

# ***The Year of Answered Prayers***

**“Pray without ceasing, rejoice evermore...”  
I Thessalonians 5:17**

The Twenty Eighth Annual State of the Church Address  
Metropolitan Baptist Church  
H. Beecher Hicks, Jr., MBA., D.Min.  
Delivered on Sunday, the twenty second day of January  
In the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Six  
“Pray without ceasing, rejoice evermore...”  
I Thessalonians 5:17

# *The Year of Answered Prayers*

**T**wenty eight years ago and more the Metropolitan congregation placed in my faltering hands the challenge of this pastorate. I had visited Metropolitan in April of 1977 for only a few short hours. Then in June of that year, on a stormy Friday evening, the congregation called and charged me with an awesome responsibility; from that moment on we became Pastor and people. And my life has never been the same.

I could not have known what these three decades would bring. They have been years of pleasure and years of pain. There were years when the skies were bright, the road seemed clear, and the path straight. There were also years when I did not know how to put one foot before the other; years that were indeed an uphill journey. And yet, the assessment of these years can only be that, through it all, God has been good to us. Through it all God has made rough places plain and crooked places straight. Through it all, through the wind and rain of every storm, there has been and yet remains with us an anchor to keep us “steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.”

So we come today, nearly twenty-nine years later, aware that we have not arrived here because of our goodness, our abilities or our intelligence. We are here because God has been good, His mercy is everlasting and His truth endures to all generations. We are here because of the love and labor we have shared together. We are here because of the saints of God “who once went sorrowing here; but now they taste unmingled love and joy without a tear.” I am here standing on the venerated shoulders of Reverend(s) Henry Bailey, Robert Johnson, Moses Wilberforce Dewitt Norman and Ernest Clarence Smith. Thanks be to God for the great things He has done through them and the great things He yet will do through us because of their continuing witness!

To speak of the State of the Church in this worship forum is, for some, peculiar and annoying. It has been my practice, however, in January of every year to report to the congregation on the progress of our ministry and to set the course for the coming year. Through this time of sharing I am seeking a level of transparency and accountability to you, the Body of Christ, so that you will know what is happening and you can be certain that we are effective and faithful to our obligations as stewards of what the enigmatic Apostle Paul called “the mysteries of the faith.” I come to this pulpit Sunday by Sunday because of God’s grace and your patient forbearance. I must not, I will not take for granted the high level of trust and expectation you have for this ministry. You have every right to know the broad expanse of our witness, the challenges we face, and the limits of our achievement.

**And this is the state of the church:** we have not yet arrived; yet we are on our way. Our ministry continues to grow even in an environment that is often hostile to that

growth. The individual ministries of the church are maturing and expanding. We are not financially rich but we are financially stable. There is a new birth of freedom in our worship that permits us to praise God with integrity and to celebrate what God has done with every manifestation of the spirit. Let the word go forth that in the Metropolitan church it's all right to praise, it's all right to dance, it's all right to shout for the God we serve is worthy to be praised. There is a sense of family among us that we have not known for many a year and we have discovered that we really do need each other in order to survive. Satan is still among us. Yet we know that if Satan left us alone we would not be doing anything worthy of his time. Thank God for Satan! The State of the Church is sound and secure. We come to the 142<sup>nd</sup> year of this ministry knowing that the eye of God is upon us, the presence of God hovers over us, the breath of God energizes us, the Spirit of God propels us, and that hand of God protects us. We have not reached perfection but I am satisfied today to tell you that "our witness is in heaven and our record will be there."

### THE SAINTS IN CAESAR'S HOUSEHOLD

In every instance of his writing the Apostle Paul always took a moment to acknowledge those who had made his journey in ministry both meaningful and possible. He called his friends in ministry "Saints in Caesar's household." (Phil. 4:22) The phrase itself is astounding on its face. Paul understood that those who assisted him were those who worked under oppressive conditions and whose lives were always hanging in the balance. They were not "saints in the lap of luxury." They were saints because they knew how to be Godly in ungodly situations. They were saints because they kept on working even when they didn't get paid. They were saints because they were faithful even when their faithfulness would surely cost them their lives. They were "Saints in Caesar's household."

And we have such saints. I am blessed in this ministry because of the tireless work of the Metropolitan Staff and because of the incomparable and indefatigable time and labor of our Chief Operating Officer, **Denise Gibson Bailey**, truly a Saint in Caesar's household.

