

The Valley of Vision

LORD, HIGH AND HOLY, MEEK AND LOWLY,
Thou hast brought me to the valley of vision,
where I live in the depths but see thee in the heights;
Hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold thy glory.

Let me learn by paradox
that the way down is the way up,
that to be low it to be high,
that the broken heart is the healed heart,
that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,
that the repenting soul is the victorious soul,
that to have nothing is to possess all,
that to bear the cross is to wear the crown,
that to give is to receive,
that the valley is the place of vision.

Lord, in the daytime stars can be seen from deepest wells,
And the deeper the wells the brighter thy stars shine;
Let me find thy light in my darkness,
thy life in my death,
thy joy in my sorrow,
thy grace in my sin,
thy riches in my poverty,
thy glory in my valley.

Assurance

ALMIGHTY GOD,
I am loved with everlasting love,
clothed in eternal righteousness,
my peace flowing like a river,
my comforts many and large,
my joy and triumph unutterable,
my soul lively with a knowledge of salvation,
my sense of justification unclouded.

I have scarce anything to pray for;
Jesus smiles upon my soul as a ray of heaven
and my supplications are swallowed up in praise.

How sweet is the glorious doctrine of election
when based upon thy Word
and wrought inwardly within the soul!

I bless thee that thou wilt keep the sinner thou hast loved,
and hast engaged that he will not forsake thee,
else I would never get to heaven.

I wrong the work of grace in my heart
if I deny my new nature and my eternal life.

If Jesus were not my righteousness and redemption,
I would sink into nethermost hell
by my misdoings, shortcomings, unbelief, unlove;

If Jesus were not by the power of his Spirit my sanctification,
there is no sin I should not commit.

O when shall I have his mind!
when shall I be conformed to his image?

All the good things of life are less than nothing
when compared with his love,
and with one glimpse of thy election favour.

All the treasures of a million worlds could not make me richer,
happier, more contented,
for his unsearchable riches are mine.

One moment of communion with him, one view of his grace,
is ineffable, inestimable.

But O God, I could not long after thy presence
if I did not know the sweetness of it;
And such I could not know except by thy Spirit in my heart,
nor love thee at all unless thou didst
elect me, call me, adopt me, save me.

I bless thee for the covenant of grace.

Freedom

O HOLY FATHER, thou hast freely given thy Son,
O DIVINE SON, thou hast freely paid my debt,
O ETERNAL SPIRIT, thou dost freely did me come,
O TRIUNE GOD, thou dost freely grace me with salvation.

Prayers and tears could not suffice to pardon my sins,
nor anything less than atoning blood,
but my believing is my receiving,
for a thankful acceptance is no paying of the debt.

What didst thou see in me?
that I a poor, diseased, despised sinner
should be clothed in thy bright glory?
that a creeping worm
should be advanced to this high state?
that one lately groaning, weeping, dying,
should be as full of joy as my heart can hold?
that a being of dust and darkness
should be taken like Mordecai from captivity,
and set next to the king?
should be lifted like Daniel from a den
and be made ruler of princes and provinces?

Who can fathom immeasurable love?
As far as the rational soul exceeds the senses,
so does the spirit exceed the rational in its knowledge of thee.

Thou hast given me understanding to compass the earth,
measure the sun, moon, stars, universe,
but above all to know thee, the only true God.

I marvel that the finite can know the Infinite,
here a little, afterwards in full-orbed truth;
Now I know but a small portion of what I shall know,
here in part, there in perfection,
here a glimpse, there a glory.

To enjoy thee is life eternal, and to enjoy is to know.
Keep me in the freedom of experiencing thy salvation continually.

The 'Nevers' of the Gospel

O LORD,
May I

never fail to come to the knowledge of the truth,
never rest in a system of doctrine, however scriptural,
that does not bring or further salvation,
or teach me to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts,
or help me to live soberly, righteously, godly;
never rely on my own convictions and resolutions,
but be strong in thee and in thy might;
never cease to find thy grace sufficient
in all my duties, trials, and conflicts;
never forget to repair to thee
in all my spiritual distresses and outward troubles,
in all the dissatisfactions experienced in creature comforts;
never fail to retreat to him who is full of grace and truth,
the friend that loveth at all times,
who is touched with feelings of my infirmities,
and can do exceeding abundantly for me;
never confine my religion to extraordinary occasions,
but acknowledge thee in all my ways;
never limit my devotions to particular seasons
but be in thy fear all the day long;
never be godly only on the sabbath or in thy house,
but on every day abroad and at home;
never make piety a dress but a habit,
not only a habit but a nature,
not only a nature but a life.
Do good to me by all thy dispensations,
by all means of grace,
by worship, prayers, praises,
And at last let me enter that world where is no temple,
but only thy glory and the Lamb's.

True Religion

LORD GOD ALMIGHTY,
I ask not to be enrolled amongst the earthly great and rich,
 but to be numbered with the spiritually blessed.
Make it my present, supreme, persevering concern
 to obtain those blessings which are
 spiritual in their nature,
 eternal in their continuance,
 satisfying in their possession.
Preserve me from a false estimate of the whole or a part of my
 character;
May I pay regard to my principles as well as my conduct,
 my motives as well as my actions.
Help me never to mistake the excitement of my passions
 for the renewing of the Holy Spirit,
 never to judge my religion by occasional impressions and
 impulses, but by my constant and prevailing disposition.
May my heart be right with thee, and my life as becometh the gospel.
May I maintain a supreme regard to another and better world,
 and feel and confess myself a stranger and a pilgrim here.
Afford me all the direction, defence, support, and consolation
 my journey hence requires,
 and grant me a mind stayed upon thee.
Give me large abundance of the supply of the Spirit of Jesus,
 that I may be prepared for every duty,
 love thee in all my mercies,
 submit to thee in every trial,
 trust thee when walking in darkness,
 have peace in thee amidst life's changes.
Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief and uncertainties.

