

CHRIST ALONE EXALTED:

THE LOVE, POWER, AND DEMONSTRATION OF THE SPIRIT
SET FORTH,
AND THE HEART-EXPERIENCE OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD
DECLARED,
ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPTURES.

THE LAST SIX SERMONS
PREACHED IN
GOWER STREET CHAPEL,
LONDON,

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PREFACE

TO THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE LORD ALMIGHTY, ALL HEALTH, PEACE, AND PROSPERITY BE UNTO YOU FROM THE LORD; AND LOVE, BLOOD, AND SALVATION ABOUND IN YOU: AND IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SPIRIT MAY YOU CONTINUALLY SAY, “TRULY OUR FELLOWSHIP IS WITH THE FATHER, AND WITH THE LORD JESUS CHRIST.”

It is in the love of the truth, and to you for the truth sake, I again address you in this way and manner; and I do it most willingly for a testimony of the grace and faithfulness of the Lord our God; and with you at all times I rejoice that he that is our God is the God of salvation, and he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself; and they that trust in him shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be moved. And for this cause we may freely assure our hearts before him, that he will never leave us nor forsake us, and will do as he hath said, “ I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also;” and we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

Many a trial, trouble, affliction, and temptation have I experienced, but the Lord hath never forsaken me, nor hath ought failed of all that he hath promised; all is come to pass even to this day. In him I have peace, in the world tribulation, &c. The truth of this I love to speak, and so stand before the people of God, and declare that it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and that in all things he should have the pre-eminence; and as we have received him so we walk in him, rooted and built up in him, and in and by the knowledge of him; and as we live and walk in the Spirit, we cannot cease to say, “The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.”

Our Lord Jesus saith, “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” This, experienced in the heart, gives us an understanding of the effectual working of the Spirit by the Word, to quicken, encourage, comfort, and correct, to the casting down of imaginations, pulling down the strongholds of Satan, and destroying all confidence in the flesh. And by the same Spirit, according to the Word, our hearts are directed into the love of God, and into the patience of Jesus Christ; and so we grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and the Word of the Lord, by the same Spirit, is good for reproof, correction, instruction, &c. And in conjunction with this it is also true, how can they hear without a preacher, and how can they preach except they be sent.

It is good at all times for the children of God to observe these and other like truths, and with all willingness of heart and mind ascribe all to the praise of the glory of his grace that hath made us accepted in the beloved; and cease not to say also, “By the grace of God I am what I am.” For the honour of my gracious Lord and God I write these things, and pray that your hearts may be comforted, being knit together in love unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; and to us the Holy Ghost saith, “All are yours, ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.

One word more, as the servant of the Lord and your companion in tribulation in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, that although I have been ashamed of myself and actions, yet I have not been ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Of this the Lord hath made me a witness, and kept me for many years, preaching the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God; and with you I rejoice also, that whether we live we live unto the Lord, or whether we die we die unto the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s; and nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Beloved of and in the Lord, I commend you to God and the Word of his grace, and pray that the following truths in the Sermons may be a sweet savour of Christ, and salvation unto you in reading, as to me when speaking them; that with one heart and mind we may magnify the Lord, utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness. And to the Father, Son, and Spirit, the Three that bear record in heaven, and these Three are One, be all honour and glory. Amen.

Yours, in our precious Lord Jesus,

A. TRIGGS.

84, *Torrington Street, Plymouth*, April, 1855

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SERMON I.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 10TH, 1854.

the drawing of the lord, and running of the church.

“Draw me, we will run after thee.” — Song i. 4.

The Church of the living God will never comprehend the fulness of the blessedness of their security in Christ; and those that are indulged with a

knowledge of the mercy, know most about the insecurity of everything out of Christ; and such are taught, and are given to understand, yea, believe, that they have no continuing, nor abiding, nor anything permanent, but what they have in Christ Jesus; and they are also taught by God, and have wisdom given them to understand, that all is vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit that is not in union with our most glorious Christ. Then what is the employ of a believer?

“To sing the love that took me in,
While others in transgression die.”

You know, with me, that when the mind is taken up with that sweet truth, everything that is moveable rolls into the back ground, while we rejoice in oneness of heart and in the unity of the Spirit. “The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted.” Mark another sweet mercy, and we can never meditate upon it too often, Jesus Christ is the rock, and he is a rock; but, mind, a rock is not Jesus Christ. Let us think over these glorious realities. The names (I do not say titles nor characters, for I do not like it), but the names that belong to our most glorious Christ are handed down to you and me from God’s mind, will, and pleasure in his own Word; and though he is one person, yet there is something so suitable and blessed, yea, so sweet and precious in every name that Jesus Christ hath, if time would permit I should like to go over a few; but as you are in the habit of reading your bibles, and I trust God gives you an understanding of what you read, that whatever name belongs to Jesus Christ, himself is the fulness of it; and as he is the fulness of it, himself and that fulness bears this unalterable truth to every believer in Christ, “All are yours, ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” This is more worth than heaven without Christ; this mercy, by the ministry of the Spirit, makes the lame man leap like an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing; this truth, realized by faith, will constrain us to loathe ourselves in our own sight, and bless God that we are nothing, and rejoice that Christ is all in all. There can be no mixation of anything of the creature with our

precious Lord Jesus; therefore, how blessed God the Father gave Christ to us as our all, and God the Father gave us to Christ, “that we should be to the praise of his glory who first trusted in Christ.” Now, in the simplicity of my heart, I will make a remark by way of a question, Is our mind more taken up with these unchangeable truths than with our changeable feelings, which is called experience? Remember, I do not say a word against that experience that worketh hope; but mind, our God never intended, nor is there a word spoken concerning it, that we should trust in anything short of him; for we know, and I have learned it, and sorrow is connected with it, that if we try to trust in our feelings, God puts bitterness in it and a damper on it; and we have appeared more like the mountains of Gilboa, without either dew or rain, than rejoicing in Christ Jesus. Let me stop a moment here, and ponder over this glorious mercy:

“Within the clefts of his dear aide,
There all his saints in safety dwell.”

Here is a mystery as well as a mercy, that although we are exposed to all manner of evil and destruction, yet preserved from all evil, we are not a whit better than the ungodly that perish in their sins — that is, as we are the sons and daughters of earthy Adam; for all are born in sin and shapen in iniquity. Then consider this, as we know it to be true, God having made us witness of it. And we will read that scripture in reference to our precious Lord Jesus, and I will read it thus: “I was born *for* sin, I was shapen *for* iniquity;” the Hebrew language will admit of it. And we will quote what Paul saith, “This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.” Observe another thing, and ponder it over — What we are out of Christ as sinners is one thing, what we are in Christ as saints is another. We daily find sin working in us to bring forth fruit unto death; yet, living believers in a living Christ, we live there without sin, as if there never had been sin; we live above sin, and are justified from all things; thus sin to a believer is a complete nonentity. Ah, say some, I wish you would forget

that word. Then I must forget Christ and salvation. I would have you think of matters soberly; if there is any sin standing against you, you stand in condemnation before God, under the curse of the law; but, blessed be God, being in Christ we are delivered from the law, we are dead to the law, we are dead to sin, we are dead to the world, but alive to God by Jesus Christ our Lord. I find I could keep on through all the time this morning, talking to you about these precious truths, being in Christ the rock, being defended by him; all storms, waves, billows, and tides of ungodliness have nothing to do with a new creature in Christ Jesus. Some of you may have noticed the waves rushing over the rocks, but it makes no impression, for when the waves recede, it leaves the rock in the exact position as it was before. Then Christ is a rock, and he saith to his God and Father, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." Where was the Church then? In him in all safety. Where are we now? In him. Where were we when the storm beat vehemently upon him? In him. Wrath cannot stand against a child of God, for by Jesus we are delivered from wrath to come; though the pendulum of eternity beats wrath to come, not a particle can come near the Church in Christ; "for in him we are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses." The realization of these precious truths, as demonstrated in the heart by God the Eternal Spirit, endears Jesus Christ, and constrains us to sing of the mercies of the Lord, and sweetly constrains us at all times to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. "Draw me, we will run after thee. The King hath brought me into his chambers, we will be glad and rejoice in thee: we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee" (Song i. 4). There never was a child of God but what was a singer. "Ah!" say you, "I cannot sing." Perhaps not, vocally; but every child of God is a singer, and there is one part he is taught to sing, though he may not utter a word, and none but a child of God can understand its meaning, and that is the first verse of Psalm ci. And there appears to be great willingness: "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." That is a singular part of the song, and it appears contrary to each other; there is not only mercy but

judgment; and as the Lord opens the secret, we sing of the mercy of the Lord, and that we have salvation in him with eternal glory; we sing of judgment, and see God the Father executing that judgment on his dear Son, our surety, when he laid our iniquity on him, and when he put him to grief; he was made sin for us who knew no sin; and whatever judgment there was between the Father and the Son, concerning the sins and transgression of the Church, it was executed on Jesus Christ. Now look at what is recorded in Psalm xv., margin: “He swore to bear the evil, and he changeth not.” Then it is in the belief of this I speak freely to you, that there is no wrath nor curse standing against a believer in Christ, such being reconciled to God by the death of his Son, and are made nigh to God by the blood of Christ, and thus stands the subject now. “Let the inhabitants of the rock sing.” Have you been singing your sweet *alamoth* to the Lord this morning? “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble” (Psa. xlvi.): “And this God is our God for ever and ever, and he will be our guide over death.”

I will just drop a hint here, and the Lord is witness to the truth of it, that I am just beginning to learn a little of the mystery of Christ, the mystery of the gospel, and the mystery of godliness — “God was manifest in the flesh.” I never learned anything concerning Jesus Christ by the dint of study, nor by the movement of intellectuality, nor by any teachings of man; but this every believer is taught, by the revelation of the Father, by the manifestation of the Son of God, and by the work and ministry of God the Eternal Spirit. Now some of our wisdom men according to the flesh may say, “then you may put away your bibles, for it is no matter whether you read them or no.” But keep a child of God from reading his bible if you can, though he may read it by the hour to his own condemnation; but attempt to take the bible from him, he will rise up in rebellion against you. If you tell him to look no more into that old book, you must keep him in the dark to prevent him. Ah, beloved! it is one thing to be a believer in Christ, and it is another thing to be a professor of religion. But, however,

we must come back to the text, one thing is certain — if God hath brought you and me as far as the text, we shall have to sing through all eternity the songs recorded in this part of the book of God; as we begin, if there is an end, so we shall end. Then I would just observe the wonderful title, — “The Song of Songs.” But there is something more in the Hebrew than the English language can fully declare; for there is no OF in the original, it is “*Song Songs*” to or of Solomon, the “Peaceable,” the “Peace;” and Jesus Christ is our peace, and he is the peaceable one. Solomon was a wonderful type of Christ; and there are some things recorded concerning Solomon that I should have shrank from in my younger days, for in my own mind I have condemned him; but let this suffice as a type of Christ. He was a lover of strange women, and every one of these strange women were Gentiles. What are we? Oh, the riches of his grace! the wonder of his love! for we were once strangers, and a great way off, but he loved us. Let me make another remark; and I have been looking a little at it this week. How careful the Lord was with the olden Church when he came down and stood at the opening of the tabernacle, and he gave commandment to the Church to be kind to the stranger; that if a stranger was circumcised (but now the new birth) they were to receive him without doubtful disputation, without any murmuring or taunting, or saying an offensive word to him; being circumcised, they received him as one of themselves, as a member of the Church of God. I do speak it in love, if these truths were considered, there would not be that diversity which produces confusion and enmity as there is now; for if a person does not come up to a certain standard of opinion and sentiment, he cannot be a child of God, nor a member with us. But let us ponder over God’s Word, and may God give us to understand that, whether babes, little children, young men, or fathers, ye are all one in Christ Jesus. I have no notion of making a division when God has proclaimed union. You know I never keep back anything that is on the mind, let it be against or for me, therefore I have no secret opinion. Nevertheless, it is the *Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s*, This not only intimates that Solomon was the composer, but that he was also the first singer of the Song. What does

the Lord imply when he saith, “I will rejoice over thee with singing?” What a mercy to understand! that before ever we were brought as living, new creatures to sing of the mercies of God, Jesus Christ had been singing and rejoicing over us from all eternity, even when we were dead in sin, and led captive by the devil at his will. Bless him, O my soul! his eye was then set on us when we were running in the way of death and hell; he was with us, watching over us, his love set upon us; every promise then stood for us, as well as all the riches of grace, with eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Why a thought of this is enough to make the dumb to sing; a knowledge of it makes sovereign mercy dear to me, and Jesus all in all. In all our backslidings, our waywardness, the vanity of our minds, the deceitfulness of our heart, and the corruption of our nature, our precious Lord Jesus was so watchful over us that not one thing of it could injure us; it troubled us, and gave us many sleepless hours, yet everything we are brought into, works together for our good. But we shall never find pleasure arising from sin, we shall never find any delight in its nature nor working, nor from the perverseness of our minds; but it will be a trouble, trial, and exercise: but we settle the matter in this way — that as God hath loved us, he hath so intended that everything shall be bitterness short of himself that we should joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. We have the major and the minor in singing; and what is called the major is generally the most spirited and lively; but then, the mournful song, that is the minor; there we appear like doves, taboring on their breasts. Why? We feel things within which produces sorrow and grief; then we sing the minor to the God of our salvation in the very depths; and he inclines his ear and sends us relief, holds us up in the midst of all oppression, turns our captivity as the waves of the south, and saith, “I am thy salvation,” “Be still, and know that I am God.” What more? “Be of good cheer.” What is the next? “The Master is come, and he calleth for thee.” These truths make me rejoice above all my sorrows. I am led again this morning, quite contrary to my intention, and thus talk to you of the real experience of the Church of God; everything must go into the back-

ground that does not stand in connexion with these divine realities. No doubt you have known professors (I have) that have had a wonderful knowledge of the doctrines in the Bible, they seem to outbrave every trouble and trial, and many have laughed at me, and scoffed at me, because I could not believe as they did. Beloved, a new heart is very sensitive, for the slightest touch will produce sorrow and grief in that heart, and it will flow out of the heart towards the author of life, and towards the author of salvation, and many times the heart language is, "Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me." None but living members of Christ know the meaning of it. Mark another mercy: do not be disappointed if the oppression multiplies, for as it multiplies, it is for God to multiply mercy towards you. Cheer up, beloved, "If God be for us, who can be against us." This mercy, as I often tell you, outmatches my heart, and it often makes me a dumb man before my God.

