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“Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people : pour out your hearts before him : God is a refuge for us.”—PSALM lxii. 8.

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THIS Psalm is a very precious one, full of gospel manna ; containing directions for the church, how to walk with God.

The Psalmist says, “Truly, in good truth, my soul waiteth upon God ; for from him cometh my salvation.” And does he not give a good reason why his soul waited upon God ? It was because all his salvation came from him. And where should a sinner look, but to him that has purchased salvation for sinners, and brings it to them who find their need of it ?

He then says, “My soul, wait thou *only* upon God.” He hath put in another word, *only* : it is but a little one, but it is very emphatical ; for it is a common case with people to make Christ half a Saviour : relying upon him, and upon themselves : saying they are to be saved by faith and works : no, says David, that will not do for me ; I must have all my salvation from the Lord.

“He only is my rock ;” the rock on which my heart shall rest ; that is, on Jesus. And if he is not your only rock, my brethren, you will find that the rock which you trust in will slip away from you. Jesus will not suffer his glory to be diminished, nor let any steal one jewel from his crown, for he is worthy of

all the praise we can give him ; and he is jealous of his honour : do you be jealous of his honour too, and shew that you are desirous of giving him all the praise that he deserves ; and, give him all that you can, you will never give him what he deserves : you will always be defective in this to all eternity ; for while we are giving to him our best praises, our obligations to him increase every day.

He then says, "I shall not be greatly moved, while the Lord only is my rock and my salvation." I find him to be as he says ; he is my defence from time to time ; I shall not be greatly moved.

The word *greatly* is often of use to the children of God, who fall into doubts at times, ready to fear they shall fall from their confidence. No, says David ; make the Lord all your rock, and build upon him all your salvation, then, though you may be shaken at times, and find your confidence beginning to totter, yet you shall not be greatly moved ; the Lord will come again, and lift you up, and cause you to rejoice in him.

But David is so pleased with the words that he hath uttered, that he repeats them over again ; and he could not repeat them too often : "My soul," says he, "wait thou only upon God." Before, he told you what was his daily use ; and now he exhorts and encourages himself to go on with this waiting. Do not be afraid of your being disappointed : continue waiting and looking for the Lord ; for he will never let them fail who trust in him.

Now, if David encourages himself in trusting in the Lord, we have also the same reason ; for our hearts at times are ready to sink, and to think that we shall be wrong at last ; therefore take David's words, "My soul, wait thou only upon God ; for my expectation is from him."

But Satan may say, Where will you look and go ? What says Peter ? "Unto him who has the words of eternal life." So we may say to our souls, when they are beginning to doubt, Where would you go ? Where

would you find salvation in any other? Christ only has the words of eternal life.

Then he adds: "The Lord only is my defence." I find him so, while I am trusting in him: though I am often afraid, yet he is better to me than either my fears or my hopes.

Then he adds: "I shall not be moved." Thus, by exhorting, and waiting upon the Lord, he gets more strength. He drops the word *greatly*, which he began with, when he said, "I shall not be *greatly* moved;" and now he speaks courageously, "I shall not be moved." The Lord is my defence; he holds me up, carries me on, and at length he will bring me to himself in glory.

Then David goes on to the words in my text—"Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people."

Now he exhorts us what to do. Good advice; the best advice; and such as all the children of God are taking, and never find themselves disappointed: "Trust in the Lord;" make him your confidence for all things: not only for all things, but at all times. When people are in peace and prosperity, they do not seem so much to see their need of trusting in the Lord as they did; but they are ready to drop their confidence, when the Lord has given them what they want of worldly things. Now this is a shameful practice; and the Lord often takes away what he had given them, because they make a bad use of it. Has the Lord given you outward peace and prosperity? trust in him to preserve it; for none can preserve it but he who gave it.

But are you brought into worldly trouble, and in great distress, and know not which way to look? You have no friend, perhaps, to go to; and your heart is ready to say, What must I do now?—All have forsaken me. No; there is one that never forsakes his people. But you can see no way how you are to be relieved.—What of all that? Has the Lord no better eyes than you? He can make a way for you, no doubt, if you trust in him. But you say

What am I to expect? Why, that relief which you want. Therefore, however difficult your worldly affairs may be, and though you have no friend at hand to help you, yet there is one above, always at hand: go to him; he will not despise the poor and destitute; but will hear their cry and will help them.

