

~Other Speakers M-R: Daily Portions:

"Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the Lord when you heard what I have spoken against this place and its people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you, declares the Lord." 2 Kings 22:19

This tenderness of heart was a mark in Josiah, on which the Lord, so to speak, put his finger; it was a special token for good which God selected from all the rest, as a testimony in his favor. The heart is always tender which God has touched with his finger; this tenderness being the fruit of the impression of the Lord's hand upon the conscience. You may know the difference between a natural conscience and a heart tender in God's fear by this--that the natural conscience is always superstitious and uncertain; as the Lord says, it "strains out a gnat, and swallows a camel." It is exceedingly observant of self-inflicted austerities, and very fearful of breaking through self-imposed rules; and while it will commit sin which a man who has the fear of God in his heart would not do for the world--it will stumble at mere unimportant trifles at which an enlightened soul would not feel the least scruple.

But here is the mark of a heart tender in God's fear--it moves as God the Spirit works upon it. It is like the mariner's compass, which having been once touched by the magnet, always turns toward the north; it may indeed oscillate and tremble backwards and forwards, but still it will return to the pole, and ultimately remain fixed at the point whence it was temporarily disturbed. So when the heart has been touched by the Spirit, and has been made tender in God's fear, it may for a time waver to the right hand or to the left, but it is always trembling and fluctuating until it points towards God, as the only and eternal center of its happiness and holiness.