But to proceed: singing belongs to the inhabitants of the rock; and they can no more cease from singing and praising God than they can cease from living; and our Lord saith, "This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise;" and have we not, this morning, received abundant mercy from the Lord! and have we not again been witnesses of the truth, "Thy mercies are new every morning, great is thy faithfulness? "Do we say it without an apprehension of it, or a knowledge of it? I am now speaking the heart-language of a child of God. "Yes," say some, "the Lord has taught me to sing of his mercies, and to know he formed me for himself, and the delight of my soul is to praise him." And I tell you, not all the powers in heaven, nor on earth, nor in hell can make you praise him, only himself — the God of our mercy that formed us. Let us look into the book of Daniel; there were those that worshipped the god of silver and gold that Nebuchadnezzar made, they bowed down to it and worshipped it; but there were three Hebrew children, believers in Christ Jesus, that all the sayings of that haughty monarch, or the persuasion of those that were with him, could make them bow down to their god. How is it with you and me? these

things are very blessed to consider. But you shall go into the fiery furnace. “We are not careful to answer thee in this matter; if it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace; and he will deliver out of thine hand, O king, &c.” We do not live in such times now, for every one may worship his own god: and we have reason to bless God for the freedom we have under the government of this nation; this mercy we should not forget; if the Lord our God had settled it for you or me to go through the fire, or anything else, depend upon it one scripture will always be our portion, “As thy days thy strength shall be.” Is there any timid child here? I have trembled many times at the thought of the pope, and of what he might do, but I think no more of him now than the moving of a straw; for the mercy is, as an inhabitant of the rock, to sing day and night, “Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” I must again say, I leave it with the Lord for being led to speak in the way I have this morning. “The Song of Songs, which is Solomon’s;” then Solomon sang it first; he tried the tune of it, and proved the harmony of it, and his whole heart and soul was in it. But I must go on toward the text in my usual way. We have no person named who the speaker is; this is another mystery for faith; but one thing is certain — that that person that spoke it, being alive, felt his need of what he expressed, and that he had confidence in the one he spoke to, and he utters it from the heart, “Let him kiss me,” &c. Do you understand this? Methinks I hear you echoing from the heart, in praises to God, “Bless him, O my soul; whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none on earth I desire besides thee.” “*Let him kiss me*” It appears to me that the expression from the heart carries out the continuance of the same, till we shall forget ourselves, and be with him for ever; it is not the desire for an hour, or for a day, but it continues vibrating in the living heart of the children, on the ground of dear relation to Christ. We are compared to the horse-leech, that continually crieth, “Give, give.” But although we are satisfied with God’s gift, and are blessed with God’s Christ, and we want no other subject nor object, yet, in the daily movements of living life, in a living heart, connected with living hunger and thirst, we are sure to say,

“Give, give;” as it is in the Lord’s prayer, “Give us, this day, our daily bread.” This is a precious definition of a believer in Christ, that we can take up the language of Paul, “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.” This is another demonstration of real experience of living life in desires after the bread of life. I would drop a hint here, and I speak it in love and affection, that there are many things the children of God, in their younger days, desire to attain to — I speak this from a knowledge of it — but I have found since, if the Lord had granted my request it would have been an evil to me; therefore, after many years’ experience, I can truly say, “My Jesus hath done all things well.” Hath ought failed of all the Lord our God hath promised? Not one thing, but they are all come to pass unto this day; therefore we will ascribe with heart and hand to God, that our God hath done all things well; for he hath wrought all our works in us, he hath wrought all our works for us, and we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ — and what God doeth standeth for ever. My soul, my hearers, what hath God wrought! Yet these precious truths are counted as nothing, and professors turn their backs upon them; but we will bless God for the mercy, that this God is our God for ever and ever. “*Let him kiss me,*” &c. Look at the simplicity of it; let us look away from self, and all fleshly things; for everything spiritual that we have heard, everything we have received, everything we know, and everything we experience in the heart is from the mouth of God; this makes us witnesses of the truth of the words of our precious Lord Jesus, “The words which I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life;” by the reception of his words we know what it is to eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, and shall die no more. There is nothing fleshly nor mortal connected with these things; and as we receive his word, which is spirit and life, we are refreshed, strengthened, and edified, which causes you and me to joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Let me speak it freely to you that are believers in Christ (if I err, correct me), that we never had a grain of

comfort in our hearts, in reality, but what we had from the Word of God, spoken by God. Think these things over; we know what it is to groan, sigh, and cry, and the Lord appears to be silent, and there appears to be neither dew nor rain — does it stop the crying? does it produce comfort or rejoicing? Nay. But we can say, “Thy words were found, I did eat them, and thy words were to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” Mark me, every seeming delight, pleasure, or joy in the flesh will end; but the Word of our God, and the fulness, and blessedness, and importance of that Word stands testified of in the following testimony, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever.” Then how sweet the words, and how consistent with his delight and pleasure, “*Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth.*” I have tried many times to coin words, and join them together, to make a nice prayer to the Lord; but the Lord has put blasting and mildew on it. Even now, sometimes, I am foolish enough to think if I could come before the people, and speak consistent with the English language and grammar rules, I should not have so many finding fault. “Oh,” says one, “I cannot hear him, his dialect is bad.” “Yes,” saith another, “his language is so inconsistent with grammar rules.” But heart-language has always been a stumbling-block to the wise according to the flesh; and it is only fools, for Christ’s sake, that understand the word of the Lord, spoken from the heart. Thousands with me have had communion together with God, in and by his Word. I do not attempt to justify nor vindicate myself but I only speak to you the truth from a knowledge of it. “Thy love is better than wine.” Then the speaker must have felt, known, received, experienced, and believed the love of God in Christ Jesus; and as there is a particular identity of the speaker, so there is a particular identity of the person spoken to, that the desires are after. An infinity of eternal blessedness is presented to us in the few words preceding the text — “for thy love is better than wine.” Now the Lord appears to hint at something like this in the days of his flesh, in that sweet parable where he speaks of the wine and old bottles — that the wine was to be put into new bottles, for the old bottles would not contain it. What is the mercy testified of? passing by of the old wine, and drinking

of the new; and there we have the words of Jesus in the introduction of the subject, in it divine blessedness and fulness, when he said, “I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine with you, until I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.” These are some of the sweet secrets concerning our precious Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

SERMON II.

Preached on Sunday Evening, Dec. 10th, 1854.

THE DRAWING OF CHRIST, AND ITS EFFECTS.

“Draw me, we will run after thee.”—Song i. 4.

It is precious to be enabled to sing these sweet truths with the spirit and the understanding also, for it is a greater mercy than to be an angel in heaven — they never sing the song of the redeemed, they are listeners; they may go as far as “unto him that loved us,” but they must be silent as to the other part, and that is, “and washed us from our sins in his own blood.” Then mark the mercy that you have been singing of: “Justified from all things.” How few there are that appear to have a right apprehension of justification — and how very few that profess godliness seem to

live, walk, and believe that they are justified from all things: but the Church of God will never more be justified and redeemed than they are now. The knowledge of redemption by blood, and being justified from all things, will constrain you and me not only to give God all the glory, but to acknowledge ourselves nothing, and Christ all in all.

“Sweet’s the peace that’s sealed by blood.”

I wonder how many know it, and can call God to record to the truth and knowledge of it. If I was asked what it is to have it sealed by blood, I should say to have the conscience purged by the blood of Jesus Christ from dead works, that is, a glorious sealing, in testimony and in blessedness, in the heart of a believer in Christ Jesus; mark you, once sealed, sealed for ever — our feelings in the flesh have nothing to do with God’s sealing. Just notice what was sealed up in God’s treasures, as recorded in Deut. xxxii.: — No one could break the seal, nor open the seal, but our most glorious Christ, when he received the book from the Father, and loosed — not broke, but loosed the seven seals. Then remember — God’s book may be a sealed book to thousands, but it is open to those that have the eyes of their understanding enlightened; to them that are new creatures in Christ; to them that are fools for Christ’s sake; and the same that opened the book and loosed the seals, is the same that hath given us a new heart; and himself, by faith, dwells in our heart: and Paul saith, “that Christ may dwell in your heart by faith.” God’s children cannot refrain from reading God’s Word; and although at times they may be cut up, root and branch, by the Word of God, they must have another look, aye, and another; yet, however pleasing it may be to read God’s Word, the understanding of it comes from God’s reading his own Word into the heart; and such, though fools, are made wise unto salvation by faith in Christ Jesus; and I cannot repeat it too often, that all the knowledge there is of ourselves, or the knowledge of pardon, peace, joy, salvation, redemption, or justification, it is by, and in accordance with the Word of the Lord. Why is it the children of God are brought into a growing knowledge with the Word of God?

Because there God opens his mind, thereby the Holy Ghost instructs us in the wisdom of God in a mystery, and the same Spirit shows us our own foolishness, our own unworthiness, emptiness, and nothingness. Doth he leave us there? Oh, no, bless his royal majesty, but he directs our heart into the love of God, and into the patience of Jesus Christ. Here I must stop, just to think of it. I know it is not acceptable nor pleasing to those that live by their experience, but you will find it most blessed if you are brought to live where your life is, and that is in Christ Jesus, the author of life; and so we live, through all death and dying circumstances, and rejoice with Paul, “for to me to live is Christ — and to die is gain.” I believe while I am in the wilderness I shall never get tired of this glorious mercy, that there is not a thought, desire, nor longing after Jesus Christ, but in accordance with the Word of God; and there is no communion with God in Christ abstracted from the Word of God; nor is there any peace with God but through the Word, who is the fulness of the scriptures; and he is our peace, and hath made peace through the blood of his cross. Having known a little of these things for more than forty years, I speak freely to you, and it is a singular thing, as the Lord hath brought me through these many years, that I have had but very few companions. Why? O, they say, he is too narrowminded for me — it is always one and the same thing with him; hear him once, you hear him always. Bless God for such a testimony! There was a time I was much attached to music, and then I was fond of variations; but in the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ there is no variation; for himself, the author of it is without variableness or shadow of turning. These are most glorious truths to be settled, grounded, rooted, and built up in. But we come to the text again: “Draw me, we will run after thee,” &c. (Song i. 4). You must know whether you are brought so far as his chamber — it is very easy and very plain. You have no need to run to the parsons, class-leaders, deacons, nor to the pope, for you must know if you are alive in Christ Jesus or dead in trespasses and sins. And we love him because he first loved us: our love is expressed by great and little — by cold and hot — but I have always found love to be love, nothing can alter

it. Then think of another mercy — God is love; and this God is our God for ever and ever: and “he that *dwelleth* in love, *dwelleth* in God, and God *in him*.” Where do we dwell? There is but one dwelling-place for the Church, and it is in Jehovah himself. The Psalmist, in the Psalm xc., saith, “Jehovah, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations;” and Psalm xci., “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” Think these truths over and do bear with me, for my heart is warm from speaking of these divine realities. In Song i. you will find the words recorded by the Holy Ghost concerning Christ and the Church. I have found it difficult many times, in looking over the Songs, to determine in my mind who the speakers are; and no doubt you have had a little exercise of mind on the subject, for there is that in some of the expressions which is wonderful; but there is one scripture that will always have its weight with the children; and it is only in that way I learn who is the speaker, for “in all things he is to have the pre-eminence” — that is, Christ; so when he speaks, he commands silence and stillness, but he does not stop the movement of the heart and mind. Do you know what I am talking to you about? it is foreign language to a great many that are wonderfully religious — he will stop our tongue, but he never stops the movements of the heart to him; for even in the very depth of sorrow, the movements of the heart are towards him, though, like a dumb man before him. But these lessons are very profitable, and they “make sovereign mercy dear to me, and Jesus all in all.” And I tell you freely, you may have all the religion in the world, but let me be in a dungeon with Christ — there is all happiness. In looking at the words of the text, *draw me*, we must confess it is living language spoken by a living creature, and there is vast importance attached to the words. First, it is very singular — it is *me*, as if there was not another besides; such are the movements of the heart, personally, of every one that God hath made a new creature in Christ. It is immaterial to me whether there is another sinner, or whether there are many sinners, it is personally me, and it generally comes in this way in the divine certainty of it — “Thou art the man.”

