

## “The Cripple and His Bible”

At a meeting of the Blackheath Auxiliary Bible Society, in the year 1815, Dr. Gregory, of Woolwich, related the following very interesting story:—More than twelve months ago, I went, upon the request of a poor, but benevolent-hearted woman in my neighborhood, to visit a desperately poor and afflicted man. On entering the cottage, I found him alone, his wife having gone to get him some milk from a kind neighbor. I was startled by the sight of a pale, emaciated man, a living image of death, fastened upright in his chair, by a rude mechanism of cords and belts hanging from the ceiling. He was totally unable to move either hand or foot. For over four years he had been deprived of the use of his limbs and lived in a constant state of extreme anguish from the swelling of his joints. As soon as I recovered a little from my surprise at seeing one in such a deplorable condition I asked if he had been left alone. “No, sire,” he replied in a touchingly feeble tone of resignation, (nothing but his lips and eyes moving while he spoke); “I am not alone for God is with me.” On drawing near to him I discovered the source of this remarkable statement. His wife had left on his knees, propped up with a cushion for the purpose his Bible lying open to his favorite portion of the Psalms. I sat down by him and we began to talk. When I discovered that he had but a small weekly allowance, I inquired how the remainder of his needs were supplied. “Why, sir,” said he, “ ’tis true, as you say, seven shillings a week would never support us; but when it is gone, I rely upon the promise I found in this book: ‘Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure;’ and I have never been disappointed yet; and so long as God is faithful to his word, I never shall.” I asked him if he ever felt tempted to repine under the pressure of so long-continued and heavy a calamity. “Not for the last three years,” said he, “blessed be God for it;” (the eye of faith sparkling and giving life to his pallid countenance while he made the declaration) “for I have learned from this book in whom to believe: and, though I am aware of my weakness and unworthiness, I am persuaded that He will ‘not leave me, nor forsake me.’ And so it is that often, when my lips are closed with locked jaw, and I cannot speak to the glory of God, He enables me to sing His praises in my heart.”