Our ministry is strong and secure because of the professional and Christ-centered leadership of six of the finest ministers who are my co-laborers and friends: The Reverend(s) **Brenda Girton Mitchell** (in absentia) who has brought new life to our ministry of Christian Discipleship, **Melvin Maxwell** who has given tirelessly of himself to our men and especially to our youth, **Sherrill McMillan** who gives leadership to our Counseling Ministry and who has this year begun a new venture in the arena of health and wholeness, the incomparable **Nolan E. Williams, Jr.**, who has transformed our choirs into a ministry and who has turned singers into Psalmists who give praise and glory to God, **Adriane Blair Wise** who has most recently joined our ministerial staff as Minister of Transition and, of course, the **Reverend Jesse Wood** who, amid a wide variety of duties and responsibilities has guided us in the development of our worship in Largo, He is indeed a faithful and devoted assistant of rare and special gifts.

**MDS**

You know, of course, that our ministry reaches far beyond these walls. Consequently, the mantle leadership that is needed cannot be deposited in one but in many. The Metropolitan Day School is now in its eighth year and is literally nurturing children and changing lives. Through Christ-centered teaching we are serving our church, our community and thirty-one of our students are able to attend the Day School through the Opportunity Scholarship Program and the Washington Scholarship Fund. Please express your appreciation for the leadership of our principal, **Mrs. Pearline R. Humbles.**

**MDALC**

Similarly we are gratified by the work of Metropolitan Delta Adult Literacy Council that continues to impact the lives of people within our community. In the last year Metropolitan Delta has serviced 550 persons who have special literacy challenges, teaching them to read and write. Twenty-six persons have received their GED diplomas and 27 have received positions of employment. This year a *Parenting for Literacy* program will begin in Ward 8 of the District. This program is designed to teach parents who have literacy challenges how to read so they will in turn be able to read to their children. Please express your appreciation for the Executive Director of Metropolitan Delta Literacy Council, **Mr. Artee J. Milligan, Jr.**

**IAMA / GH**

This year, under the leadership of Dr. Sherrill McMillan, IAMA, Inc., terminated its non-profit corporate status and became a ministry of Metropolitan Church. In its stead The Garment's Hem has been organized as a separate subsidiary corporation of the church. The Garment's Hem will provide an integrative approach to healing afflictions of body, mind and spirit. This new outreach effort is specifically targeted to residents of Prince George's County. Already the Garment's Hem is preparing to serve our new constituency through Blood pressure, diabetes, body mass, vision, hearing, as well as HIV/AIDS screening and testing. Once again, we praise God for **Dr. Sherrill McMillan** and the leadership she brings.

**MCDC**

Our Metropolitan Community Development Corporation continues its maintenance of two three-story office buildings adjacent to our property in Largo, Maryland. These offices buildings are occupied by small businesses within the community and thus serve as an incubator for economic growth and development. The buildings are now at 85% occupancy and covering their expense. Programmatically MCDC offers financial literacy programs for youth and adults and has reached over 200 persons in transition, teaching new life skills as well as financial management. We are, in addition, now offering Home Ownership Seminars in Prince George's County. Once again, would you express your appreciation to MCDC's Executive Director, **Dr. Jesse Wood.**

## COUNCIL OF SERVANTS

Finally, these acknowledgements could not be complete were it not for the partnership that has been developed with the Council of Servants (formerly the Official Board) of our Church. The Diaconate, under the devoted leadership of **Servant Donald Hines**, the Trustee Ministry under the skillful guidance of **Servant Jeffrey Washington** along with **Mark Smith** our Church Clerk, all of whom comprise the Council of Servants, along with the Elders who provide a spiritual support for our work, are the persons who give unselfishly of themselves in every area of our church life. Their work is pivotal to the ministries of the church, the provision of the Ordinances of the church, home and hospital visitation and for the overall management and stewardship of the resources of the church. They are the constant support, seen and often unseen, upon which this Pastor relies. Over the past few years we have been engaged in an effort to give responsible structure to the internal organization of the Council and have added new persons from this congregation in an effort to ensure that our leadership is progressive, that our programs are innovative, and that we resist the unproductive trap of entrenched leadership. At every level of our work we must be consistently excellent for our Christ.