I love sometimes (and the Lord indulges me with it) to sit and think over by-gone days and by-gone things: there was no gospel preached in the village in which I lived, nor did I ever hear a gospel sermon till God had spoken peace to my soul. I used to mope about, my companions all left me, and the briers and thorns were my only company when in secret to pour out my heart to God; therefore, I cannot cease to speak well of my glorious Lord that it is of grace, and the gift by grace by one man Jesus Christ. There are a multitude of colleges in our day to make professors and parsons, and they are quite welcome to it; but I will tell you God hath a wonderful school and a wonderful discipline; and he deals wonderfully, for he takes his scholars and makes everything that was once pleasant complete bitterness; and he will make everything we once delighted in the greatest trouble; and when he brings us to know what we really are, we loathe ourselves in our own sight for all our abomination. Mark you, I do not set this up for a standard for your experience, for I believe there are some of God's children that have never travelled this path, yet they groan, sigh, cry, and long, and cannot live in peace with themselves; nor can they bring their actions into consistency with the Word of God, for the more they try, the more crooked things appear, that the Lord himself may make the darkness light, and crooked things straight, that no flesh should glory in his presence. But let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, &c. I am sure of one thing, from a knowledge of it, that we shall delight ourselves in the Lord, and he will give us the desire of our heart. Mark another mercy that appears conspicuous in the words draw me, that there is one in view, thought, and desire, with an assurance that the person addressed is able to draw me. Just look at the simplicity of these sweet truths—they show us first, the nature of the love of God, and though we may not apprehend it by the faith of God's elect, yet I tell you the love of God and the faith of God can never be separated. Many of God's children live long, and go on with sorrow of heart, writing bitter things against themselves, before they have a real apprehension of faith, or that they have faith in Christ Jesus. Why every desire after Jesus

Christ goes out by faith; and the believing of the truths of God is by faith; all knowledge of our lost estate, in the assurance of it, is not unconnected with the faith of God's elect. And yet, perhaps, there are some of you, even now, after years of tender mercies, and having found that the consolations of God are neither few nor small — yet come to talk to you about faith, you hardly know whether you have any; yet if you are led on so far as that, you answer the description of the Word of the Lord, “O, thou of little faith,” all is well, but you may think, and sometimes believe, you shall die in the flesh without the faith of God's elect. But you never had such fears as that without the love of God — without the fear of God, and the faith of God's elect. Only look at another thing — I want to be as simple as I possibly can: In the days of the flesh of our precious Lord Jesus, a certain one came to him to ask him to do something for him: “Believest thou, that I can do this for thee?” “Yea, Lord, help thou my unbelief.” Do not expect, if you have the faith of God's elect, and live and walk by faith, that you will not be troubled nor exercised by unbelief; here it is I think God's children make mistakes, and I have done so many times; but it is so settled, and it must be so to the end — “it is the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these two are contrary the one to the other.” Bless God for the experience of it daily, I would not have it otherwise, because if it was I should not be fit for Christ. I may be speaking rather free on these mercies, but it is the truth, and may the Lord give you a real understanding of it; then the sweetness, whether in the depths, darkness, or in deaths, as believers in Christ, there is no power to prevent us saying, draw me. Having just dropped this hint, we will now look at the two scriptures where the Father and the Son is spoken of as drawing the children, John vi. 44: “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him.” Are we witnesses of this? then observe how blessedly this is demonstrated, that as the Father draws us to Christ, it is a proof of the Father's love, our acceptance in Christ, and that Christ is all in all. John xii: “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me — that is very precious. But now I make an observation, that the

general ministry of the day, and those who are trying to live by what they call experience, instead of Christ lifted up, want to confine him in a flesh and blood system. Did you ever see the sun without looking out of yourselves? Certainly not; — our eyes were not given us to look at ourselves, but we can look at one another. Just think of the blessedness of having Christ our object and subject — then whatever darkness there may be with you or me, we never see Christ but in his own light, and himself is the light of life. Then we see him the beauty of Israel, the King in his beauty; and there is that in Christ when lifted up, that will draw us off from self and everything we are the subject of; and I will just drop this hint — and some of you, perhaps, are more familiar with it than I am — and that is, the magnet will draw nothing contrary to its nature. If we have been drawn by Christ, we are partakers of a divine nature, being members of Christ. Then mark the blessedness of his drawing — that it is by his power, his attraction, his love — and I was going to say, he will never stop drawing us until he draws us to himself, to be glorified together with him, who is our God, our glory. Let us stop a moment here in the contemplation of this sweet mercy. You put the filings of gold to the magnet, and there is no movement; but put what you want the magnet to attract in an earthen vessel, and there will be movement. And we are earthen vessels, fit for the Master's use, and who made us empty for himself to fill; and blessed be God it is written in the closing of Eph. i. that we, the Church, are the fullness of him who filleth all in all. This scripture we believe, but we cannot comprehend it; and the more the Lord gives us understanding and knowledge of the scriptures, the greater fools we shall appear. This keeps us in our proper place, feeling our need daily of our precious Christ; and whatever may be going on, it will always be, *draw me*. I will make another remark, because there are many that use peradventures, maybes, and ifs. They are all very well in their place: the peradventure with Abraham was very well as far as it went, but when he stopped, the Lord stopped. But as we are led to ponder over these glorious truths, being made witnesses of them, do not suppose while you are in the wilderness that you will get

beyond the expression and the need of it—that is, *draw me*. I have seen some, and I have heard of others that have got as far as they need to go, and they have turned their back on the ordinances of God’s house, and say, I know all that I want to know. I bless my God, I live like a little child; and if you get much above that, or if you suppose you are some great one, you will be very much mistaken in the matter, as here manifested—*draw me*. You will find another text just like it, and that is, “Teach me, O Lord, to do thy will, O my God.” And to do the will of God from the heart, is better than all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices under the law. Then mark the dignity of a believer, and the blessedness and position of a believer; that he is out of all ceremonies, out of all traditions, beyond the law, in the righteousness of the law by faith in Christ Jesus; so we live in peace with God through Christ Jesus our Lord. I find there is no end to this glorious mercy. Now many things in nature we have got beyond; for instance, our childhood, school days, and school fellows, with many things besides, I could mention. And it is like as Paul saith, “When I became a man, I put away childish things.” But remember, if you are brought there, do not despise those that are in their childhood—we were there once; and though they cannot come forward to you, I do not see it is wrong to go back to them. I have no notion of setting up a standard of experience for any one to walk by.

We will now observe — Life must be manifested, the prayer must go forth, the desire must be accomplished, before the will is made known — “We will run after thee.” These things are very plain; we have no need to learn Hebrew, Greek, or Latin to understand this; for we know it by our feelings, arising from life, by the movement of the heart and mind after one object, Christ Jesus — “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all unto me.” I have thought many times concerning Moses; that a Gentile maid should give him a Greek name. He was not named by his parents, but he was named from the very circumstance of his being drawn out of the water. What could his parents see but death? But it was God’s intention to preserve him; and I believe he moved that maid to call him Moses. What does

the name mean? “Drawn out;” and so is every child of God. Moses was drawn forth out of apparent and imminent death; and we are drawn out of sin and death by God the Father and his dear Son — that is the first step; and being drawn out of death we are drawn into life, and there we live and stand for ever. Thousands and thousands of changes may take place in our feelings; and we feelingly may be in a very strange place sometimes, with very strange companions; but as we are led to consider the matter, and believe the truth, that as Moses was set there according to God’s will, so we are, and everything is settled for us. Why? Because the Lord loveth us, and you will find God’s fixations are always contrary to the flesh and its movements; therefore, poor sinner, if you are so surrounded that you cannot see a hair-breadth before you, do not think that the devil put you there for your bad behaviour. I have no notion of these things; as a father, I never had a desire to do my children an injury, though commanded not to spare the rod. Then how blessed it is, wherever we are, whatever the position and situation, or whatever the feelings, I think we can read this inscription on it, “Who knoweth but what the hand of the Lord is in all this?” Who said it? That man who declared he escaped with the skin of his teeth; friends, riches, and everything was gone. But it was according to God’s purpose in love to Job. Though he scraped himself with a potsherd, it was to learn what the ungodly know not, that is, “I know that my Redeemer liveth.” Well, Job, what more will you say of him? “He knoweth the way that I take.” We think we take some very mysterious ways at times; but he knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me I shall come forth as gold. That is the mercy, poor sinner; and we know it is true, that is, if God hath taught us “that the trial of our faith being more precious than of gold that perisheth; though it be tried by fire.” I cannot get on in haste, these are weighty matters; they are not things to please a trifling mind, or Christ despisers. Then the person that saith *draw me*, also saith *we will run* after THEE. There is one sweet scripture which I must quote, which is most blessed, and which is the fulness of all that comes after, that is, Jesus Christ is our forerunner, and there never was one that was in living life

but what he was the forerunner of. Why is it, the children of God have such pleasure and delight in these glorious secrets? Because Jesus Christ is their forerunner. Let us hear the expression of the heart, by believing in Jesus, and experiencing his drawing. "I will run in the way of thy commandment, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." That is precious, it is Christ-endearing, it is heartwarming and soul-humbling. You may depend upon it, in the way of God's commandments there is not an iota of our fleshly actions; but it is simply believing by faith in Jesus, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. Then there is another truth, which declares real willingness, "Thy people shall be made willing in the day of thy power; from the beauty of holiness, and the womb of the morning, thou hast thy numerous progeny." Thus it reads in my old Bible, instead of the *dew of thy youth*. Here we discover the plainness and the blessedness of the truth in the experience of it; of running in the way of God's commandments. And there is one commandment from the mouth of the Lord which has been most precious to me for many years; and I will look at it first in this way, as I am so fond of looking at myself, and thinking about things concerning myself; but his commandment is, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside me there is no Saviour." "Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee." "Put me in remembrance; let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified." What can we declare short of this, that "Christ is all in all." Just look at another mercy, which must be familiar with you and me, whereby the gospel was preached in olden days, when the Lord came down and talked to Moses in the way he did, and told him to appoint three cities of refuge one side of Jordan, and three cities of refuge the other side. Now we are what we call the nether side of Jordan, and we have three cities of refuge, and we shall have three when we are passed over Jordan, and are glorified together with Christ. And I believe the three cities of refuge represent God the Father in his love, God the Son in his blood and salvation, and God the Eternal Spirit in whom we live and walk; if you think it is otherwise, I will not quarrel with you. You will also find

the Lord gave commandment that every stone and obstacle was to be taken out of the way of the manslayer. He did not tell those that ran to take them out of the way, oh no. And our Lord hath done all for us, and the way was to be free, and there was not to be any obstruction in the way; and, bless God, there is none in Christ Jesus. What sort of creatures were they that were to run? The manslayer; not the murderer, for no murderer hath eternal life. The manslayer; and we come in here. What man is it? The man Christ Jesus. And who was to pursue after the manslayer? Such only who were related to the man that was slain. Think of the man Christ Jesus, slain for you and me; our hands, as it were, imbrued in his blood, yet related to him, who put him to grief, and made his soul an offering for sin; and he was put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit. How glorious and precious the refuge, for the manslayer running from wrath to come; and we never read that one was ever overtaken in the way. I want you to be growing in love with God's testimonies, and to have an understanding of the same, knowing the truth of what Jesus saith of the Old Testament Scriptures, "and they are they that testify of me." I would stop a moment here to make a remark. When our Lord Jesus spake these words there were no scriptures but the Old Testament, therefore he said, "search the scriptures, in *them ye think* (that is the Jews) ye have eternal life," &c., *instead of in him* the fulness of the scriptures. There were many who were very pious and devout, that used to be in Plymouth in by-gone days, who set aside the Old Testament Scriptures; and I have known them to say, "I have nothing to do with the Old Testament Scriptures; we are out of the old dispensation." But I do not wonder now that they would have nothing to do with it, because God had never made the Old Testament Scriptures have anything to do with them. But, however, we will return to the text "*We will run after thee.*" What is meant by the stones being taken out of the way? Just such things that some want to keep in existence, and which are stuck up in churches — The Ten Commandments, engraven on stone. I am not speaking against the law, let those that like it have it; for it is no more than what I was once delighted with, but it was "before the

commandment came;” that makes all the difference, poor sinner. Well, but, say you, why speak in this way? The law first was engraven on stone, and Moses was the first to break it; which was to shew that he was a typical mediator, and broke the law. God never charged him with the act. What did the Lord say? “Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, that thou brakest,” &c. “And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” &c. This is the God of grace to all his children; this is he that saith, “I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful, and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious.” Then, when the ark was building, was the law exhibited to the children of Israel, or was it placed in a conspicuous place? No. Where was it? Thus saith the Lord, put the law into the ark; not an Israelite to look upon it, but they were to look at the ark, that represented our most glorious Christ. Where is the law? Saith Christ to his Father, “Thy law is within my heart;” and that heart never had anything against one of his members. This is as Kent sings in one of his songs—

“In the wounds of Jesus slain
‘Tis sweet to read the law.”

What do we read there? Jesus Christ, the Lord our righteousness, is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. I may have wandered from the words of the text; but, as usual, I have stood and spoke to you the truths as they have arisen to the mind. “*Draw me, we will run after thee.*” Then to pretend to run without his drawing is contrary to God’s truth; then to expect to be drawn without being brought into the position to cry unto him, is attempting to deny all heart-experience, all grace reigning, and all strength communicating, and it sets aside the blessedness of the declaration, “My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness.” Here we discover a little of the mercy. Now, I may be a little out of the way, yet I do think God’s children run best

when they think they run worst. This is from something more than observation; it is from heart-feeling in the knowledge of the truth of it. You may be ready to say, I cannot make it out. You find the Lord Jesus, the refuge of his people, saith, “The righteous runneth into it, and are safe.” All the movements of thy heart, with the desires, all centre in Christ, and are going out after Christ; and sometimes it is thus expressed, “Make haste to help me, O my God;” “Let not the enemy triumph over me;” “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.” And thus “we come up from the wilderness, leaning on the Beloved,” hanging on him amidst ten thousand discouragements, and often constrained to say, “I will not let thee go unless thou bless me.”

This brings us to the other clause in the text, and it will take us all eternity to talk of it, and that is the words, “*the King*.” If you have seen him, it has killed you to yourself, and you have fallen before him as dead, like John in the Revelation, which is connected with it, and which we are made witnesses of: “He laid his right hand on me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last; and have the keys of hell and of death.” I have no more fear of entering hell than I have of speaking to you concerning Jesus Christ; but there was a time I really thought I should go there. I can assure you of one thing, sin has been no plaything to me for more than forty years. Where is our hiding-place and refuge? In Christ. What is he a refuge from? The storm and tempest, and he is a refuge in times of trouble; “and they that know thy name will put their trust in thee.”

I shall now say a few words concerning the *King*. The person that is testified of as the King, is all God the Father’s fulness to the Church, and he is all the Church’s fulness to God the Father; then as God chose us in him, and blessed us in him, his pleasure is manifested; namely, “It pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell.” Just think of this, and do not grieve any more, nor exercise your mind about your emptiness, it being so suitable for his fulness. Yet how I have strove to retain what he had communicated to my heart, and endeavoured to live in the sweet

enjoyment and delights arising therefrom; but God's children must be emptied from vessel to vessel, that of his fulness we might all receive, and grace for grace. Amen.

