhaps, you may have said, "O the mercy of God, how sweet it is! How great is His mercy!" *His mercy endureth for ever*. You began, when the Lord quickened your soul, to cry for mercy: *God, be merciful to me a sinner*. That was Asaph's cry. And the Lord's mercy was made known to him in the Person of His dear Son. O the mercy of the Lord! How great, how sweet is His mercy!

*Mercy, through blood, I make my plea;  
O God, be merciful to me! (Samuel Medley)*

Can you come in here, poor soul? O I believe there are some of you hovering round, and you can come in.

*Mercy, through blood, I make my plea;  
O God, be merciful to me!*

*I will be merciful, says God, to whom I will be merciful.* That soul that thirsts for mercy shall know and taste the mercy of God. Yes, God's pardoning mercy – you shall know it, and taste it. The Lord will be gracious to you at the voice of your supplication. God does hear the voice of the supplication of His people. And they can testify of it too.

And yet, after this, they may know the hiding of God's face, and cry in the language of my text: *Is His mercy clean gone for ever?* You will remember that the same man that said: *I called upon Thy Name, O Lord, and Thou hast heard my voice... Thou saidst, Fear not,* the same man cried in such language as this: *He hath hedged me about, that I cannot get out: He hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer.* (*Lamentations 3:55,56 & 7,8*) I thought of Jeremiah as I was coming along this morning. He speaks of God hearing him, and he speaks of crying and shouting, and God shutting out his prayer. And so, child of God, you may look back to such sweet times in your experience, when you called upon the name of the Lord, and He drew near, and He said: *Fear not.* You then felt the mercy of God to be great, and you felt none need despair since I have found mercy.

Yet you have known what it has been under the hidings of His face to cry: *Is His mercy clean gone for ever?* Unbelief says it is. And the soul in such a moment refuses to be comforted. You try to comfort one that is in such a spot. I have known what it is to be here, and for unbelief to say: "He is clean gone for ever." My soul has refused to be comforted. You try to comfort such an one, and they will put it away. O I warn you: Be careful how you put it away, and what the Lord has done for you – be very careful. Your soul refused to be comforted, unbelief refused to be comforted. You may use such language, and you will regret it, and though God forgives you, you will never forgive yourself. I know what I am speaking about, and you will wonder at the mercy of God in forgiving you.

Ah friends, two things have astonished me – and some of you too: God's goodness, and my badness, my vileness, my departure from the Lord. O what a wretch I feel myself to be, and what a good God He is to bear with all my ill manners in the wilderness. I sin against Him, and if He dealt with me after my sin, He would make a full end of me. We may well say: *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not.* (*Lamentations 3:22*) Does God's promise fail? Unbelief says, Yes. Faith says, Never! God's promises never fail. He is faithful that hath spoken. Thou shalt see, poor sinner, whether God's promise fails. You shall see, says God to Moses, whether My word will come to pass, or not. I hate my sins and my unbelief. I would be free from this cursed unbelief. O the sin of my unbelief! "Good God," I sometimes say, "have mercy upon me; pardon the sin of my unbelief; give me faith, bring faith into blessed, active exercise, that I may believe that Thou art, and that Thou art the rewarder of them that diligently seek Thee." Has He not promised, and are not His promises Yea and Amen? Doth His promise fail for evermore? What? God's promise fail? Men's promises may fail – we may know something of breach of promise so far as man is concerned. But the Lord's will never fail.

*What more can He say than to you He hath said,  
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled? (Kirkham)*

His promise is that He will keep you, and be all your sufficiency, and be all to you that you need. The Lord has given you a promise, as I trust He has me, and you have believed the word of the Lord. Perhaps He has promised you that you shall get to heaven, and you have as firmly believed it as though you were already there. I do not say it has been so. There is the promise, a great promise. God has promised that you shall see Him, and be with Him, and be like Him. But you live to prove that your faith must be tried. God tries it sharply, and you begin to ask in the very language of my text: *Doth His promise fail for ever?* It seems as though it is impossible for this promise to be fulfilled. You seem to get worse and worse, and seem to be at a greater distance from the Lord than ever, and you begin to wonder after all whether it came from Him. And you come to the words of my text, and say: *Doth His promise fail for evermore?* Perhaps the Lord has promised you that He will appear for you, and strengthen you, and direct you, and that He will never forsake you. Some

promise! To bring it down to this, and you really believed the Lord would make it good. Now everything seems against it. You feel that it is impossible for this promise to be made good in your soul's experience. The Lord gave Abraham a promise, but everything seemed to be against the fulfilment of the promise. And so it may be that everything appears to be against the fulfilment of the promise. You are waiting, and you may have to wait. But you will not have to wait in vain. God will fulfil the promise. Has He spoken? Shall He not do it? *I will work*, He says, *and who shall let it?* (*Isaiah 43:13*) And the Lord will work and fulfil the work He has promised. His promise cannot fail for evermore, and when faith is brought into exercise, you rest in the word of the Lord. And you say, *Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope.* (*Psalms 119:49*) Lord, make it good. And you believe then, friends, that He will make it good. And you say: What is impossible with man is possible with God. (*see Matthew 19:26*) *Is anything too hard for the Lord?* (*Genesis 18:14*) He can make it good in a moment.