## TOWARD A NEW METROPOLITAN

Our greatest task before us today is the work of erecting a Tabernacle for our Christ in Largo, Maryland. The path toward Largo has been long and winding. We have crossed wide waters and have found giants in the land. Yet God has been faithful and has answered our prayers. The vision we pursue is not of brick and mortar. It is a vision that seeks to touch the human heart and to address human needs. We know that heart matters and therefore, in the words of Nehemiah, we will build up these walls because the people have a heart to work.

There are many, however, who have joined our fellowship in the last five years who do not know how God has blessed us. Let me share with you now a chronology of the events of the past years so that you will see how far the Lord done brought us from!

### 1999

In 1999 our community began to change and our new neighbors objected to our use of the Garrison School yard as a place for Sunday parking. Our decision was to abandon our use of the yard. The motive for our move, however, is far beyond parking. We knew then as we know now that it is necessary to create a place of worship and praise where Metropolitan could grow to the limits of the vision God has for us. Our vision is to reach beyond walls, to nurture and bless children, provide healing hands for the wounded, build houses, feed the hungry and become an avenue of escape for those who are imprisoned by the structures of this world. Our vision is to continue our strong and rich history of service to the multiple communities and cultures we have and will serve. In response to this vision the church voted overwhelmingly to step out on faith – in search of an unknown land on which to build the new Metropolitan.

## **2000**

In the year 2000 the church voted to purchase 34 acres of land in Largo, Maryland. The congregation responded on one day with a **Miracle In May** Offering of \$750,000 planting a seed of faith in the vision for new soil.

## **2001**

In 2001 our architect was selected and Metropolitan was made the “*remainderman*” for the Burton Charitable Remainder Trust and the Hannover UniTrust valued at over \$5.6 million.

## **2002**

In 2002 our First Fruits Sunday yielded \$5.1 million in pledges toward the fulfillment of our vision.

## **2003**

In 2003 negotiations continued for the sale of properties surrounding the church and yielded a substantial sum toward the cost of new construction.

## **2004**

In 2004 the ceremonial groundbreaking was held on God’s land in Largo and SRP Development was hired to serve as the Development Manager for our project.

## **2005**

In May of 2005 Prince Georges County Planning Board approved our Detailed Sight Plan, we celebrated our Victory at our **Heart Matters Prayer Breakfast**, the initial building permit was hand delivered by County Executive Jack Johnson, and the design/build firm of J. E. Dunn and Rees was selected to complete the design and construction of the new facility.

Also, in 2005 an additional \$1.3 was received from the Hannover UniTrust. This money allowed for the Metropolitan Day School mortgage to be paid in full.

The permanent bond financing was approved with the California Plan of Church Finance. Closing on our bond financing package occurred this week. You need to understand what this means. Our financial position was strong enough to qualify for \$30 million in bonds and enough to satisfy the financial requirements to complete the construction of the new church in one phase. That sounds like a blessing to me!

In addition, a reappraisal of the property in Largo revealed that the property had escalated in appraised value by \$2.3 million dollars. Sounds like a blessing to me!

Not only that – hear this! – **Payment of pledges to the Hope Fund totaled \$5.5 million dollars exceeding the \$5.1 million in pledges received above and beyond your tithes and offerings.** Even so our giving in tithes and offerings for the last 12 months is up over the previous twelve months. Your mission giving increased while monies for Hurricane relief reached record proportions. I cannot tell you how

pleased and proud I am of this congregation. Metropolitan you did what you said you would do. You made your pledges and you were faithful to your word. I ask now that those who have completed their Hope Fund Pledge would please stand and receive the appreciation of the congregation. Evidently, somebody sees the vision. We are able because our God is able. Work on the Land in Largo has now begun! Somebody hand me a hard hat! Somebody ought to shout!

## **2006**

In the first three weeks of this year, as a consequence of our financing, the debt on the land in Largo has been paid in full. The amount that we have paid for the land is now fully in the Remainder Trust and will be accounted as an asset on our books. After all of this, construction is underway, the vision is being realized before our eyes, and a new Metropolitan will soon rise from the earth. Give God the glory!

## **THE WORK OF OUR HANDS**

The result of these blessings is that there is work for our hands to do. As the architects and contractors have their work to do externally, we must be similarly engaged internally. The construction of a building is a matter of the physical; what we are engaged in is a matter of the spiritual. We must expend our energies in preparation for the “new thing” God will require us to be and become.