SERMON III.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 17TH, 1854.

THE LORD THE CREATOR AND FORMER OF HIS
PEOPLE, AND THEY ALSO HIS REDEEMED.

“But now, thus faith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.” ISAIAH xliii. 1.

“Awake, my silent tongue,
Attempt the heavenly lay;

A pardon'd sinner's song
Should Jesus' love display.
No theme like this to raise the soul
To realms of bliss, where pleasures roll."

It is sweet, heart-comforting, and mind-animating; and there are but two ways that God's children can sing, that is, either in prayer or in praise. Now every living soul here this morning has been enabled (though some without sound) to sing the truths, and feel the blessedness of what you have been singing of — "O, tell my soul." That is very personal, something similar to this, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Everything to a child of God is personal; we may articulate the words with sound, but have we had any heart-movement in prayer, and in desires to God? What is all profession if it does not stand in love, and in living union with him who said, "Because I live you shall live also." Let me make a remark here: as we are dying daily, and a few more days will close the scene with some of us, I would ask this question, Is it all right between God and the conscience? have we received pardon? for we never rejoice in the Lord before that. The desires and the longings are the same, but rejoicing in Christ is by dear communications from the Spirit of what Christ is, and what he hath done. Even now we have no communion with the Father but through him, and he is living in the presence of the Father for us. There is something that language can never express of the divine communion and communication between Christ and a broken-hearted sinner. It matters not where that sinner may be, nothing can stop communion between him and his God. You may have thought, when you have been miserable and sorrowful, that communion was stopped; but we have as much communion with God in sorrow as we have when rejoicing, but the feelings of it are very different. We, as creatures, are so apt to judge more from our feelings than from the faithfulness of God. I know I have living witnesses of the truths I am speaking of; nevertheless, though we so often judge from feelings, let it be observed, God never condemns us for it; but he will instruct us, and make us know our own foolishness in these things.

And I have never found, for more than forty years, that ever my gracious God frowned on me. Some of you may think it strange; I have had thoughts about it as well as you, but he never frowns on me. “Ah,” say you, “are you sure of it?” Quite sure; for only hear what he says, “Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.” And that is not all: “I have loved thee with an everlasting love;” “I will surely do thee good;” “I will be with thee in all places whithersoever thou goest.” This is the Jesus Christ of whom Peter writes of in his second chapter: “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.” I do not know a time, circumstance, or season but what Jesus Christ is precious to me. Some of you may want to hear a word or two on the subject. How is it, then, he is always precious to you? Because he is always what he is to me, and I have faith to believe it; and we live believing in Jesus, and we believe in him in the dark as well as in the light, “coming up from the wilderness leaning on the Beloved.” And there is another mercy we shall be more familiar with the longer we live in the wilderness, and that is, “My grace is sufficient for thee;” then all our sufficiency must go. “My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Bless God for weakness, and bless him for trouble. Why? “It worketh patience.” Bless God for affliction? Why? “Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.” You may say, as many do, “He is gone beyond my experience.” If I am, I am not gone beyond God’s testimonies, nor the loving-kindness of the Lord to his Church. “But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine” (Isa. xliii. 1). I did intend to have spoken to you again concerning the sweet truths contained in the text we had last Lord’s day, but I find I have no control over my intentions, and I have no power to retain anything; but, I bless my God, it is according to his grace. We were then talking a little about the King; and he is the King of Glory, King of Saints, and King Eternal. Mark me, there is no one short of him will satisfy a child of God, or please God the Father. Nor the Holy Ghost, in his ministry, testifies of any short of Jesus Christ. Let me, as

usual, just notice a few testimonies concerning Christ. In the opening of chapter xlii. we have God the Father's testimony concerning the Son us his servant, and the Church's servant; and had not the Holy Ghost recorded the sweet testimony we never should have known it. And that almighty Recorder is the one minister in the Church of God that teaches us to profit. Allow me to make a remark here. I love to read my bible, and I would retain what I read if I was able; but that the Lord sees fit shall not be so. Now I may read from morning to night, but the Word would never enter my heart without the power, love, ministry, unction, and divine teaching of God the Eternal Spirit. Why is it, and how is it, there are so many speculative professors in our day? they have the Word at the end of their tongue, and can talk many a child of God dumb, and they can pray when they like. Why is it? Because their bodies are not the temples of the Holy Ghost. I speak the truth before God in Christ. Remember, if our bodies are not the temples of the Holy Ghost, Christ does not dwell in us by faith, nor have we life in him. I must be a little sober, and not go on fast concerning these divine realities. Then how does God the Father usher in his beloved Son? With a *behold!* I have sat, I have stood, I have laid, I have kneeled before God in wonder and silence, with adoration and praise, without speaking a word, for the word "behold!" from God's mouth has filled me with joy and peace in believing. Our application to the Word, or the scriptures, is one thing, but God's power applying the Word is another thing. There are always two effects manifested to me; the one humbles me before the Lord into nothingness, and the other constrains me to sing, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my Salvation be exalted." I believe I speak the truth when I say, it is the entrance of God's Word by faith, and the power of God that gives us heart-experience of the truths of God, and brings us into a knowledge of communion with the Lord. Here let me add, do not think of approximating a throne of grace according to your imagination, or feelings of the flesh. There is no communion with God but by, in, with, and according to his Word. Just notice these things when you get amongst professing talkers, and try to bring

them to the point when they had communion with the Lord, and what was the nature of it. You will not have many to answer you according to the truth. Now notice how the Father proceeds: “Behold my servant.” This is one of the mysteries for faith, that Jesus Christ, who is co-equal and eternal with the Father, and is the eternal God our refuge, should become the Father’s servant — but he did not change from what he was. Now I have known those that profess to be believers say, that Jesus changed from what he was. But he is Jesus Christ, the same, yea, the same that saith, “I and my Father are one;” and is the same that we are joined to and one spirit; the same that we sing of, “Hallelujah, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth;” is the same that said, “I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of the people;” and also saith to the Father, “Thy wrath lieth hard upon me; I am pressed underneath as a cart is pressed under sheaves.” This is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Creator of the ends of the earth; he is God the Father’s servant; he became the visible Jehovah in our own flesh and blood — Emmanuel, “God with us;” and he finished the work the Father gave him to do. Now, beloved, do dwell a moment or two on these precious truths. And let me add, Jesus Christ did nothing for himself; what he did was for the glory of the Father, and the glorification of each member of his body; and those whom God the Father gave him he will present saying, “Here am I, and the children God hath given me.” “Behold my servant, whom I uphold,” or will *lay hold upon*; that is according to the Hebrew language. And God the Father did lay hold of him with a witness, bless his dear name; and can we live without praising him? for, if it had not been so, justice would have laid hold of you and me, and would have said “*Pay me what thou owest;*” but the Father, having laid hold of Christ, he paid the debt. Only hear what he saith, “Whom seek ye?” “Jesus of Nazareth.” “I am he; if ye seek me, let these go their way.” Thus we come out free; law nor justice have no claim on a child of God for satisfaction for sin. “Mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” In comes another dear mercy, and it is a daily mercy for you and me, and it is well for us

that we know it: “The bruised reed shall he not break.” We do not like it very well, for we want to walk uprightly; but we never saw a bruised reed stand alone, nor could it stand if it was raised up. Then what is the mercy for a bruised reed? Jesus Christ is the strength of Israel; and “his strength is made perfect in weakness.” No doubt you have wondered that, though bruised, never broken off from the root, Christ Jesus. Then, when down, we cannot lift up ourselves; and when up we cannot keep ourselves so, nor walk. Then how blessed, “it is God that worketh in us to will and do of his own good pleasure.” These mercies, in the experience of them, bring you and me to love the Lord, to praise him, and hang on him like a vessel on a nail, amidst ten thousand discouragements, knowing that nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. If our precious Lord will not break the bruised reed, who can? No one. What can? Nothing; and yet we fear it. And it is quite right; fear never works any evil to a child of God, though perhaps it may terrify him. Fear will keep a child from presumption, or trifling with God’s Word; fear will keep a child crying, and it will keep him “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of faith.” These things are widely different from profession, or from having a knowledge of the doctrine in hearsay, for there never was a sinner that ever had the fear of God in his heart, and that feared and trembled before God, but what he was a branch of Christ the living vine, though he cannot believe it; and even may go on to the journey’s end, and know not what the liberty of God’s children is; but you cannot stop him from panting, breathing, desiring, and perhaps saying, I wish I was like such an one, he seems to go on quite pleasantly. Beloved, every one has his proper standing in Christ. Why is it we are in him? Not because of our believing, but because of God the Father’s putting us in Christ; but remember you cannot separate believing from union to the Lamb of God. I would again remark the variety of dispensations the children of God have to pass through — yet in every place, and in every position, whether in Egypt, Babylon, or in the wilderness, it matters not; every one has his proper path, all his steps are numbered, and God is our guide; and at last

we shall be glorified together with Christ. Cheer up beloved, “if God be for us who can be against us?” I just notice another sweet and precious testimony, “He will not quench the smoking flax;” and there is a flax in nature no fire can consume; do you understand this mercy? I am not a naturalist, but I believe there is some truth in it, for put it in the fire, and take it out, there will be no change in the flax, but if there is any change it comes out whiter than it went in: think of furnace-work, how profitable; think of fiery trials, how excellent; God’s children always come out different in feeling to what they go in. These things are learnt by experience, not by hearsay, nor by profession; in the original you will find it thus, “the dimly burning flax but the time is coming when it will be, “Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;” “and I will be a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her.” You and I shall be tried, as by fire, but are as safe in the furnace as out of it. This is the experience I love — for it worketh hope, and hope maketh not ashamed; and I love to speak of it to God’s tried and exercised children. Do not dream of going home to heaven in the sunshine of pleasure, with pleasant things here on earth, for if you try to make peace with yourself you will be very much mistaken; there is no peace for a child of God, but in the peace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. I have sought for peace in my experience, and I have sought for peace amongst my fellow creatures, and I have sought for peace amongst the Church of God; but I never could find real peace but in Christ — of him, through him, and to him who is our peace, and hath made peace through the blood of his cross. Every child of God hath a warfare, for this is not our rest — it is polluted; and the more you seek to shun that warfare the more you will run your head into it. It is marvellous, but all the dealings of the Lord with us is to bring you and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, by faith, at his dear feet, to crown him Lord of all, to bless him and praise him for all things; for “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.” Many things, daily, not only would discourage us, but would even produce rebellion in our hearts

against God, “but grace reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Christ Jesus.” As Jesus Christ was God the Father’s servant, to finish the work the Father gave him to do (John xix.), he declares, “It is finished and whatever Christ did is put down to the Church’s account; as the Holy Ghost saith, “All are yours, ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” Then think a moment of what is recorded concerning him When he was among his twelve disciples, or I would rather say the eleven in particular, for Judas was on the eve of departure from them for ever; what did he say to them amidst all their anxiety and sorrow? “I am among you as him that serveth.” Does he not wait on you and me day by day? for there is nothing too low, nor nothing too high for Jesus Christ, the servant of God the Father; there is nothing too small for our Lord Jesus to take notice of, for even the very hairs of our head are all numbered. “*I am among you at him that serveth.*” Then here comes something for you to think of: we have willingness, like the women and those in the days of old, to minister to the Lord, and we try to carry him a little balm, and a little honey, and a few spices, and there is a disposition, with desires, to wash his feet with our tears, and to wipe them with the hair of our head; this is in real love to him; but, remember, the servant swallows up our serving, unless as we serve him in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Now ponder this over; let us not try how much we can say, Am I, or are you, the servants of Jesus Christ? say you, I bless God I am. Well, then, what is our service? To give him the honour and glory due to his name, and crown him Lord of all, and ever sing, “Let the God of my salvation be exalted.” Is that all? Nay. “Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, for thy truth’s sake.” This is humility of mind, and this is spiritual service, giving him the glory due unto his name; yea, praising him with joyful lips. But we will look again at the peculiar service, being God the Father’s servant; and I acknowledge it in this way, that everything I have is from his hand, and I have nothing but what he brings me; I have nothing but what he communicates; and he gives me power to receive it, as well as power to thank him. Do you understand it,

or else are you thinking you do God service by something of your own? By these dear truths we learn the obedience of faith, not the obedience of the creature; and, as we learn the obedience of faith, we shall loathe ourselves, in our own sight, for our abomination; and we shall learn, and know, and acknowledge our own nothingness, and delight ourselves in the Lord, and rejoice that Christ is all and in all. These are among our choice mercies that the Holy Ghost demonstrates in the heart of a believer in Christ Jesus. Then, as he is among you as him that serveth, he brings you and me to need — I will not say want, because the Lord does not say so; but he brings us to need that he may hear from us, and sweet it is to live beggars; and though sometimes he may appear to be at a distance, and appear as if he did not hear our cry, yet, if he speaks not, he saith, “My bowels are moved for him; gladly and lovingly will I have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.” Mind the glorious secret — “*My bowels are moved for him.*” Our most glorious Christ, in the fulness of love, in union with the Church, saith, and we know it is true, “he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” O what a precious, precious Lord Jesus ours is. I do not think I shall cease from praising him to all eternity; and I do not see how I can, for he saith, “Because I live, you shall live also.” This is not moving on by fits and starts; we may be comfortable, and at times we may be sorrowful, and so we ought to be, but our Lord Jesus is always the same for us and to us. I know many that seem to be very shy of these truths; they want to circumscribe Christ in themselves, instead of understanding and knowing what it is to be a new creature in Christ Jesus, partakers of Christ, partakers of the first resurrection, partakers of his holiness; “Then who shall (*or, who can*) lay anything to the charge of God’s elect.” As usual, my heart is warm with speaking of a precious Lord Jesus.

