

# The Presence of God

OUR Father, which art in heaven, our hearts are full of gratitude to Thee for Thy Word. We bless Thee that we have it in our houses, that Thou hast given to many of us to understand it and to enjoy it. Although as yet we know not what we shall know, yet have we learned from it what we never can forget, that which has changed our lives has removed our burdens, has comforted our hearts, has set our faces like flints against sin, and made us eager after perfect holiness.

We thank Thee, Lord, for every leaf of the Book, not only for its promises which are inexpressibly sweet, but for its precepts in which our soul delights and especially for the revelation of Thy Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. O God, we thank Thee for the manifestation of Him even in the types and shadows of the Old Testament. These are inexpressibly glorious to us, full of wondrous value, inexpressibly dear because in them and through them we see the Lord. But we bless Thee much more for the clear light of the New Testament, for giving us the key to all the secrets of the Old Testament, for now, reading the Scriptures of the New Covenant, we understand the language of the Old Covenant and are made to joy and to rejoice therein.

Father, we thank Thee for the Book, we thank Thee for the glorious Man, the God whom the Book reveals as our Savior, and now we thank Thee for the Blessed Spirit, for without His light upon the understanding, we should have learned nothing. The letter killeth, it is the Spirit that giveth life. Blessed are our eyes that have been touched with

heavenly eye-salve. Blessed are the hearts that have been softened, that have been made ready to receive the truth in the love of it! Blessed be the sovereign grace of God that hath chosen unto Him a people who delight in His Word and who meditate in it both day and night!

Our hearts are full of praises to God for this Man of Truth, for this unmeasured wealth of holy knowledge. Lord make us to enjoy it more and more. May we feed upon this manna; may we drink from this well of life. May we be satisfied with it and by it be made like to the God from whom it came.

And now, Lord, our prayer is to Thee at the mention of Thy sacred Book, that Thou wouldst write it upon the fleshy tablets of our heart more fully. We want to know the truth that the truth may make us free. We want to feel the truth that we may be sanctified by it. Oh! let it be in us a living seed which shall produce in us a life acceptable before God, a life which shall be seen in everything that we do unto the living God, for we remember that Thou art not the God of the dead but of the living.

Lord, we ask that Thy Word may chasten us whenever we go astray, may it enlighten us whenever for a moment we get into darkness. May Thy Word be the supreme ruler of our being. May we give ourselves up to its sacred law to be obedient to its every hint, wishing in all things, even in the least things, to do the will of God from the heart and having every thought brought into captivity to the mind of the Spirit of God.

Bless Thy people. Bless them in this way by saturating them with the Word of Thy truth. O Lord, they are out in the world so much. Oh! grant that the world may not take them off from their God. May they get the world under their feet. Let them not be buried in it, but may they live upon it, treading it beneath their feet, the spiritual getting the mastery always over the material. Oh! that the Word of God might be with us when we are in the midst of an ungodly generation. May the Proverbs often furnish us with wisdom, the Psalms furnish us with comfort, the Gospels teach us the way of holiness, and the Epistles instruct us in the deep things of the kingdom of God.

Lord, educate us for a higher life and let that life be begun here. May we be always in the school, always disciples, and when we are out in the world, may we be trying to put in practice what we have learned at Jesus' feet. What He tells us in darkness, may we proclaim in the light and what He whispers in our ear in the closets, may we sound forth upon the housetops.

Oh! dear, dear Savior, what could we do without Thee. We are as yet in banishment, we have not come into the land of light and glory. It is on the other side the river, in the land where Thou dwellest, Thy land of Immanuel, and till we come thither, be Thou with us. We have said unto ourselves, How shall we live without our Lord and then we have said unto Thee, "If Thy Spirit go not with us, carry us not up hence." Oh! be to us this day as the fiery cloudy pillar that covered all the camp of Israel. May we dwell in God. May we live and move in God. May we be conscious of the presence of God to a greater extent than we are conscious of anything else.

Bless the churches. Look on them, Lord. Cast an eye of love upon the little companies of the faithful wherever they may be and help them and their pastors, and may the churches be in every place a light in the midst of this crooked and perverse generation. O God, we are waiting and watching for a display of Thy great power among the people.

It is an age of great luxury and great sin and gross departures from the truth. We beseech Thee, defend Thine own. When Thine Ark was carried captive among the Philistines and set up in the temple of Dagon, Dagon fell before it, then didst Thou smite Thine adversaries in the hinder parts and put them to a perpetual reproach, and Thou canst do the like again, and we pray it may be so. Oh! for the stretched out hand of God. We are longing to see it in the conversion of great multitudes by the Gospel, that those who have said, "Aha, aha, the Gospel has lost its power," may be made foolish by the wisdom of the Most High, even as Jannes and Jambres were made foolish when they could not do so with their enchantments, but God was with His servant.

O, Jehovah, Thou art the true God, God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, this God is our God forever and ever. He shall be our guide even unto death. Them who spakest by the apostles, speak still by Thy servants, and let Thy Word be with as much power as when Thou saidst, "Let there be light, and there was light." Oh! for the lifting up of Thy voice! Let confusion and darkness once again hear the voice of Him that makes order and that giveth life. Oh! how we would stir Thee up, Thou gracious God. Our prayers would take the form of that ancient one,

"Awake, awake, put on Thy strength." Art Thou not He that cut Egypt and wounded the crocodile? Hast Thou not still the same power to smite and to vindicate Thine own truth and deliver Thine own redeemed?

O Lamb, slain from before the foundation of the world, Thou art still to sit upon the throne, for He that is on the throne looks like a Lamb that has been newly slain. O Jesus, we beseech Thee, take to Thyself Thy great power. Divide the spoil with the strong. Take the purchase of Thy precious blood and rule from the river even unto the ends of the earth.

Here we are before Thee. Look on us in great pity. Lord, bless Thine own people. With favor do Thou compass them as with a shield. Lord, save the unsaved. In great compassion draw them by the attractive magnet of the cross, draw them to Thyself, compel them to come in that the wedding may be furnished with guests.

With one heart we put up our prayer on the behalf of the teachers of the young. We thank Thee, Lord, that so many men and women are ready to give their Sabbath's rest to this important service. Oh! grant that zeal for teaching the young may never burn low in the Church. May any that are taking no part in it and who ought to be, be aroused at once to commence the holy effort. Bless the teachers of the senior classes. May their young men and women pass into the Church. May there be no gap between the school and the church. Bridge that distance by Thy sovereign grace. But equally bless the teachers of the infants and of the younger children. May conversion go on among the young. May there be multitudes of such

conversions. In effect, we would pray that no child may leave the schools unsaved. Oh! save the children, great Lover of the little ones. Thou who wouldst have them suffered to come to Thee, Thou wilt not forget them, but Thou wilt draw them and accept them. Lord! save the children. Let all the schools participate in the blessing which we seek and by this blessed agency, may this nation be kept from heathenism, this city especially be preserved from its dogged disregard of the Sabbath, and its carelessness about the things of God. Oh! bless the Sabbath school to London, to every part of it, and let Jesus Christ be glorified among the little ones, and again may there be heard loud hosannas in the streets of Jerusalem from the babes and sucklings out of whose mouths Thou hast ordained strength. The Lord be with these dear workers throughout today and make it a high day, a festival of prayer and faith, a time when Jesus the Lord shall especially meet with them and bless them.

God bless our country! God save our Sovereign! Grant guidance at this time to all with regard to the political affairs of this nation. Grant Thy blessing to all ranks and conditions of men and let every nation call Thee "blessed" Let all tongues speak the name of Jesus and all men own Him as Lord and King. We ask it in His name. Amen.