And so, if you come to speak of providential things, the Lord has promised to take care of you, and perhaps every door in providence is closed, and you have got to the last shilling, and you say: *Doth His promise fail for evermore?* Unbelief says, Yes! But let the Lord appear, and bring faith in exercise, and you believe in a moment that the promise of God will be made good. And you do not faint. Why? Because you believe. *I had fainted*, said the psalmist, *unless* – Ah, that *unless* comes in, friends, and so it comes in in your soul's experience from time to time – *unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.* (*Psalms 27:13*) *Doth His promise fail for evermore?* No!

*The gospel bears my spirit up;  
A faithful and unchanging God  
Lays the foundation of my hope,  
In oaths, and promises, and blood.* (Isaac Watts)

*Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* Well, you would hardly think, friends, that the Lord's people get so low as this, would you? It is possible that the Lord's people should be brought so low as to give utterance to the language of our text. *Hath the Lord forgotten to be gracious?* Zion says that the Lord has forsaken her. God hath forsaken me. The Lord puts it very blessedly. You know the figure concerning the child. Is it possible that the mother that bears the babe in her breast should forget her offspring? Is it possible that that mother, who has watched over that babe in its weakness and helplessness should forget her babe? Is it possible that there are such mothers, or such women? It is possible.

*Can a woman's tender care  
Cease towards the child she bare?  
Yes, she my forgetful be,  
Yet will I remember thee.* (William Cowper)

*Yet*, says the Lord, *will I not forget thee.* (*Isaiah 49:15*) O how the heart of the mother, a real mother, cares for her offspring! How she loves the child! Yet how far the figure falls short when you come to think of the Lord being gracious to His own. O it is impossible that He should forget them.

*Forget thee I will not, I cannot; thy name  
Engraved on My heart does for ever remain;  
The palms of My hands while I look on I see  
The wounds I received when suffering for thee.* (James Grant)

*Hath God forgotten to be gracious?* Never! He cannot forget to be gracious. He is gracious to the voice of their supplication. Then when you are ready to say, *I cry and shout, He shutteth out my prayer* (*Lamentations 3:8*), this is your infirmity. God hears the groans of the elect. He has not forgotten to be gracious.



*Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?* Solemn language! No, friend, God doesn't hide His face in anger. His dealings are not in anger, but these are in His dear covenant love. All God's dealings are in love, though sometimes the cup may be bitter, and the path may be painful. The Lord knows it is for your good, and it will redound to His honour and to His glory, though you may think it is indeed a strange path. *Think it not strange*, says the apostle, *concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you. (1 Peter 4:12)* Have you ever been here one moment with this prayer, as though God had forsaken you too? Have you known anything of this path? And you begin to write bitter things against yourself, and to give utterance to such solemn language as we have read by way of a text, and you say: *Hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?*

And then you say: *Selah*. You begin to consider. You come to a stop – and about time too! *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord? (Isaiah 40:27)* Why give utterance to such expressions? Why harbour such hard thoughts? The man of God is coming to himself. God is bringing him to himself. It is a mercy when God works after this manner. He no longer gives utterance to such language, but he says: *This is my infirmity*. This is my sin, my unbelief, my weakness. The Lord knows how to deal with His people, friends, and how to speak to them, and how to bring them down, as He did the psalmist. And He causes them to pause, and to consider, and to say: *This is my infirmity*. O what a good God He is, not to cut us off, or to deal with us after our sin, or reward us after our iniquity! We may say things in haste, but God does not make a full end of us. The psalmist said: *I said in my haste, I am cut off from before Thine eyes. (Psalm 31:22)* But God did not cut him off. *Nevertheless*, he says, *Thou heardest the voice of my supplications when I cried unto Thee*. And so we have to confess before Him: *This is my infirmity: but I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High. I will remember the works of the Lord*.

I will remember Thy works, Thy doings. I will meditate upon Thy works. More particularly, would we speak, if we had time, of God's work in us. *I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High*. I will remember the years of Thy power, Thy mercy, Thy dealings with us. That is it. The Lord lead you in your meditation thus to look at it. He said: *I remembered God, and was troubled*. But here he says: *I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High*, and takes comfort. When the Holy Ghost brings to remembrance the years of the right hand of the most High, then the soul is strengthened and helped. And you know, the Lord Jesus Christ said, concerning this matter, the Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in His Name, He would bring all things to remembrance, whatsoever He had spoken unto them. (*John 15:26*)

*I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High*. O the power of God, the mercy, the grace of God! O to think of these things, and for them to be brought to remembrance! How it humbles the soul in the very dust before the Lord, and how we put the crown upon His great head, and crown Him Lord of all! How we ascribe all unto Him, as we remember the years of the right hand of the most High!

I must leave the subject with you. May the Lord fasten it upon your hearts and consciences, and make it a real word to you, and lead you into it, and make it a blessing to you, so that you may indeed be enabled to say feelingly, graciously, experimentally: *I will remember the years of the right hand of the most High*.