Now, suppose, and I use the supposition here, and will leave you to determine it, but suppose we had the world at our command, and had riches, honours, and titles, or had more servants than Solomon, what would it avail you or me when the closing scene comes. There is only one right

way of living, and one right way of dying; that is, as we live in Christ Jesus, and “blessed are the dead who die in the Lord;” it would have been blessed had it been *who die for the Lord*. Then what a marvellous mercy, that we shall die in eternal life, who swallowed up death in victory. We not only sing our sweet *alamoth* to the Lord, triumphing over death; “God is our refuge and strength;” but “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” Now look at a few words in the last verse of Isa. xlii., where we have Jesus set before us in the depths of his suffering, and the greatness of his love, when God the Father poured on him the fury of his anger; not only his anger, but the fury of it. If he had not been eternal, and co-equal with God the Father, the fury of God’s anger would have consumed him; yea, have annihilated him: no cheated substance, nor created creature, no, not even the angels in heaven, could have stood the fury of God’s anger. Now think of our Lord Jesus, his eternity, his eternal power and Godhead, “over all, God blessed for ever,” yet our brother, born for adversity, God manifest in the flesh, Emmanuel, “God with us,” put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit, “*made sin*” — do mark the expression — Emmanuel, “God with us,” “*made sin for us*, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” “The fury of his anger, and the strength of battle; and it set him on fire round about, yet he knew not; and it burned him, yet laid it not to heart.” And what saith the Lord concerning this? “When my enemies came upon me to eat up my flesh they stumbled and fell, though an host should encamp about me,” &c. And we read of the fulfilment of it, when “they went backwards, and fell to the ground.” And I believe they never would have risen again, if the Lord had not helped them up, to accomplish the eternal purpose; for himself to be betrayed, and God the Father to put him to death, to make his soul an offering for sin, and he poured out his soul unto death, was numbered with the transgressors, and he bore the sins of many. There never was but one sin-bearer, and that was our Lord Jesus Christ. Had he not borne my sins, woe be to me to all eternity. I would drop this hint again, though it is much cavilled at; but God our Father took our sins

from us, and laid them on Christ; thus they were off from the Church on to another. And what did our Lord Jesus do with them? “He put them away by the sacrifice of himself.” And the Holy Ghost declares what God’s mind is concerning them, “I will remember them no more.” Cheer up, beloved, sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever. “*The strength of battle.*” He is a man of war, he is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace. What did he destroy? “He destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” I have heard many make up their sermons with the devil and his strength. It is not worth speaking about. “I would rather think of the loving-kindness of the Lord in the midst of his temple.” Ah,” say you, “you appear to trifle with him.” We have no strength of our own to outmatch the devil, but mind where Christ’s strength is; let the devil bark, he cannot bite; let him tempt, he cannot destroy; let him plague, and work unbelief, he cannot make a believer an unbeliever, glory to our precious Lord Jesus. “It set him on fire round about,” &c. He had engaged with the Father, and had entered into covenant, and he swore to bear the evil, and he changeth not. I tell you faith and hope in Jesus Christ is ten thousand times better than to be an angel that never sinned. Some of you will not believe me, and I do not ask you, for it is God that makes believers: and he makes us believe the truth, not by speculation, but from heart-felt experience. We are just come to the text, and it is fraught with everlasting blessedness: first, “Thus saith the Lord;” the words stamp it with everything that is blessed and unalterable; and it is sweet, as the Lord leads us, to look over his Word, to mark what we read, and take notice of it, that everything that is of vast importance stands connected with a “*Thus saith the Lord;*” and that the Lord should so fold it up, yet, in the unfolding of his love and mercy to you and me, in the depths and heights of it, saith, “They shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” Do you believe it, “*They shall be?*” then “Come out from among them, touch not the unclean thing, be ye separate that bear the vessels of the Lord, and I will receive you,” &c. You cannot find one, however vile, that went to the Lord to seek for mercy, that ever he

said nay to. *“I will receive you.”* Did you ever experience the fulfilment of it? The place is in the mind in a moment, when I received Christ, and Christ received me into his heart, and the bowels of his mercies. I do not set this up for a standard for you to walk by, but mind you, there must be a receiving of Christ Jesus the Lord, or else we shall never walk in him, in living life, in fellowship with the Holy Three—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost — and these three are one. “I will receive you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”

And it is most blessed at all times, and in all places, that our Lord Jesus is with us, as he saith, “I am among you as him that serveth, and hereby, as we experience these truths, we learn that Jesus, the Son of God, and our brother, born for adversity, is God the Father’s servant, and our servant; and he is the Son that honoureth the Father, and the servant his Master — and such honour have all the saints. I could, with all readiness of mind, pause another moment at the threshold of the text, and speak of him to whom the Father saith, “I, the Lord, have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thy hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes,” &c. These are a few of the sure mercies of David, flowing from the love of the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son, and made known in our hearts by the Spirit, which produces joy and peace in believing; and Jesus saith, “I will bring the blind by a way they knew not; I will lead them in paths they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight; these things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.” And to this we may well say, with the apostle, “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God.” And I freely say, that an heart-experience, by the demonstration of the Spirit, is far better than heaven without salvation. And, as Christ is all in all, so it is most blessed to see, receive, and know the testimonies of the Father and the Spirit concerning him in the scriptures, and also his own declarations concerning the Father and the Spirit, and so increase in the knowledge of God; yea, grow in grace, and

in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. And as he is the fulness of the text, so also of the verse preceding it; “On whom the Father poured the fury of his anger, and the strength of battle.” And himself, being strong in power, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince, was mighty in battle, and got himself the victory; and we, his redeemed, the travail of his soul, and the inhabitants of the Rock, we sing salvation to God and the Lamb, and say, “Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” And this brings me to the text, “But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob.” Thus the person, power, and glory of the Lord Jesus is set before us, and declared in plain words, which wayfaring men, though fools, are witnesses of, and understand; and such not only acknowledge his eternal power and godhead, as the Creator, but know him also the Most High God, their Redeemer, and rejoice that they have redemption in his blood — the forgiveness of sins; and they also believe in him, the great God and Saviour, the “Creator of the ends of the earth, that fainteth not, neither is weary.” And in meditations of him it is well, at all times, to consider him Jesus Christ, the same that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be wearied and faint in our minds; for it is the person of Christ, Emmanuel, “God with us,” that giveth validity, honour, and glory to all he wrought, suffered and obtained. And it is himself that is “made of God unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” And this is he of whom the Holy Ghost saith in the text, “But now, thus saith the Lord.” What a fulness of blessedness in his word, which will stand for ever, and also his heart-warming *fear not*. Also, “I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name: thou art mine.” There I must stop, being bounded by time; but Jesus, the hope of Israel, is the eternity of Israel, the eternal God, our refuge, a refuge in times of trouble, a refuge from the storm; and, as his redeemed, we sing, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble, therefore will not we fear.” I stop where I began, “But now, thus saith the Lord;” and as we increase in faith, and abound in hope,

so also Jesus and salvation will be increasingly precious unto us; unto him be glory for ever. Amen.

SERMON IV.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY EVENING, DEC. 17TH, 1854.

THE ALMIGHTY CREATOR, THE GLORIOUS REDEEMER.

“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.”— Isa. xliii. 1.

“From sin’s dark thorny maze,
To Canaan’s fertile plains,

A travelling fair one, in distress,
On her Beloved leans.”

If we experience the divine contents of the song it will make us sing as we pass through the valley of the shadow of death, “The righteous shall hold on his way.” Perhaps there is nothing that so terrifies a child of God, on the first outset, than the thought of death or dying; but I live as familiar with death as I do with my bed, for I can see no substance in death; and I feel persuaded, according to the Word of the Lord, that death has no sting; for our most glorious Christ swallowed up death in victory: mark the expression. Yea, blessed be his holy name, the almighty conqueror, Jesus, conquered sin, death, and the devil; therefore, how blessed it is to sing our love-songs to him daily, in the belief of these glorious truths; and, in addition to them, the Holy Ghost tells us, that “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” “But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee,” &c.(Isa. xliii. 1). We will begin this evening with “*Thus saith the Lord;*” and if we have a “*Thus saith the Lord,*” it is no matter what men or devils may say about it; but if we have not a “*Thus saith the Lord,*” depend upon it, we may well tremble at the thought of what may be coming on us. If we look to the closing part of the sixth chapter of the 2nd of Corinthians we have a “*Thus saith the Lord,*” when speaking to the Church about coming out from among them, &c. You must know who you associate with, and what is your object and subject; for if you belong to Christ you must leave all besides. “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, *saith the Lord,*” &c., “and I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” There is something in the name Father that always comforts, refreshes, exhilarates, and feeds my never-dying soul. *Father*. It is very singular that in the Hebrew it is only two letters, and in the Greek there are two more put to it. In the Hebrew it is *Ab*, in the Greek *Abba*; so read it forward or backward it is always the same; our Father is the everlasting Father, and he will rest in his love; he never was angry with one of his children. I know this is saying

too much for a great many. What, never angry with a child? Never. But I do not mean to say that the child never had an apprehension that God was angry with him; and we will read what is recorded in Isa. xii.: “Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.” Who turned it away? Jesus Christ, the Father’s servant. Therefore, as we stand in Christ, the adopted of God in Christ Jesus, God has no anger against his children. “Behold, God is my salvation.”

We will now proceed, as the Lord shall enable, to make a few remarks on the second clause in our text; “*Created thee, O Jacob.*” There never was but one that created, and that is Jesus Christ, the Creator; he created heaven and the earth; and I have thought, lately, in looking at the testimony of the Holy Ghost, in connexion with this, that we only find three things that God blessed at the creation. What are the three? The fishes, Adam, and Eve; and the seventh day, these were the only things that God blessed. Read Gen. i., and part of the second chapter, then you will notice this with me; that whatever the fishes may represent, we will not attempt to dwell upon; but let us look at our father and mother, and that God’s blessing was on them before sin entered, and death by sin: sin did not alter God’s blessing. I hope you understand this, for if it is realized in the heart and mind, it will humble us before the Lord, and we shall give him the honour due to his name.

Then mark the glorious mercy, “*That created thee, O Jacob.*” And there is something singular that the name Jacob should be the word in the Hebrew that can be translated “*heel.*” Then think it over, “He shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” — *his Jacob.* Then happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help.

Observe another thing, and ask a question, Did God create anything in vain? Surely not. Then he was not the author nor the creator of sin. I know there are many that run away with the notion that God is the author of sin; let them enjoy their notions, I will not quarrel with them, but let us bless God for the mercy. Sin is of the devil; God created him, but he never made

him a devil, that was his own act. Then God created the heaven and the earth, and all that in them is; and God created man, and the woman was created in Adam, in union to Adam; but when, in her separate standing from Adam, it is said, God builded the woman, and we are God's building. What did the woman represent? The married wife, the Church of God. Who did Adam represent? Christ Jehovah, the second Adam from heaven. O the sweet mysteries of the faith of God's elect. Let us pause a moment at the threshold of these glorious realities, and may the Lord open them more and more to our hearts. Did the Lord make Adam for himself, or the woman for herself? Certainly not. But God made the man for the woman, and the woman for the man. God the Father made Christ suffer for the Church of God, his wife, that we should be made the righteousness of God in him. Have you hearts large enough to receive those divine truths? or is your religion in notions and sentiment? or does your life and living stand in Christ, with Christ, by Christ, and for Christ, who saith, "Where I am, there shall ye be also?"

I stop another moment in the contemplation of this sweet and precious mercy; therefore, God created Jacob for himself; and Jacob never lived for himself, that is, as a creature; but he lived for the Lord, and he died for the Lord; and it is marvellous, in looking into Luke i., when the angel Gabriel comes forth concerning the incarnation of the Son of God, that he began with the house of Jacob; "He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever." Not the house of Abraham nor of Isaac; then why the house of Jacob? Read your bibles, and you will find that Jacob's house was almost entirely made up of Gentiles. Here we discover again the mystery of God, and the mystery of faith; neither Abraham nor Isaac had many Gentiles in their house as Jacob had; therefore the Lord's wisdom is displayed that he should reign over the house of Jacob for ever. How blessed, simple, and plain these truths are. Then the Lord created Jacob; he created him, first, as a creature, and secondly, he made him a new creature.

I would notice here a phrase that is often used by parsons and by professors, that is, the words “*created anew.*” Now, to me, that word anew implies that we are created new creatures out of the old material; but we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus. This is another glorious mystery; and let me beseech you not to pin your faith to pulpit phraseology, nor the sentiments of religious people. What did the Lord say to the Jews? “Search the scriptures,” &c.

When I make these remarks, do not think that I am finding fault with what are called old authors, or other books; you are quite welcome to them, but remember, you never get any establishment in faith but by the Word of God, demonstrated by God the eternal Spirit; nor did ever a child of God have access to God the Father, through Jesus Christ, but according to the scriptures; nor did ever a sinner believe in Jesus Christ but according to the scriptures; he can no more believe in Christ, without the scriptures, than he can believe in God without life. Our God hath handed down his will and pleasure in the scriptures; and I believe, and I take the liberty of speaking it, that God will put blastings and mildew on everything short of himself. God created Jacob, and he makes all his Jacob’s new creatures in Christ. Death invaded the creature, sin entered, and death by sin; and as it is written, “Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return,” however long or short we may remain in the lower house, that will be the end. What death is we cannot tell, yet death worketh in us, and we die daily; although we are familiar with death we cannot tell what it is; how we grow old, or how my hair turns grey, I cannot tell; and I believe all the philosophers in the world cannot determine it.