If he bids you come to him, and trust in him at all times, it is your business to go to him at all times; and the more distressed your circumstances are, the more fit for God to take care of. Supposing your bosom is full of guilt, and you find trouble on account of it; in this case, you say you cannot go to Christ: whereas it is the only reason that you should go. Sinners will not go to Christ while they are at ease; but when they know themselves to be in a lost state and condition, and when they can find no help any where else, then Jesus says, "I am come to save the lost." Go your way to him. He bids you trust in him at this time, when under a sense of your lost estate. If you see yourselves ruined, however deplorable and wretched your case be, it is not too hard for Christ; for he receives all that come to him: not with frowning looks: no; but with a smiling countenance. "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden: come, and I will give you rest."

What are you to do, but to trust in him in this time of sin and misery? Go to him just as you are. Do not be running to some of your lusts; nor imagine that you can do any thing to prepare your way; but go and cast yourselves at the feet of Christ, saying, Lord, I am come as a ruined sinner; I know none can help me but thee; and thou hast ordered me to trust in thee at all times: I am come, Lord, at this time.

But, perhaps, when you are dying, your adversary, the devil, may tell you, Now, you are sick, and lying upon a dying-bed, it is too late to come now: why did you not come sooner: there was mercy to be had then: but you have over-staid your time: Christ has been calling by his word, and by his ministers, but

you would not hear them ; and now he has sent the summons to you, to remove you out of this world ; and you would be glad of salvation, when you can have no more comfort here. Well, when these words, or words like these, are brought to your hearts, remember from whom they come : they come from the adversary of your souls. O ! he does not love to see a sinner, burdened with sin, looking unto Christ.

But Satan may say, Did you ever hear of a sinner, so great as you are, come to Christ, and was received by him ? Yes, tell him ; you read of a cross-thief, as bad as yourself, that railed on Christ, when on the cross ; and when he went to Christ he must naturally think, Will he shew mercy to me ? He asked for mercy ; and he received it. Go you and try ; that is the only way to deal with Jesus. Mind not what the adversary tells you. If your grief is great, confess it, and tell the Lord all your trouble ; and at the same time tell him, for he loves to be told of his word with confidence and modesty ; tell him when you go, though your heart is discouraged, and Satan distresses you, and unbelief terrifies you, yet you have got his word : " Trust in me at all times : " I come at this time : it is late, indeed ; but it is in the time of life ; I come to thee, Lord, and beseech thee to help me ; shew thy mercy towards a poor sinner, who is come at last : I am now come, and desire to partake of that mercy held forth to sinners ; Lord, send me that mercy, and I will shout the loudest of thy children above.

There is nothing which the Lord delights in more than to hear his people, when they come to him, plead his word, and hold it fast. Though Satan wants to take it away from you, yet never give it up. Die with your souls deceived (if that is possible) in the hands of Christ. Tell Satan, though I am as vile as any in the world, yet the Lord has taught me to put my trust in him : I will go to him, and endeavour by his grace, to trust in him at all times. Ah, but, says Satan, what a poor feeble faith is thine ! what hast

thou to depend upon? sometimes hoping, and sometimes doubting? dost thou expect that the Lord will look upon thy little faith? Yes, tell him; the Lord does not so much look at the greatness of our faith, when we go to him, as at the reality of it. Though faith is weak, when we come before the Lord, yet he will receive it. He never sent any away for the weakness of their faith; but he often reproves his people, because they do not believe more strongly. Go to him, and tell him your condition; and when you call upon him, expect an answer. Nothing pleases the Lord more, than when a poor tempted and troubled soul comes to him, as Abraham did, against hope, believing in hope. You are ready to think his was a poor hope from time to time, for about twenty-five years: but he believed in hope. And what is said of this believer in God? that he gave glory to him.

The Lord is never more glorified, than when we go to him, relying upon his word, notwithstanding providences, and every thing else make against us. Yet, even then, says the poor soul, the word is for me; for Christ invites sinners to come, whoever they are.

Though Abraham against hope believed in hope, yet the Lord did not look upon this as a poor testimony of his faith. We see, by his not hearkening to what he felt within him, nor to the temptations which the devil cast in his way, that he only looked at the word of God; relying upon his word and promise, though all providences made against him, he thereby gave glory to God.

And so it will be with us. When we find many things make against us, if we have but a word of promise to rely upon, and hold it fast, then we are giving glory to God. What says the tried old soldier, Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Well said. Though the Lord seems, by his providence and dealings with me, to cast me off, and to take no notice of me, I do not mind that. The Lord says, "Trust in me at all times." Go to him; lie at his

feet: tell him you are come, merely relying upon his word of promise; and that you have nothing to encourage you but his word. Put your trust in him, and you will find that the Lord in due time will come and bless you.