Mortification

O DEVINE LAWGIVER,
I take shame to myself
 for open violations of thy law,
 for my secret faults,
 my omissions of duty,
 my unprofitable attendance upon means of grace,
 my carnality in worshipping thee,
 and all the sins of my holy things.
My iniquities are increased over my head:
My trespasses are known in the heavens,
 and there Christ is gone also,
 my advocate with the Father,
 my propitiation for sins,
 and I hear his word of peace.
At present it is a day of small things with me,
 I have light enough to see my darkness,
 sensitivity enough to feel the hardness of my heart,
 spirituality enough to mourn my want of a heavenly mind;
But I might have had more,
 I ought to have had more,
 I have never been straitened in thee,
 thou hast always placed before me an infinite fullness,
 and I have not taken it.
I confess and bewail my deficiencies and backslidings:
I mourn my numberless failures,
 my incorrigibility under rebukes,
 my want of profiting under ordinances of mercy,
 my neglect of opportunities for usefulness.
It is not with me as in months past;
O recall me to thyself, and enable me to feel my first love.
May my improvements correspond with privileges,
May my will accept the decisions of my judgement,
 my choice be that which conscience approves,
And may I never condemn my self in the things I allow!

Choices

O GOD

Through I am allowed to approach thee
I am not unmindful of my sins,
I do not deny my guilt,
I confess my wickedness, and earnestly plead forgiveness.

May I with Moses choose affliction rather than enjoy the pleasures of
sin.

Help me to place myself always under thy guiding and guardian care,
to take firmer hold of the sure covenant that binds me to thee,
to feel more of the purifying, dignifying,
softening influence of the religion I profess,
to have more compassion, love, pity, courtesy,
to deem it an honour to be employed by thee
as an instrument in thy hands,
ready to seize every opportunity of usefulness,
and willing to offer all my talents to thy service.

Thou hast done for me all things well,
hast remembered, distinguished, indulged me.
All my desires have not been gratified,
but thy love denied them to me
when fulfilment of my wishes would have proved my ruin or
injury.

My trials have been fewer than my sins,
and when I have kissed the rod it has fallen from thy hands.

Thou hast often wiped away my tears,
restored peace to my mourning heart,
chastened me for my profit.

All thy work for me is perfect, and I praise thee.

Longings After God

MY DEAR LORD,

I can but tell thee that thou knowest
I long for nothing but thyself,
nothing but holiness,
nothing but union with thy will.

Thou hast given me these desires,
and thou alone canst give me the thing desired.

My soul longs for communion with thee,
for mortification of indwelling corruption,
especially spiritual pride.

How precious it is
to have a tender sense and clear apprehension
of the mystery of godliness,
of true holiness!

What a blessedness to be like thee
as much as it is possible for a creature to be like its creator!

Lord, give me more of thy likeness;

Enlarge me to live more for thee.

Help me to be less pleased with my spiritual experiences,
and when I feel at ease after sweet communings,
teach me it is far too little I know and do.

Blessed Lord,
let me climb up near to thee,
and love, and long, and plead, and wrestle with thee,
and pant for deliverance from the body of sin,
for my heart is wandering and lifeless,
and my soul mourns to think
it should ever lose sight of it beloved.

Wrap my life in divine love,
and keep me ever desiring thee,

Always humble and resigned to thy will,
more fixed on thyself,
that I may be more fitted for doing and suffering.

Devotion

GOD OF MY END,

It is my greatest, noblest pleasure
to be acquainted with thee
and with my rational, immortal soul;

It is sweet and entertaining
to look into my being
when all my powers and passions
are united and engaged in pursuit of thee,
when my soul longs and passionately breathes
after conformity to thee
and full enjoyment of thee;

No hours pass away with so much pleasure
as those spent in communion with thee
and with my heart.

O how desirable, how profitable to the Christian life
is a spirit of holy watchfulness
and godly jealousy over myself.
when my soul is afraid of nothing
except grieving and offending thee, the blessed God,
my Father and friend,
whom I then love and long to please,
rather than be happy in myself!

Knowing, as I do, that this is the pious temper,
worthy of the highest ambition, and closest pursuit
of intelligent creatures and holy Christians,
may my joy derive form glorifying and delighting thee.

I long to fill all my time for thee,
whether at home or in the way;
to place all my concerns in thy hands;
to be entirely at thy disposal,
having no will or interest of my own.

Help me to live to thee for ever,
to make thee my last and only end,
so that I may never more in one instance love my sinful self.

Worship

GLORIOUS GOD,

It is the flame of my life to worship thee,
the crown and glory of my soul to adore thee,
heavenly pleasure to approach thee.

Give me power by thy Spirit to help me worship now,
that I may forget the world,
be brought into fullness of life,
be refreshed, comforted, blessed.

Give me knowledge of thy goodness
that I might not be over-awed by thy greatness;

Give me Jesus, Son of Man, Son of God,
that I might not be terrified,
but be drawn near with filial love,
with holy boldness;

He is my mediator, brother, interpreter,
branch, daysman, Lamb;
him I glorify,
in him I am set on high.

Crowns to give I have none,
but what thou hast given I return,
content to feel that everything is mine when it is thine,
and the more fully mine when I have yielded it to thee.

Let me live wholly to my Savior,
free from distractions,
from carking care,
from hindrances to the pursuit of the narrow way.

I am pardoned through the blood of Jesus –
give me a new sense of it,
continue to pardon me by it,
may I come every day to the fountain,
and every day be washed anew,
that I may worship thee always in spirit and truth.