But we will pass on. Not only were we created by God, but here is our standing now; it is new creatures in Christ Jesus; and none but new creatures in Christ know what it is to be the subjects of death. We were new creatures in Christ before we knew that we were sinners; and the subject, in our apprehension, is very different; for, as I have often told you, I believed in my heart that when God convinced me of sin that he would have

sent me to hell as sure as I am now speaking to you, but blessed be God, he cut off my expectation, and he proclaimed pardon and peace, and he said to me, "I am thy salvation." And as we are new creatures in Christ, we were that before we felt guilt in our conscience; we were alive in Christ, partakers of Christ, and joined to the Lord and one Spirit, before ever God, the eternal Spirit, convinced us of sin. Why, say you, I can hardly understand you. Do the stones feel? do the dead groan? do they sigh, cry, or long? Not a bit of it. Then when we were dead in trespasses and sins, we did not know anything about guilt or sinnership. I used to go to church, and say after the parson, but I said what I felt not, nor knew not; but when the Lord made me a new creature in Christ I felt and knew I stood guilty before God. It is not an easy position, nor is it a position to trifle with; for there is something, when God charges guilt in a sinner's conscience, that will make him tremble day and night. I know some get religious and have the doctrines at their fingers' end, but, if you come on these personal matters, they will say you are too narrow-minded and bigoted. But we will leave that; this is the grand point to know, Has God convinced you and me of sin? has he brought us to cry, Unclean, unclean, and to know what it is to stand at the bar (allow me the word), expecting the sentence of "Depart from me, ye cursed?" But instead of that it has been words of peace, "Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom." I can tell you, almost to a foot of land, more than two hundred and fifty miles from here, where God made me a witness of this truth. I desire to leave a personal testimony for God with you. Then mind you, that as God created Jacob for himself, so God created every new creature for himself. If you will look into Eph. i. 12, it has been much on my mind of late, that is, "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."

Now look at Isa. xlii., and there we find, "This people have I formed for myself," and we are created for himself. If once the Holy Ghost realizes it in the heart, and assures us of it, it will take off ten thousand anxious cares concerning the flesh; for I believe I am living for the Lord — I am

passing through all he has settled for me in safety, and the Lord is with me in every place. Then mark how things stand: “The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.” We do not get a knowledge of it by hearsay, but we shall feel sinking in deep mire, where there is no standing; then we shall cry, “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe “Uphold me with thy free spirit.” These are some of the breathings of God’s Jacobs — new creatures born in Christ.

Then mark another mercy of the blessedness of the security of the Church. We sometimes appear to ourselves as if we were surrounded by every enemy that can possibly be in existence, and nothing appears but instant destruction. See a little concerning this in the days of Elisha and his servant. The Assyrians encompassed the mountain, and the poor servant was driven to his wit’s end. “Lord,” said the man of God, “open his eyes.” And it is only for God to open our eyes, we shall then see. And what did he see? The mountain encompassed about with horses and chariots of fire. That is a plain representation of the security, as well as the defense, of every living child of God. What more? “I will be a wall of fire round about her, and the glory in the midst of her.” Here let us pause to ponder over this glorious secret; who can come near us? I have read of travelers in foreign lands, in the vicinity of wild beasts; nothing will keep them off but fire. And if we are inclosed (which, bless God, we are) in the person, fulness, salvation, and glory of God, if there were ten million devils, not one can come near a child of God in Christ. These are royal mercies, which will make us live well, ay, and die well, sing well, walk well, and speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power. Then being new creatures in Christ is not only that we should be to the praise of the glory of God the Father, but that the Church should be the glory of Christ. Is your mind taken up with these divine testimonies? then how sweet, how comforting, how heart-cheering, and Christ-endearing, the words recorded in Isa. lx., “Jehovah shall be unto thee for an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.” Then what is the echo from the heart to the truth and blessedness of it? “God forbid that I should glory in anything short of the

cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.” And mark the mercy: “If we suffer with him (not *for* him) we shall be also glorified together.” What about sufferings? Oh, saith Paul, “I count the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us,” not *to us*. Do think it over, and be particular with God’s most holy Word; and do not try how much you can read, but watch God’s movements in the heart, in teaching us to profit, and by instructing us in the way; and he saith, “I will guide thee with mine eye.” This is the privilege and blessedness of each believer in the Lord Jesus. But there was a time I did not know it. “Yes,” say you, “and I suppose there was a time you did not enjoy it.” I do not live by enjoyments; but it is a mercy to know him, being rooted, grounded, and settled in the knowledge of God and Christ Jesus. I love enjoyments as well as you do, but the Lord does not seem to favour me with them as he did in my childhood. But we are grown up into Christ, and are settled, rooted, grounded, and built up in him. You that are brought into this position of steadfastness in the faith, and you hear a child of God prattle, and sometimes seem to talk nonsense, you will not despise him, nor will you put a damper upon him; but you will do something like Paul, even, as it were, become one that is circumcised. What for Paul? That I may gain the more. I have known those, and I dealt a little with it in my younger days — that is, to set up a standard of experience; but since the Lord has taught me concerning *babes* and little children, I look back with pleasure and delight how God bore with my weakness and folly then; and he bears with my weakness and folly now, for I am not got one whit further than a babe in Christ Jesus. What does this open to us? That God is our Father, and we are begotten of God, born of God, quickened of God; and being born of God, we shall live in God in eternal life, in eternal glory, to all eternity.

One word more on the divine security and blessedness of the Church. “Underneath *are the everlasting arms*,” “*a wall of fire round about us*.” And his excellency is over Israel, and it is our covering; therefore, being in Christ we are dead, and our life is hid with Christ in God. “When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory.”

“Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob.” The Lord speaks personally. I did not hear the voice of God for you, nor did you hear the voice of God for me; but here is the consociation not to be broken, “He that heareth the voice of the Son of God shall live.” That is most blessed to consider; we feel the life within, but we only live in Christ, live by Christ, live for Christ, and live to be with Christ to all eternity. Sin defaced God’s creation, because it stood related to the earth; and we believe that we are of the earth, earthy. But there is an end to that creation; for being new creatures in Christ, earth has no connection with it; nor can any earthly thing attach itself to a new creature in Christ Jesus. Let us make this remark, for it is heart-cheering that we were not created for our pleasure or delight, although it is connected with it. But here is the confession: “For thy pleasure they are and were created.” Then think a little of his pleasure: “It pleased God to bruise him, and to put him to grief, and to make his soul an offering for sin;” and this dear truth comes in so particular. God the Father poured on him the fury of his anger, &c., and he *“acknowledged it not;”* so it reads in the Hebrew language; for we can never suppose ignorance to attach itself to the wisdom of God in a mystery. I have known many, in by-gone days, that seemed pleased with an ignorant Christ. I never could trust such an one; but I have blessed him thousands of times that “he knoweth our frames, and doth remember that we are dust.” Bless his name; and he knows our every trial, and “he is touched with the feelings of our infirmities” — that is fellow-feeling. Jesus Christ was manifest in the flesh, and he hath our flesh and blood, and we are joined to him and one Spirit. It is hereby, if I may be allowed the expression, an holy reciprocity is kept up between Christ and the Church. When he speaks we are silent for a time, then we begin to sing; and when he is silent we begin to speak to him, and to cry to him, saying, “Make haste, O Lord, to help me;” nor can we cease until we receive the Word, whether it is for reproof, correction, edification, or comforting. Nothing short of the Word from the Lord will ever satisfy a believer in Christ. I know this is considered too particular for professors, nevertheless it is the truth. Mark with me another

very dear mercy, and I speak here freely of it — and perhaps you may be ready to say it is not scriptural — that when our God chose us in himself he laid out himself for us; and he saith, “I will be their God, and they shall be my people.” And he taketh pleasure in his people, and he will beautify the meek with salvation. Cheer up, beloved, “all are yours, ye are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.” Here we may wear (as it is recorded in Heb. xi.) sheep-skins and goat-skins, and be destitute, forsaken, and persecuted; wandering in dens and caves of the earth; yet to touch them was to touch the apple of his eye. How near, how dear, and how precious — thy God thy glory.

Here is another thing I would just notice, that is, when we have supposed that someone has done us an injury, we have taken it to ourselves; but that is very wrong, for this is our mercy. Whatever may surround us, whatever evil may befall us, or however numerous our enemies may be, we should leave them in the hands of the Lord with ourselves. We then shall know, from heart-felt experience, that “we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” I have tried to suppress evil-speaking, and I have tried to maintain a good name, but it is all gone, and I would not now try to maintain it; let everything go to the dogs; let Christ alone be exalted. Say you, “I like to keep my name and reputation.” Keep it as long as you can. But if you belong to Christ, he will strip you of everything connected with the creature, that we may glory only in the Lord. I know this manner of preaching is not generally liked, for the creature wants to be spoken well of; but that was never my province, but to speak as God would direct me.

We will now look at the next clause of the text: “And he that formed thee, O Israel.” First notice the two names. And we have two names — the son of Adam dead, and the son of Adam, Jehovah, from heaven. We have two likenesses, or images: “For as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” What is this heavenly image? The image of the invisible God; not that we shall be godhead, nor taken up into godhead to be God, but, by virtue of union to him, we are partakers

of his holiness in oneness of nature; and thus the Holy Ghost speaks of it: "Because as he is, so are we in this world." Yet those that know and believe these glorious realities, will never attempt to honour themselves, nor will they attempt to puff up themselves; but their delight will be in the Lord, "that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." "Formed thee, O Israel." This is a wonderful expression; I am not about to explain it. But when God had a purpose to answer concerning matters, he made a conveyance of it to the heart and mind of Jeremiah, and by certain subjects that he gave Jeremiah an understanding of. In Jer. xviii. the Lord saith to him, "Arise, and go down to the potter's house." Have you ever been there? What a sweet lesson God teaches his people there. And at the command of God he went down to the house, and the potter wrought a work on the wheels, and the vessel that he made was marred; but it was in the hand of the potter. Nor was it cast away, although marred; nor did the potter refuse it because it was marred, "but he made it another vessel as it pleased him;" he asked no one what he should do with it. Therefore, our almighty Potter made us vessels, and sin marred us; but he made us another vessel as it pleased him, and we are called "vessels of mercy, afore prepared unto glory."

Let us stop a moment here. When the Lord had an especial mercy to open to Isaiah to write to the Church, he opens it just in the same way; and it was by shewing him vessels of small quantity, and vessels of large quantity; and I do not think one of them made themselves. Who made them? The potter; and we read that each was hung upon the nail. What does God say of Christ? "I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place." And they shall hang on him all the glory of his Father's house, the offspring (that is first), the issue (that comes next); and, bless him, he hath the issues from death. Then comes the vessels, and they were hung upon the nail. Who hung them there? God the Father. Who formed them? The almighty Potter. What was it for? To be used. As a vessel never made itself, it never moves of itself. Then if it has no hand in its making or moving, it hath nothing to do with hanging itself on the nail; and when hung on the nail, not an act

of its own is taken into account to keep it there. Why? “The Lord himself is the keeper of Israel;” and every vessel is “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.” In my simple way I would say, that you and me, as creatures, never hang a vessel on a nail with its mouth downwards, but always with its mouth upward, which well describes the living heart of a living sinner, who opens his mouth wide that God may fill it; and we direct our prayer to God and look up. Pause a moment in the contemplation of this unchangeable mercy — that as the vessel had nothing to do in its formation, or security, preservation, or banging itself up, so you and me, vessels of mercy, by the love of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are kept secure by God, to be glorified together with Christ. Every vessel thus made, and every vessel thus hung up, is of the earth, and he is delivered from what the earth is subject of, and being thus delivered he does not partake of what the earth produces. This is living by faith, eating the bread of God, and drinking the water of life, being partakers of Christ — cannot die anymore.

But perhaps your thoughts of the subject have often been like mine; that after hung up I have felt things that were earthly more than I did before. That is one mercy arising from the truth and blessedness of God’s Word, of being separated to God. We then begin to feel what we are as creatures, and being separated from ourselves as sinners, and being joined to the Lord, we begin to feel that from the sole of the foot to the head there is no soundness in it. Then we begin to groan, being burdened, and sometimes “desire to depart to be with Christ, which is far better.” You will observe another thing, that is, they are all living vessels, and there is a fulness to be communicated to them; and yet they shall feel as if it was flowing and ebbing, as if they were as empty as they possibly can be; but it only fits us for Jesus Christ, “for of his fulness we all receive, and grace for grace.” Then to feel empty is exceedingly suitable, for when we feel the drawings of God, we then drink, (shall I say?) our souls full of love, blood, and salvation.

I have often thought of the dear expression of Rutherford's, "If he (the Lord) would let me into this well, I would drink my soul full of his love." Have you been indulged with it? Have you any intercourse with the Son of God, the fountain of living waters? "The streams of that river shall make glad the city of God." Look into John iv. He sat thus on the well, and talked with the poor woman, and the disciples wondered at it. And I hope we know something of the wondering at it; of his sitting down with you and me. What did he say to her? "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water. For whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst." He *that drinketh*, not he that thinketh about it, or looketh at it, but he that *drinketh*. There is a sort of perpetuity attached to that sweet word "*drinketh*" — "but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water, springing up into eternal life." Neither sin, Satan, nor unbelief can stop the springing up of the water of life. Stop, say you, do not talk like that; for many times I have been so oppressed, that it appeared as if the well was stopped, for there was no springing up. Quite true; but did you not groan about it? and was it not something like this, without speaking a word, namely, "I opened my mouth, and panted." Bless God for such a testimony, and bless God for being a witness of it; for did you ever know anything pant that was not alive? We can pant when we cannot speak, and we sigh when we do not speak; and they are living functions of living life, and Christ is that, "because I live, ye shall live also." Why, bless you, we are no more alive when we are singing, and are joyful in the Lord, than we are when we are in trouble and sorrowful; it is one and the same life and one and the same blessedness. In the days of Abraham there were some that stopped up the wells. And why did they stop them up? For another to open them. Therefore all thy seeming heart-closing, and seeing the stone on the well's mouth, may grieve you, but this will be the language, "My soul is athirst for God." Every obstacle shall be removed, and we shall satiate our souls with the streams of that

river that maketh glad the city of God. And the more we drink the more we thirst; and the more we have communicated to us, the more we shall feel our need. So we shall go on, looking unto Jesus, until he saith, “Come up higher.”