I might mention many other times in which we might trust in the Lord; but they are comprised in this little word *all*: and a precious word it is: "Trust in him at *all* times." When you are full of fears, then you should bring the little word *all* unto him, and say, I have nothing to encourage me to come unto thee, but that precious little word *all*: "Trust in the Lord at *all* times."

Satan is very crafty: he will tell poor souls, why, what do you mean by trusting in the Lord? What right have you to do so? Are you a child of God? Are you one of the elect? You are doubting of it every day: what have you to do to trust in the Lord? Give him this answer: though I am often afraid about my adoption, and cannot say, I am one of the children of God; this I can say, I am one of the *people*. What does my text say? "Trust in the Lord at all times, ye *people*." You may go with this to the Lord. Though you cannot satisfy yourself that you are an adopted child, you may say, I am one of the *people*, and will lie at thy feet till thou dost shew me that I am thine adopted child.

Many are often discouraged in themselves, because they know not their election. Seek for it: wait upon the Lord; wait his time: and in due time he will make it manifest. For your encouragement, the Lord has given you these words in our text: "Trust in the Lord at all times, ye *people*." Are you not one of the people? May you not plead this with the Lord, who commands all his people to trust in him? Why, then, go to him as one of the people, and expect to receive his salvation.

Take notice; it is not said in my text: "Trust in him at all times, *my* people;" but "*the* people."

Thereby he gives a general order. Go to him, then, as one of the people, and expect his help.

But let us notice the next words in my text : " Pour out your hearts before him." This is a precious command. Many times the children of God are so burdened with grief, with sin, and worldly cares, that they know not how to bear them ; and their bosom is so full of sorrow ; so that they sit down and mourn over their hard lot. The devil dearly loves to see a child of God sit down and say, What a sad condition I am in ! I dare not go to the Lord, I am so miserable. Well, suppose you are ; where would you go ? You cannot be worse for it. Others are running about, from post to pillar, desiring to know what they shall do ; their trials are so great, they know not how to be delivered out of them ; and they go and ask one neighbour, and another, till they tire them all out. What does the Lord say to them ? He gives good advice. Instead of making your neighbours your counsellors, go to him who is the chief counsellor, able to tell you what to do, and willing to relieve you at all times. Go to him, and say, Lord, I am come with a heart laden with grief, and with worldly cares, and know not which way to turn myself : what must I do ? The first thing which he tells you to do, is, " Pour out your hearts before me." You have been pouring them out before your neighbours ; and what have you got there ? Why, nothing. Then come and pour them out before me.

The word *pour* plainly signifies, that the heart is full of grief, and almost afraid to empty itself before the Lord. What does he say to you ? " Come, and pour out all your trouble before me." He is never weary with hearing the complaints of his people ; therefore you should go, and keep nothing back : tell him every thing that hurts you, and pour all your complaints into his merciful bosom. That is a precious word : " Pour out your hearts before him." Make him your counsellor and friend : you cannot

please him better than when your hearts rely wholly upon him. You may tell him, if you please, you have been so foolish, as to look to this friend, and the other for relief, and found none; and you now come to him, who commands you to pour out your heart before him.

But perhaps your heart is burdened, not only with worldly cares, but with sinful lusts and corruptions. A sore burden indeed. And you are afraid and ashamed, perhaps, to go and tell the Lord all your trouble. But you need not be afraid of going, when he commands you. He knows every thing in your heart; all worldly cares, all sinful burdens; and when the heart is quite full, he says then, "Pour out all before me." Here is great encouragement for you: take the encouragement which the Lord offers: go and tell him your grief and burdens.

Ah! says the poor soul, I have been to the Lord again and again; but I find I am sinning against him daily, and I am ashamed to go to him. Now my conscience accuses me, and the devil tells me I am impertinent, how shall I appear before Christ, to pour out my heart before him? Go and pour out your heart before him, till that crafty devil leaves you. You have the best reason in the world to go to the Saviour. He that knows what you are; what burdens you are bearing, and what sins you have committed; even he says, "Come and pour out your hearts before me."

But I may add, further, does not the Lord command us in his word and in his prayer, to say, "Forgive us our trespasses?" And does not this plainly intimate, that trespasses are to be forgiven daily? Where are you to bring them, but to the Lord? Go, therefore, and tell him you are come, according to his word, to acquaint him with your sins and trespasses. Ah, but, you say, I have gone so often already, that I am ashamed to go. What does the Lord say to Peter? "If thy brother trespass against thee seven times a day, thou shalt forgive him." And Peter had not a little forgiven him.