Accordingly, we have begun a process of intentional transformation. Over the next year and a half the congregation will be challenged to take an introspective look at who we are, what we do, why and how we do it. This process of spiritual self-examination will cause us not only to be thoughtful but will prepare of for the various transitions that will surely take place. As new persons unite with our fellowship we must be sensitive to the needs they bring for our future in addition to the retention of the best of who we are in the now. Our internal transformation will give rise to discussions regarding the uses of technology, the provision of services for new and different constituencies, facilities management, internal church business development, organizational restructuring, security and parking controls. And the list goes on.

What I am trying to say is that, going forward, Metropolitan will be engaged in a process of change. We must not, however, be victimized by change because we were unprepared. We must, to the extent we are able, manage change so that we are blessed by it.

In order to facilitate this process I have appointed nine persons to give leadership to various transitional committees. Servants Lora Brown, Tina Long, Lindsay Merritt, Chrissie Nash, Rick Roberts, Paul Robinson, Wilma Tilson, Jeffrey Washington and Tony Williams are charged to reach into the congregation in order that your skills and gifts may be utilized in this process as well. Over all, I have appointed the Reverend Adriane Blair Wise to serve as Minister of Transition. In this position, Reverend Wise is charged with the responsibility organizing the efficient programmatic movement from ministry on R Street to ministry in Largo, Maryland.

Let's be real here. Change is never an easy proposition. We don't like to change. We resist change. If we have learned anything at all we have learned, in the words of Bishop Kenneth Ulmer, that *"healthy things grow, growing things change, change challenges us, challenge forces us to trust God, trust leads to obedience, obedience makes us healthy and healthy things grow."* And we will be challenged by change. My hope, however, is that Metropolitan will rise to this challenge and that we will use the transitional process as a tool for growth and greater service to our Christ.

## **MIRACLE MANAGEMENT**

However we view the events and circumstances that have brought us from 1999 to this present moment, I believe it is clear that the miracle for which we prayed has, in fact, occurred. There is no way to explain friends we did not know, enemies who tried to hurt us but helped us, land we did not seek, office buildings we had not imagined, money we had not counted on, and financing we did not have to struggle for. There is no way to explain land that was ready for us when God got us ready for it. There is no way to explain pledges that were made and then kept. We prayed for a miracle and a miracle is what we got.

We must be careful here. The challenge we face is not simply to receive a miracle but to know how to manage a miracle. The challenge may well be to ensure that we don't get in the way of the miracle but to participate in God's plan to secure the miracle. Here's what you need to know: Miracles occur as a consequence of a Divine-human transaction. Miracles are not left up to us; neither are they left up to God. Miracles are a consequence of a Divine-human transaction.

- God will be faithful to you but you must also be faithful to Him.
- God will raise up friends for you but you must also be a friend to Him.
- God will give you a new job but you must first get out of bed to go look for it.
- God will give you a new home but you must first stay in school so you can be qualified to earn it.
- God will bless you with abundance and fill your barns with plenty but you must also bring your tithes and your offerings to the storehouse.
- God will answer prayer but every once in a while you need to fall to your knees and say, "Father, I stretch my hands to thee..."

It's a Divine-human transaction.

I bring this transaction to your attention because the completion of the first pledge period last December was but the first step on a long journey. I challenge you today to make a new pledge, to make a new sacrificial pledge, to make a new pledge that comes not as a matter of your head but a matter of your heart. God will provide miracles but we must do our part. We must maintain the very essence of our ministry and sustain our core services. We can only do so if you maintain your tithes and offerings. In addition, we need you to make a new pledge today. The bulldozers are on the land and

the financing is in place. But financing is just that – financing! We still have to pay it back. In a few weeks you will hear us speak of Memorial Gifts. This will be your opportunity to give specific items to the church in memory and in honor of friends and loved ones. You will be asked to donate for seats and other furniture, have rooms named in your honor, and provide necessary equipment and all of the specialty items that are not included in our financing.

This will be a challenge for some years to come and so it is necessary for me to make this urgent appeal today. At the conclusion of this service I will ask for those who have completed their pledges to come forward with new pledges. I will ask for those who have never pledged to do so today. I will ask that those who never thought we'd get this far would pledge today. What has been achieved so far has been achieved with the participation of only a fraction of our congregation. Think of where we would be if we all were faithful in this Divine-human transaction.

One manages a miracle when one sees that miracles occur by transaction. And you only know that you have a miracle when you are able to see the Hand of God. I don't know about you but I have seen the Hand of God upon this place. I have seen the Hand of God upon this vision. I have seen the Hand of God bring something out of nothing. I have seen the Hand of God take us through dangers seen and unseen. I have seen the Hand of God hold us steady through assaults from within and without. I have seen the Hand of God when the wicked, enemies and foes came upon me to eat up my flesh. We are not here because of ourselves; we are here because of His wondrous miracle working power. I have seen His miracle producing power and I believe there are miracles yet to come. In fact, tell somebody...