I see Time tells me to stop. What do we know of these truths? Are we possessors of vital godliness? Are we alive in Christ? Do we walk in the fear of the Lord? Or else are we only walking on, in what is called the ordinances of his house. You may walk there, but if we are not alive in Christ, death will put an end to all our religion. I have often thought, and have often quoted it, and it is useful, or else it would not be in God’s book, “Examine yourself” (whether you are religious or whether you are pious, oh, no); “examine yourself, whether you be in the faith; prove yourselves; know you not, except Christ be in you,” &c. The God of peace be with you. Amen.

SERMON V.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DEC. 24TH, 1854.

COMFORT AND CORDIALS FOR BROKEN HEARTS
AND WOUNDED SPIRITS.

“But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.” Isaiah xliii. 1.

In the contemplation of the truths you have been just singing, I would say, it is one thing to utter the words from the mouth, and to have a musical voice, but it is quite another thing to make melody to the Lord in the heart; the Lord takes no notice of any singing but heart-singing. Then mark the blessedness of the subject:

“When Jesus died their debts were paid,
Whose sins lay on the scape-goat’s head
Was to the trackless desert drove,
And buried in eternal love.”

Was he led away without the sins? No; but when Aaron, the high priest, laid his hands on the head of the goat, and confessed the sins of the people, that goat was constituted sin before God. And that goat was a beautiful type of Christ, our sin-bearer; and Jesus Christ was made sin, and it matters not what we may think about it, or what people may say. I know speculative minds have strange notions of eternal matters, and they say that the Godhead could not suffer; but we do not talk of godhead separate from manhood, or manhood separate from godhead. Jesus Christ was God manifest in the flesh, he was what he is, and he is what he was, and that is “Emmanuel, God with us,” or *with us, God*, so it reads in Hebrew; and he is Jesus Christ the same, nothing altered. Time things makes an alteration with you and me, and we grow old and feeble. Our Lord Jesus never did an evil or a sinful action, yet he was made sin. As sin is the author of every evil, and the strength of sin is the law, our Lord Jesus Christ not only fulfilled but magnified the law, and he was made the curse of the law. It is only in what Christ hath done that we stand free from condemnation, and justified from all things; and God himself has nothing to lay to the charge of his elect. Ah, say some, this is worse and worse. You can think so if you like. I read in my Bible these Christ-endearing words, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth.” Where were all the charges laid? On our surety. Remember, God the Father and God the Son dealt personally one with another in matters

concerning the redemption of the Church; and the council of peace was, is, and shall be between them both; and we, the Church, have nothing to do in redemption. "We are God's workmanship," and we have a labour of love, and that is, to believe in Christ Jesus; and that is the simplest and the plainest thing in the world. I would drop a hint here, and I know some of you know it with me, that is how I have troubled myself, and exercised my mind by seeking after enjoyments; and the longer I have sought after them the further they appeared to be from me. But I never sought the Lord in vain. His word he will fulfil: he that seeks me shall surely find me. But if you are seeking for anything short of Jesus Christ you will be filled with disappointment, and it will produce anguish of mind; but here is the antidote, "joy and peace in believing." These are weighty matters, but they are the truths I love to speak of continually. Then let us again look at the mercy, that Jesus put away our sins by the sacrifice of himself; we hail it with pleasure, and we rejoice in the mercy, and we feel delighted to say, "Let the God of my salvation be exalted." This is certain, that as Jesus Christ put away our sins, he will never bring them back again. Then what are you grumbling about? for if we were not sinners, we should not be fit for the friend of publicans and sinners. But it is not the knowledge of sin and our sinnership that gives us comfort, but knowing salvation by Jesus Christ. It is not the knowledge of our sinnership that produces faith and hope in God, but the love of God, the mercy of God, the will and pleasure of God, and being God's workmanship in Christ Jesus; and thus we believe to the saving of the soul. Do bear with me; these truths warm the heart, and raise the mind above all that is passing and repassing.

Let us look at another thing, and may the Lord open the gospel fulness of it: no Israelite had a hand in putting his sins, or laying them on the head of the scape-goat; they were wholly passive in the transaction. Then what are we careful about? Do we want to lay what is not to be laid, and what Jesus Christ has made a nonentity of? He suffered once. Who was it for? The just for the unjust. What is the sweet effect? To bring us to God. Had we any hand in it? Nothing more than this, "Draw me, and I will run after

thee.” This is a little of the old-fashioned experience of the Old Testament saints, yet we are so foolish that we want a new way, a new religion, and a new experience; but we shall never have it if we belong to Christ Jesus, and are one with him.

There is another truth, and a most blessed one, that is, to be satisfied with God the Father’s gift to us. He did not give us Jesus Christ that we should bring anything to him to add to our blessedness; nor did he give Christ to you or me to separate ourselves from that gift, or to disinherit ourselves from the blessedness of that gift. The Holy Ghost saith, “The gifts and callings of God are without repentance.” Can we (as witnesses of these truths) call God to record on our souls concerning the mercy, and utter from our hearts the truth, “Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth I desire besides thee?”

I must make another remark concerning the dear truth. Not only the scapegoat bearing the sin, but when the high priest went into the holiest of all, the people said not a word against his going in; for there he spake to God and God spoke to him. He presented the blood, and God communed with him; and then he came out and made known God’s will to them. Think of thy precious Lord Jesus, “he that was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” entered heaven with his own blood, and is living in the presence of God to make intercession for us. Oh, what a precious Lord Jesus; and our mercy is to live on in silence, yet always blessing, praising, and adoring the Lord, yea, shouting victory through our most glorious Christ.

There is another truth that you have been singing of, and it is the word *blotted* out — there is something so precious in it. In the usual course of business, when there is a receipt given, it is generally written “settled” at the bottom of the bill; but our Lord has *blotted* out all our sins and debts, so that there is not so much as a letter standing in the book of ordinances, or in the book of the law, it is blotted out; so are our transgressions, sins, and iniquities. And I believe it is a royal truth what God made Balaam

say, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel." Yet there are those in our day that say, If you do not preach the creature and its filthiness, you cannot preach the truth. We may see things, and they may attract the eye and the senses, but do remark, that nothing but heart-felt experience, by demonstration, will ever make you or me witnesses for Christ. Here I pause to contemplate this glorious mercy, and in connection the blessedness arising from our sins being blotted out, and put away, is, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Ah, says a poor soul, I fear it. It is better to fear than to trifle. Many I have known that would talk, and say there was no condemnation, and yet would walk and act quite contrary to it as darkness is to the light, and have wallowed in all manner of abominations; but it is only the upright that walk uprightly, and that love Jesus Christ and salvation. Now the text I have read you is the same that I read to you last Sabbath; and it was not my intention to have read it to you this morning, for I had a little novelty in my mind that I intended talking to you about, for I thought if I had not a new text to-day you would be tired of the old one; and it was not until you had almost closed your second song, that the words were brought again to the mind. "But *now, thus saith the Lord,*" &c. Have we had a thus saith the Lord for anything this week? I know you have, if you belong to Christ; for our Lord deals in a most marvellous way. He not only speaks once or twice, but again and again. He knows well that we are very dull of hearing, and sometimes very slow of heart to believe; but it does not unfit us for Christ. Oh, say you, I think if I was not so dull of hearing it would be better with me. I know what it is to have such thoughts, as well as to raise objections against myself, and I am sometimes now at it; but, however, the Lord sweeps away the whole of it. And in looking over God's book, what a dear privilege it is, that a child of God hath everything that he is confirmed in; with a "thus saith the Lord." And when it is demonstrated in a sinner's heart, it will make him loathe himself in his own sight for all his abominations, and it will make him, in his own feelings, the weakest creature that ever lived. But will he stop there? Oh,

no; but he will tell the Lord that he is not worthy of the least of these his mercies and his truth.

Now mark the distinction: the olden Jews thought they were the only people that were beloved and chosen of God. They raged, they railed, and they blasphemed, and even said to Christ, “Say we not well that thou art mad, and hast a devil?” What was it that rose their enmity to such a pitch? On account of the Gentiles. And I would have you notice what is recorded of Peter; although he could curse and swear, yet he saith, “Not so, Lord, for I have eaten nothing common or unclean.” What a nice pharisaical man; but the Lord loved him. Did the Lord reject him, or punish him for his actions or his words? No; but he told him to look at the things set before him; and these were all manner of four-footed beasts, and creeping things of the earth — a full representation of you and me, Gentiles — and they were in a great sheet, knit at the four comers. What was to be done? “Arise, Peter, kill and eat.” And that was Peter’s work to the day of his death. How did he kill? By the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. How did he eat? By faith he believed in “the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world;” and he ate his flesh and drank his blood, and rejoiced with others that salvation is of the Lord. There is a vast difference between Peter’s killing and a murderer, for no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Therefore look again at the glorious mercy, and ponder it over. And we have had some sweet experience of the truths of God for years. Now there are things that present themselves to us that we tremble at the approximation of, which causes us to cry unto God, that he may again say unto us, “*Fear not*, thou worm, Jacob.” And there are other things that present themselves, that cause us to go on in the strength of the Lord, with faith and hope in God, and with this confidence, “If God be for us, who can be against us?” What is our mercy? “The Lord shall go before thee, and the God of Israel shall be thy reward.” Therefore I add by permission, that a child of God can walk through hell unmolested, if he hath a “thus saith the Lord” for his portion.

I must not go on too fast; these are divine realities, and, as I often tell you, matters for faith; sight and sense, sensibility and reason, have nothing to do with it. "We walk by faith, and not by sight" Then take notice of another mercy, that we have never a "thus saith the Lord," but what he is with us to fulfil his promise. And I know you will agree with me when I say, that the Lord never spoke a word into your heart or mine but what he fulfilled that word, and that he was the fulness of it. Then to have God's "fear not," with a "thus saith the Lord," is a most blessed portion. "Fear not to go down into Egypt." Poor dear old Jacob trembled about going into Egypt. We may have our troubles, and fears, and tremblings, and may be ready to say, "all these things are against me," but, beloved, with a "thus saith the Lord," and a "fear not," it is then, "I will go on in the strength of the Lord; I will make mention of his righteousness, and of his only." And we go on, from day to day, as witnesses of the fulfilment of his Word, "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." I would add (and if I err correct me) that all religion, without God's "fear not," and "thus saith the Lord," will leave us in darkness, will leave us in death, and will leave us for ever. By making these remarks, I desire to stir up your pure minds, knowing we cannot live, even as believers, without "Fear not," and "Thus saith the Lord." I have tried for years, and I have prayed to the Lord that he would keep me one side of trials; that is, that I might not know what the flesh against the spirit is; yet, the more I prayed against it, the more I have been exercised with it; and even now I am got old, it appears to me that the flesh is more rampant than ever in rebelling against God; but it is the warfare, the flesh against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these two are contrary the one to the other, so that I cannot do the things that I would. Let me tell you a secret: You know what secret prayer is, when you bow the knees before God, and no eye sees you but the Lord; you feel a desire to pour out your heart before the Lord, without molestation, let, or hindrance, and yet, in feeling, you may be more like a devil than a saint; the scum of the great pot will be made manifest, and I have wondered, scores of times, that it hath not

ran over. Why is all this? That we may learn to have no confidence in the flesh. I have tried to pray it down, to sing it down, and to read it down, but I never could stop its striving for the mastery. Where have you been brought? “Make haste to help me, O my God.” This is the experience I love, and by love constrained to leave the whole of it, with myself, in the hands of a gracious God, the faithful Creator, and thus learn how grace reigns, through righteousness, unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ, our Lord. I do not mean to say that all God’s children are exercised like this; but there never was a child that lived long but knew something of the contention, between the flesh and the spirit. And here comes the sweet mercy: though apparently overcome and cast down, yet never destroyed; nor did ever God let the enemy triumph over one of his children; and, as long as the Lord keeps us in the wilderness, he will never let us rise above a “*Fear not*;” for we shall continually need it; and he will never let us go one side of a “*Thus saith the Lord*.” You may try to escape it, and you may try to walk one side of it, and you may try to go beyond the end of the cross, but you are sure to have it, and sweet it is in the obedience of faith in Christ to take up the cross daily, and follow him. I have the cross in bed, as well as when I am up; in the dark, as well as in the light; and I believe I shall never get rid of it until my precious Lord saith, “Come up higher.” Then farewell to all time-things, trials, exercises, troubles, and crosses; and we shall be for ever with the Lord, to see him as he is; then shall we be like him.

I would say again, Cheer up, beloved of the Lord; nothing hath failed of all the Lord our God hath promised. Now, the Word of the Lord, connected with our text, embraces a certain specific people, and he thus expresses it, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” I have never seen a sheep yet but would rather run away from a dog than face it or fight it. Ah, say you, that is just like me. But I never saw a sheep destroy itself by running away from a dog; and when I have seen a sheep contend with a dog, it has generally come off with blood flowing; but you will never see the sheep encircle a dog as they

will the shepherd. I have seen contentions with them there, trying which should get nearest to the shepherd. Take another hint. I never saw a sheep approach the shepherd with its head another way. Then it is said, "The righteous are as bold as a lion;" "I will go in unto the king." Oh, say our workers, you must stop till you are a little more pious, and a little calmer in mind; you feel the workings of the flesh, and surely you cannot be fit to go to the Lord now. But a child in extremity will not stay to parley with fleshly things to please the devil, but says, "*I will go in unto the King,*" &c. But he has not sent for you. No matter, "If I perish, I perish." That is the way God's children honour the Lord with their faith: though he bears long with them they will take no put off; but this is the language, "Make haste to help me, O my God." I believe there is a vast difference between compliments and real prayer. Now we are just in the time when we hear it said, I wish you the compliment of the season. Away with such nonsense; let us have the reality of it; and what is that? "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." He is our refuge, he is our possession, and he is our inheritance; blessed be the name of the Lord. Then all compliments may go to the dogs; we must have it in reality from the mouth of the Lord; "Thus saith the Lord, fear not."