Go to Christ every day for pardon. If you keep your guilt in your bosom, it will only make it rankle. Tell him you are weary and ashamed of yourself ; and you are come to tell him all your grief, and to beg that he will come and deliver you from guilt, and save you more and more from the power of sin. Whatever burden, therefore, you have upon your heart, the Lord would not have you suffer it to rest there ; for if you do, it will make you feeble by and by. But when you find your breast full of trouble, remember his kind word to you ; “ Come, poor soul, and pour out your burdens before me.” Pour out your whole hearts, and let him know every thing that distresses you.

But what follows in the last words of my text, “ God is a refuge for us.” O! these are precious words. We may look around about us again and again, for a place of refuge, for a person to apply to for help, and we shall find ourselves frequently, if not continually disappointed. Therefore the Lord tells his people, for their comfort, that God is a refuge for them. Are you poor? the Lord is rich. Can you find no refuge in your fellow-creatures? and have you no where to fly to? Go to the Lord.

It is very strange, when the Lord has all things in his hands, and all love in his heart, and advises his people to come to him, telling them that he is a refuge for them ; they so often delay to come : they had rather find refuge from a fellow-creature, than from their God. They who have learned to trust in the Lord, know what precious words these are, “ God is a refuge for us.” Come, and try ; and you shall find him so too.

The devil will often be telling you that are the people of God, there is no help for you, even in your God : you have been seeking for help a long time, but have found none ; what will you do now ? Why, tell him, you will go to him that says, “ God is a refuge for us.” But the devil will say, you are so poor, and so despicable a creature : what, can you

think that Christ will take any notice of you ? Why, your own brethren are ready to overlook you ; and the world despises you ; and yet you think Christ will take notice of you ! Tell the devil, Yes ; he never fails them that trust in him. Whatever your circumstances may be ; though you may look all around you, this and that way, and find no place to flee to ; no refuge for your souls ; yet God, the faithful God, says, he is a refuge for you. Trust him ; go to him accordingly ; look unto him at all times. Let your condition be what it may : be it ever so deplorable and wretched, yet the Lord tells you, when you go, I am a refuge for you.

Be sure, if you forget every other part of the Sermon, carry this home with you, " God is a refuge for me." Therefore, though I find no help in myself, nor in creatures, yet there is help enough in God : all my help is laid upon him ; and he tells helpless creatures, " I am a refuge for you."

Hear it, ye poor burdened sinners ; and thank him for his kind word : go to him, to have his promise fulfilled time after time. Yet a little while, and he will bring you to his kingdom, where you shall live and reign with him for ever.

Are you sick, and in great distress, and without any friend to apply to, ready to say, What must I do now ? Why, my text tells you what you are to do at all times. Whatever your case is, whether sick, poor, naked, or wretched, come to the Lord ; he says, " I am a refuge for you."

But you say, Lord, I have been sinning against thee, time after time. I know it, says Christ : but if you come, weary of sin, and desirous of gospel-rest, you shall find that I am a refuge for you.

But you say you come so often, that you are ashamed to come. That may be a good argument to keep you from your fellow-creatures : you have been knocking often at their doors, and they are ready to say, you came to my house the other day. Well, say you, may I not come every day ? No ; you find

no such help from man. But Christ never complains of your coming too often, but is better pleased with those who are oftenest knocking at his door, and looking to him for the help which he has promised.

And you that are poor in spirit, who cannot find relief in yourself, nor from your fellow-creatures, go to Christ, and he will be ready to help you : " God is a refuge for you." O think of that word, whenever troubles enter in your mind. Repeat them again and again ; and shame the devil out : tell him, though every thing looks black, yet " God is a refuge for me." Are you to believe the devil or God? Keep these words always in your mind ; for all of you will be in such circumstances, at times, as not to know where to go, nor what to do ; then these words come sweetly into the bosom, " God is a refuge for me." He loves to help the helpless, to hear the poor wounded soul, and to save the guilty sinner : while he is doing this, he is acting the part of a Saviour, and brings glory to himself.

But I might add, that no one knows the compassion which is found in the heart of Jesus, but himself : therefore, when you go to him, do not entertain any unkind thoughts of him ; for he invites all sinners to come to him, all poor and wretched sinners ; and he that invites us to come, has blessings to dispose of. Keep the last words of my text evermore in your mind ; they will be of use to you, living and dying, sick or well : whatever circumstances you are in, you may find the want of such words as these, " God is a refuge for us." Take heed, when you go to him, to do as David did ; plead his word with him. This is one part of the christian's duty, which he often neglects. David says, " O keep my soul, and deliver me." What then, David? Why, says he, " for I trust in thee." He pleaded the Lord's word, and so may you.