*I'm looking for a miracle; I expect the impossible  
I feel the intangible; I see the invisible.  
The sky is the limit to what I can feel  
Just believe and receive it, God will perform it today.  
I expect a miracle every day.  
God will make a way out of no way.*

### **THE YEAR OF ANSWERED PRAYERS**

I came here today to declare unto you that this is the year of answered prayers. I want you to hear me today because this thing is personal with me and I believe it's personal with you. I confess when I look back upon the years of our engagement as Pastor and People there are some of those years when it appeared that our prayers were not being answered. There were years when it appeared to me that the heavens were shut up, like Elijah the rains had stopped and there was not water in the land, and it looked like God was no longer answering prayers.

I remember a time when folk gathered in the hall and the topic of conversation was "I don't see the vision." Prayers unanswered.

I remember a time when folk said the problem is not with the vision but with the visionary. Prayers unanswered.

I remember a time when the money was slow and the pledges were unkept. Prayers unanswered.

I still must deal with those who question my long-term intent and want to know if I'm going to get the building built and then leave. Well, let me answer your question. All of us are here on borrowed time. And all of us must leave when God says so. I struggle to this pulpit every Sunday and declare God's Word here not because I deserve it but because He permits it and you support it. You want to know if I intend to stay and finish the job. I want to know if you will pray and help me finish the job. You want to know if I have a timetable; I want you to know ***"I don't feel no ways tired; I've come too far from where I started from."***

***My hand is on the plough, my faltering hand  
And all that is before me is still untilled land.  
The wilderness and the solitary place  
The lonely, lonely desert with all of its inter-space  
The handle of my plough with tears is wet  
The shares with rust are spoiled and yet, and yet  
My God keep us all from turning back  
For He who removes His hand from the plough and looks back  
Shall not be fit for the Kingdom of God.***

***Author Unknown***

Yet I come to declare among you today that this is a new day and this is the year of answered prayers.

Let me tell you how to manage this miracle. I looked to Paul's writing in his first epistle to the church at Thessalonica in order to find a way to manage the miracle. Thessalonica, as you know, was the capitol city of Macedonia in the northern part of Greece. He wrote to the church at Thessalonica, situated as it was on the Via Egnatia, the major Roman highway that connected Rome with Constantinople. Paul was in Athens when he sent young Timothy back to Thessalonica in order that he could report on the state of the Church. And the word was that while Thessalonica was a healthy church they still required the counsel and advise of the aging Apostle. That's why, when Paul found out how strong the church was, he sent some specific instructions to govern their behavior as they marched together toward the King. And when I read it, I found a word for you and me. Here's what I found out: there are four things we must do in the year of Answered Prayers.

***16. Rejoice evermore.***

First of all, says Paul, when you see a miracle, Rejoice. When you see a miracle, it's a time to let your hair down. Rejoice. When you see a miracle, it's a time to get out in the aisle and get your step on. But what Paul really said was "Rejoice **evermore.**" In other words, don't ever stop rejoicing. In good times and in bad, rejoice **ever more.** In sunshine and in shadow, rejoice **ever more.** When you see the way and when you can't find the way, as long as God is in control, you can rejoice **ever more.**

### **17. Pray without ceasing.**

In the year of answered prayer that is not a time to stop praying, that's the time to keep on praying. If God has blessed us with a little prayer, Good God A'mighty, just think how God will bless us with much prayer. Keep on praying. And if I don't tell you anything else let me assure you that our God is a prayer answering God. Is there anybody here that knows our God is a prayer answering God?

I looked to this book and this is what it says:

Hezekiah prayed and God added 15 years to his life. God is a prayer answering God.

Daniel prayed and God locked the lion's jaw. God is a prayer answering God.

Elijah prayed and defeated the 450 prophets of baal on Mt. Carmel. God is a prayer answering God.

David prayed: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." God is a prayer answering God.

Esther prayed in the palace at Shushan. And I heard her say, "**If I perish, I perish.**" God is a prayer answering God.

Hannah prayed for a son and then promised to give him back. God is a prayer answering God.

Peter was in jail but the church prayed for him. Angels came and took him out of jail just so the jailors would know that our God is a prayer answering God.

