

would care to go from the top to the bottom of your house at night, especially if there is nobody in it but yourself, without at least a candle or a taper. Try it; and, unless you are very brave, I rather think you will admit that your heart beats. And if there is a sudden, unusual sound, you feel your hair almost beginning to rise. Darkness needs light, and the valley of the shadow needs nothing less than the Divine light. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow." What a blessing that the Lord Jesus Christ understands nervousness—for a great many folk do not. Even your best friends, my good woman, my dear man, laugh at you for your nervousness, because you are so timid, and because you are so shrinking, and because you are so easily put about; and they say, "What is wrong with you? There is nothing. You are alarmed and frightened even at your own shadow." And the commentators, brave fellows, tell us so smartly, that the shadow of a sword doesn't cut; and the shadow of a dog won't bite. Well, no; but the shadow of a dog means a dog somewhere here, doesn't it? Ah, anyway, what a Saviour Christ is for nervous people! Even among the shadows, He gives us His own substantial presence. He wants to allay every fear by taking away the very source of fear. He wants Himself to be with us in the darkness and the gloom. "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

Are you in darkness to-day? Hear this voice. Take this rod and Him that appointed it. Come near to Christ and listen to Him: "When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am with thee; I have redeemed thee; thou art Mine." What does that mean? It means what it says. Take it in, in all its strong, majestic simplicity. Some of us are a long while in the valley of the shadow, and we need to work away at that verse, or at something like it. Did you ever hear such an exquisite song in the night as the 4th verse? Did you ever hear a song in the night? Here is one. Oh, what an exquisite melody it appears, as you think of David in some time of darkness and distress and danger! And how darkness and distress and danger were multiplied to him, let his life show. Just think of him, in the midst of it all, saying "I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me."

I remember having this borne in upon myself (if you will pardon a personal reminis-

cence) in a way that I have never forgotten. One night, when I was a lad, lying in my bed at home, long ago, I awoke, and it was dark, and I heard a voice in the night—not a song, but I heard the voice of my mother as she lay upon her bed of pain. She was twenty-five years in the valley of the shadow of death. Her "light affliction" endured for a quarter of a century, but it was "but for a moment," seeing that it led to the "eternal weight of glory." I shall never forget how the sound of her voice floated into my dark room and my disquieted heart—"Yea, though I walk through the valley"—think of it rising in the air at two o'clock on a dark winter morning with the wind howling around your house—"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for Thou art with me." I am saying it in a rough, unmelodious man's voice. I heard it hummed in the exquisite tone that only a man's mother's voice can ever have to his own ear. Sing it! Sing it in the darkness. Sing it now all the more if the valley seems long. You are passing through it, remember. "Though I walk through the valley." It is a tunnel, but only a tunnel, and, like all tunnels, it has a light at both ends, and certainly it has light at that end to which you are travelling. Most of the railway stations, I notice, are entered through tunnels. I do not know why, but it so happens that coming into most of our London termini you shoot through a long, dreary, ghostly, rattling tunnel, and then there is the terminus, and your father there, or your wife there on the platform, and then the embrace and the kiss and the hearty welcome. We are going through the tunnel, and at the end of it is the terminus, and, please God, we shall soon be there. It is a dark and noisome and spectral, and a little awesome and fearsome just now. Sing. Sing this Psalm of heart confidence, and the shadows will become somewhat luminous with the light that is about to reveal itself—the light of heaven, our eternal home.

I heard again a song in the night. I do not know whether I can faithfully set it forth to you. I remember going down one night, about twelve o'clock, to the seaside, and I stood in the shadow of a gloomy wood. In the front of me for miles stretched the frith of the sea. Away across yonder were the Argyleshire hills, and up above them, again, the gloomy heavens, with here and there a star peeping out. It was like the valley of the shadow of death. The sea was lapping at my feet, and a gentle breeze was blowing over it, when suddenly I heard a sound. I listened and strained my ear, and that sound turned out to be the sound, first