The promises in the Bible are free for all who see their need of them ; and the Lord has told thee, if thou trustest in him, thou shalt never be confounded.

But perhaps you are thinking, if I trust in the Lord, I shall be confounded : and suppose you are, you will lose nothing by your trusting, even though it should not be fulfilled. But remember, that the Lord will never suffer his promise to fail : “ Faithful is he that hath promised.” Though you may often doubt of his performing, yet he never did, nor ever will fail. Therefore, “ Trust in the Lord at all times, ye people ; pour out your hearts before him” in every time of trouble.

I do not know a more precious verse in the scriptures than my text : “ Trust in him at all times, ye people.” Though at present you may not know whether you belong to the family of God, yet trust him, you are of the people : here hang, till he gives you better support. And when you find your poor bosom laden with cares and grief, whatever causes your distress, the Lord knows very well, that if you keep it back, it will make you worse : therefore do as the Lord says ; “ Pour out your heart before me :” tell me all your grief ; make me your counsellor and friend, and you shall find what a counsellor I am ; and I will remember to comfort you in the worst state that you can be in.

In health and in sickness, in life and in death, this will apply to Jesus : “ He is a refuge for us.” What could you wish for more ? Go, then unto him : doubt no more : cast away your doubts and fears : trust in him : if you cannot with full assurance, do it with some assurance, with a little faith, and expect more. Remember, the Lord loves to increase what he has given, and to build you up in faith and holiness.

I would say a little more ; but I find my strength begins to fail. I am glad, and I am thankful, that the Lord has held me up hitherto, blessed be his name. When I begin to totter, and when I experience infirmity, I am ashamed that I should ever entertain a doubt of him. May these words be impressed upon my heart : “ God is a refuge for me :” and may he fix it on all your hearts.

And now I conclude my subject. I came up to you trembling, but the Lord has carried me through, blessed be his name: and I look to him to carry me home; for I have no feet of my own to walk with. But the Lord can hold me up, till I have done my work, and then he will put an end to my labours. Thanks be to his name for calling me to preach out of doors. It is the glory of a creature to publish the fame and salvation of God.

I must now speak a little by way of taking leave.

Lord, I beseech thee to pour thy blessing constantly upon this congregation: thy power and glory let it be made manifest among them. Open the eyes of those that are spiritually blind, deaf, and dead. Comfort the mourner. Strengthen the weak, to go on their way. Build up thy church on their most holy faith. May this house be filled with thy presence. Bless every hearer that attends here from time to time; and may the Lord delight in them to bless them; and may they excel in his blessed service. May this ever be a house for God; kept from error; kept in union; going on their way; looking and longing for the coming of their dear Lord.

Bless all the ministers that labour here, occasionally and stately. Fill their mouths with thy truth. Warm their hearts with thy love. Keep them evermore in the faith; zealously disposed to exalt the honour of the dear Redeemer, and to promote the salvation of sinners.

And may the Lord bless the Trustees. Lengthen out their days. We bless thee that they have been faithful and true to their trust. Give them, Lord, the comforts of thy Holy Spirit. Enable them to go forward yet for a while; and bless their labours; and may they see that the people honour them for what they have done. May there never be wanting faithful men to succeed them; nor faithful ministers to labour among them. And as one of the Trustees has been lately removed from them, the Lord direct them in the choice of another. Be gracious to their

partners in life: impress their souls with thy precious love: strengthen them, quicken them, and build them up: may the Lord delight in them, and water their souls from time to time; causing the seed of grace, that has been sown in their bosom, to bring forth fruit to life eternal.

The Lord remember all the children for good, causing them to receive a blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of their salvation.

And now, Lord, I must take my leave of this chapel which I have long visited. Oh! keep them continually in thy fear; and bless them abundantly with all spiritual blessings. May they evermore delight in the Lord, and the Lord delight in them to heal them.

I know not whether I shall ever return any more; nor is it needful for me to know: but this I know, if the Lord continues my life, and allows me some measure of strength, I shall crawl up again. In the meantime, think of a poor crawling creature when you are upon your knees, and put up a short petition to the Lord, that he would bless me, pardon me, sanctify and prepare me for his kingdom and glory. Amen and amen.

May the peace of God, that passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and in the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And may the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.