Jesus prayed over two little fish and five loaves of bread and then fed 5,000 not counting women and children. God is a prayer answering God.

I heard Jesus pray, "**Father, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.**" God is a prayer answering God.

I heard a thief pray, "**When you come into your kingdom, remember me!**" God is a prayer answering God.

But I believe there's somebody in here that knows for yourself that God is a prayer answering God. Has anybody called Him? Has anybody been down on your knees? Anybody here know how to call on Heaven?

And all I want you to know is that I've been waiting on this day a mighty long time. I've been praying a mighty long time. I've been hoping a mighty long time. And all I can tell you is that

He is an On-time God. Yes, He is!

He may not come when you call Him but He's always right on time! Yes, He is.

This is the year; this is the year of answered prayer.

**But don't stop there!**

**18** *In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

I don't know about you but I came out here to say "Thank you!" For your goodness, thank you. For your grace, thank you. For your mercy, thank you. Thank you for my rising. Thank you for my falling. Thank you for my friends. Thank you for my enemies. For a faithful church, thank you. For a giving church, thank you. For supportive Deacons, Thank you. For all the things you've done for me, Thank You. Is there anybody here that just wants to say, "Thank you!?"

**But don't stop there. Paul says:**

**19** *Quench not the spirit.*

Paul says, whatever you do, don't quench the spirit. You don't know what that means. It means when you come to church, don't pour water on the Spirit. When you come to church, don't come in here looking like you're disinterested. When you come to church, don't come in here looking bored and ready to go home. When you come to church, get a good night's rest the night before so you don't have to go to sleep on Sunday. Don't quench the spirit. When you come to church and you don't want to shout, at least don't get in the way. Move over so somebody else can shout. Don't quench the spirit. I don't know how you feel about it but every once in a while there ought to be some spirit in here. Every once in a while something ought to catch on fire. Every once in a while there ought to be a little prayer wheel turning and a little fire burning. But whatever you do, don't quench the spirit.

**THE YEAR OF ANSWERED PRAYERS** (reprise!)

Let me tell you how the year of answered prayers really works. In order to appreciate the value and purpose of answered prayers you must first go through the valley of unanswered prayers. The miracle/blessing/prayer-answering process has to take you through something in order for you to understand what God has done to you through you.

The story is told of a preacher who had a conversation with God one day. God told the preacher to push a large bolder, a bolder larger than any he had ever seen. Day after day the preacher pushed the bolder. But the bolder never moved. Month after month

the preacher pushed the bolder. But the bolder never moved. Ever faithful, year after year, the preacher pushed the bolder. But the bolder never moved.

- You can imagine that the preacher became disheartened and discouraged.
- You can imagine that the preacher began to think that his labor was in vain.
- You can imagine that the preacher thought that his task unreasonable and his chances for success unachievable.

After years of pushing the bolder, the preacher got up enough nerve to discuss the matter with God. 'God, I've been doing what you asked me to do. Day after day, week after week, year after year, I've been doing what you asked. And now I feel like I'm a failure. Now, I feel let down. I feel like I'm a failure because I haven't been able to move this stone. After all of these years, after all my struggling and striving, I still can't move this stone. I've been singing. I've been praying. I've been preaching. I've been struggling the best I can but I still can't move this stone.'

And that's when God spoke to the preacher, 'Well, preacher, you see, I didn't tell you to move it. I just told you to push it. You didn't know why I told you to push it but this is why: Look at your biceps, look at your triceps. Look at your quads.

While you were pushing I was making you stronger every day.

While you were pushing I was giving you more endurance every day. While you were pushing I was teaching you stamina and staying power. While you were pushing I was teaching you patience and teaching you how to survive.

So don't worry about moving the rock; just keep on pushing.

*I've had some good days  
I've had some hills to clime  
I've had some weary days  
And some sleepless nights  
But when I look around and think things over  
All of my good days, out weigh my bad days  
I won't complain.*

*Sometimes the clouds hang low  
I can hardly see the road.  
I ask the question, "Lord,  
Why so much pain?"  
But He knows what's best for me  
More than my weary eyes can see  
So, I'll say, "Thank you, Lord"  
I won't complain.*

*God has been good to me  
He's been so good to me  
More than this world could ever be  
He's been good to me.  
He dries all my tears away*

*Turns my midnights into day  
So, I'll just say "Thank you, Lord."  
I won't complain.*