Mark another sweet and precious mercy; that as the Lord has made us his people, and fitted us for himself, there is no fitness that we shall find in ourselves, but what the Lord hath made us for himself, then the Lord will never despise the work of his hands. Sin made us sinners and transgressors; but God, having made us new creatures in Christ, what he hath done will stand for ever; sin defiled us, but we are preserved in Christ Jesus from all evil; sin made us rebellious against God; Jesus Christ received gifts for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Does the Spirit dwell in you and me? and are our bodies his temple? Bless God they are. Are the words of the Lord Jesus fulfilled, "And we will come and make our abode with you?" so that the holy Three in One, and One in

Three dwells in us, and we dwell in the Father, and in the Son, and live and walk in the Spirit; and nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. *“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob.”* God created Jacob for himself; and you and me are new creatures, created in Christ Jesus; and as we were created by God, so we were created for God. I cannot refrain from quoting that dear scripture, recorded in Eph. i. 13, “That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.” When did God the Father trust in Christ? Go back into eternity, search into the depths of it if you can; why was it? what was it, but that we, — his chosen in Christ Jesus, and that Christ redeemed, — should be to the praise of his glory, and that we should be glorified together with him — “Jesus, our everlasting light, our God, our glory.” How little everything appears, yea, less than nothing and vanity, that stops short of these divine realities; and we must not be in haste to pass away from these precious truths. Now, nothing would please you and me better than to live always fit for Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ to be always fit to us and for us. But here is the mistake we make, thinking if we had not so much sorrow and grief; and if the way was more level and plain it would be better. But not a whit of it; for Jesus was “a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;” And depend upon it, if we love Jesus Christ, we shall know what it is to be sorrowful children, that he may sympathize with us. I have often thought he drops, as it were, his own tears into my heart, to constrain me, by love, to weep tears of joy for our Lord Jesus Christ. What honour God’s children have! Ah, say you, I want to live happy. If you want to live happy in yourself, or in anything short of Jesus, you will be the most miserable creature in the world. I know many of you understand what I am talking about, and I have learned it by experience. Where was Israel’s happiness? In the Lord. “Happy art thou, O Israel; who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency? and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee; and thou shalt tread upon their high places.” He hath kept me in that way for years; for if I have an enemy, and they should say all manner of evil

of me, I say not a word against it. But would you not attempt to stop them? No. But you ought to. Away with your *oughts*; let me have that almighty One; for there is only one that can still the tongue, or make a sinner quiet before the Lord. I speak in all freedom, and we will bless the Lord our God.

But, however, we will go on a little further in the glorious and precious mercy. “Fear not, I have redeemed thee.” Now, it would have been most blessed if the Lord had said, “I will redeem thee.” When God convinces us of sin, and brings us to know that we are sinners, there is a searching, looking, and a desiring after redemption; and how pleasant it would have been if the Lord had come forth to redeem us from iniquity, as I thought and desired. Ah, say some, now I can walk with you there. And hath not your soul, heart, and mind almost made a stoppage when the Lord, the Holy Ghost testified of Jesus, and when you received the words from his mouth, “I have redeemed thee?” Then mark the mercy; as he hath redeemed us there is nothing now to redeem us from. Stop, say some, I do not like these things; what, is there nothing to redeem us from? No; for he hath redeemed us from sin, transgression, and the curse of the law; but, in feeling, we may go down into Egypt, according to his love and purpose; but he always saith, “Fear not to go down into Egypt, I will go with thee;” and we have been redeemed from it by God. I have often wondered at it, and my heart has flowed out with blessing, praising, and adoring the Lord; and frequently, in conjunction with being redeemed from Egypt, I have been constrained by love to stand still and see the salvation of God; for do remark, it appears the greatest trouble God’s people had was after they came out of Egypt; they groaned in Egypt on account of their bondage; and when God brought them out (and I trust he has brought you into a knowledge of being brought out), the sea was before them, the mountains on either hand, and the enemy close behind; but this is the command, “Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you.” You may depend on it, it is a truth, that we should even now run from the Lord if we were not environed and hedged in by God himself — “a wall of fire round about

us.” It is a sweet mercy to be brought into such positions; and, if God did not help us, under it we should sink. Who are those that sing of salvation? Those that God delivers. Who are those that praise the Lord? Those that God deals bountifully with. Who are they that trust in the Lord? Those that have been exercised, tried, vexed, and driven to their wit’s end, and, when all but gone, his power, love, grace, and mercy hath frustrated the tokens of liars, and made diviners mad, and hath delivered us from the temptation. “Is there anything too hard for the Lord?” And as we learn by daily experience that we cannot manage our own affairs, what a mercy it is to commit everything into the hand of the Lord, with ourselves, who saith, “I will never leave thee, I will never forsake thee;” so that we may boldly say, “The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do *unto me.*”

It is with heart-felt pleasure I have ran on thus far. I again read the text, as I have passed over the threshold of the same; “But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob,” &c. It seems as if the Lord was determined to rivet our heart and mind to and in what he had to say, by calling us by the name Jacob, to remind us continually of our low, weak, and helpless state; and also that the Lord calleth Jacob by his proper name, and connects it with an unalterable “Fear not;” as in the text, saying, “Fear not, thou worm Jacob;” and at the same time, it is declared by the Holy Ghost, “Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the Lord his God;” and I again say, that Jacob, the heel, though bruised, yet never broken off from his union-standing, and life-blessedness to “Emmanuel, God with us;” for it is “in him we live, and move, and have our being.” This is very blessed, and always the same, because Jesus Christ is the same; and there is something blessed to have the mind and soul confirmed in, that there is a special mark of love and mercy set before us, in what the Lord saith, “Thy name shall be no more called Jacob, but Israel;” and so every child of God is called by a new name.

It is also well to notice that the name of Israel was given to him after he had wrestled with the angel, and had said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." This sets before us a mystery for faith; and no doubt Jacob, now named Israel, saw the day of Christ, as Abraham did, who had his name changed for an especial purpose; Abram, a high father; Abraham, a living and a breathing father; Jacob, the weak, the feeble worm; Israel, the upright in God. And it is heart-warming, as we consider and ponder over these truths, that we also shall lose the name sinner, but the name saint will run coeval with eternity; and we may well say, "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever;" for the God of Jacob is our God for ever and ever, and he will be our guide over death; and the Holy Ghost saith, "Neither can they die any more, they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection," and "we are raised up together with him, and made to sit together with him in heavenly places."

These are they to whom the "Fear not" is spoken, by whom it is realized in heart-felt experience; and such only know and believe the fulness of the truth, "I have redeemed thee." Jesus, the most high God, is our Redeemer, our kinsman Redeemer, who hath obtained eternal redemption for us, and redeemed us to God by his blood; and we have redemption in his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; and we are the Church, purified by God, by his own blood. And what an unspeakable mercy the blood to us, is for a token, and by it our conscience is purged from dead works to serve the living God, whose service is perfect freedom. Beloved, let us ponder over these precious truths, as we go on in the strength of the Lord, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

The subject is of that extensive nature and importance that I can only hint at it as I pass the limits of an hour; but the truth is, however we may be bounded with time now, eternals vary not, nor is there progression in them. Eternal life and eternal glory enclose eternal redemption, salvation, and inheritance. And the Lord our God saith, "I am their possession, I am their inheritance." O the depth of the riches! My soul, my hearers, what

hath God wrought! And to this I add, “Thus saith the Lord, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine; when thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the floods, 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 the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel.” “And there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel;” then “who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” This is at all times the same to and for babes, little children, young men, and fathers; for they are all one in Christ Jesus, and to each alike Christ is all in all.

As I have once more to sit with you at the Lord’s table, I stop at the usual time, and have scarce began the text, “But now;” and it is always now. “But now, thus saith the Lord.” Whether in the dark or the light, in trouble or in joy, cast down or lifted up, it is always “Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob.” To him be glory for ever. Amen.

SERMON VI.

PREACHED ON SUNDAY EVENING, DEC. 24TH, 1854.

THE REDEEMER THE MOST HIGH
GOD, AND THE REDEEMED HIS OWN BODY.

“But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine.”— Isaiah xliii. 1.

“Now, free from sin, I walk at large,
This Breaker’s blood’s my soul’s discharge:
At his dear feet content I’ll lay,
A sinner sav’d, and homage pay.”

As sure as we are brought to sing of the mercies of the Lord, so sure shall we sing as you have just been singing.

“Till round thy throne thy face I view,
And sing thy blood and victory too.”

What an unspeakable mercy to be a living witness of the contents of that sweet song, and to have acknowledge of him who is our Breaker, and to have a heart to receive God’s testimony concerning him. Micah is very blessed, saying “the Breaker is come up before them and is he not always our forerunner, going before us? Why, if he were not, every little difficulty would more than bow us down: “I will go before them, and the God of Israel shall be their rereward.” Our glorious Jesus broke nothing down for himself, but he did it all for his Church, that our God and Father by him might be glorified; and you and me, the members of his body, might be glorified in him who is our God, our glory. There is something very precious in the contemplation of this from a knowledge of it. Then what did he break? Everything that was opposed to the Church, and he hath trodden down strength. What is that? The strength of sin is the law. How did he break that down? By fulfilling it in his obedience under the law; in his obedience to his God and Father as the law fulfiller, and his obedience is imputed unto you and me — so that sin can no more have dominion over us than it can over Christ. Some of you may dispute it, but if the Lord is your teacher, you will hail it with pleasure, “for sin shall not have the dominion over you.” Why is it that it cannot have dominion over us? Because our Lord Jesus hath destroyed the body of sin yes, and Jesus Christ destroyed all the power of sin; all it can now do is to tease us, which we feel, and we loathe ourselves in our own sight; — but sometimes it

appears, (and it is more than a supposition with us), as if sin had the dominion over us; from whence we are led captive by the devil at his will, and we have no power to keep ourselves from it. I know it is written, “resist the devil, and he will flee from thee,” but in general we go the wrong way to work in resisting him, that is, by our supposed faith and knowledge. But which is the right way to resist him? “To cleave to the Lord with full purpose of heart.” That is the way God’s children in the simplicity of their hearts out-match the devil. How is it expressed in the scriptures? “I will not let thee go unless thou bless me;” “ Hold up my goings in thy paths;” “Leave me not comfortless.” These are some of the heart-breathings of the living children of God, and they cannot live long without them. Mark again, *the Breaker is come up before them*. Where did he come up from? Death! “and we follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth and being partakers of the first resurrection, we come up out of death as we belong to Christ — but we never come up out of death but only as Jesus is our forerunner. Let me make a remark here, that although we are the subjects of death, and we know what it is to die daily, yet death hath no power over a member of the body of Christ. I want you to think more about God’s testimonies, and the truth contained in them, and not to be consulting your frames and feelings, whether good or bad. “And *we are more than conquerors;*” then being more than *conquerors*, nothing can conquer a child of God, though he may groan, sigh, and cry; for being joined to the Lord and one Spirit, he always lives in union with Christ. *More than conquerors*. Now, how marvellous it is, that those that are more than conquerors are those that fear they shall be conquered; and none beside them have such fears. This was strange to me once, that I should live daily more than a conqueror, yet tremble before God, fearing that I should be conquered. And I do bless my God that I am not got beyond a little fear now. Why is it? That he might endear himself and extend his mercy, and give us a little reviving in our bondage state. If we belong to Christ, we shall not live long without these things. We read, in Psalm ix., of “the gates of death.” Now look to Peter; when God brought him out of prison,

the last gate was an iron gate; no human invention nor creature strength would ever have opened that gate; but our most glorious Christ Jesus caused it to open of its own accord. And when the man of God was brought out (and was it not so with you and me?), he wist not what was done, but when he passed through one street. What can we say of that? “He laid his body as the ground, and as the street to them that went over.” These truths are among the choice mercies and rich experience of the children of God, who live and walk by faith, believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. “But now, thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine” (Isa. xliii. 1).

We shall never get to the end of the text, for it is always, “Now thus saith the Lord.” I could dwell an hour or two on this sweet expression, but I must hasten towards the end of the text, but not to the end of the subject. Whatever stands unconnected with a “thus saith the Lord,” will do us no good; therefore it is not the reading of it, but it is when the Lord speaks his own Word from his own mouth into our hearts, and we hear the words “fear not,” that we acknowledge the truth of them; then if we have not fear, we shall not need a “fear not.” See the suitability of it; we may read it, and may hear another read it, and we may make an acknowledgment to the truth of it, and say, it is true; but unless we are brought into the position, and that by God himself, we shall not need his *fear not’s* — none of your chance work here. But we must be brought into the position, and that by God himself, that God’s “fear not” may suppress or swallow up our fears, that we may joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. There is another remark I must make; and the things I am now speaking of I know the truth of; for the experience of them is not dormant; nor can nor will the heart lay dormant where the mercy is felt and known. But thus it will be expressed, “I will utter the memory of his great goodness, and sing of his righteousness. I will praise him with joyful lips, and will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall be ever in my mouth.” These are among our choice mercies. And let me observe, and you take notice of it, that the

Lord keeping you and me in the wilderness is not only for our good, comfort, and consolation, but it is to bring us into a most particular knowledge of, and familiarity with himself; not by feeling in the abstract, but by the Word of God demonstrated in the heart by its divine author, God the Spirit. What will be the effect? “It is the voice of my Beloved, that knocketh, saying, Open to me, my sister, my spouse.”

Do allow me a moment or two longer here, for it is for this one grand reason that the children of God are constrained by love (not of necessity, but of love) to look into their Father’s will, more or less, day by day; and as we are constrained by love to look into it, the more we read, and the more God gives us understanding, the more we shall desire to live in abstractedness from self, sin, death, and the devil, and live on by faith, glorying only in the Lord. And, connected with the one grand, glorious, eternal mercy and truth, “fear not,” stands these precious words, “*for I have redeemed thee.*” It would be a wonderful congregation if every one in the hearing of my voice knew Christ to be their Redeemer; yet he may be, and they may not know it. But it is among the sweet privileges of the children, from day to day, to know that he is their Redeemer, that he hath redeemed us, and that we are his redeemed, and nothing can come between us and himself. I have no need to tell you that redemption signifies purchase. Let us hear what is recorded in Acts xx. 28, “Feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” — there is the purchase. Now many talk of purchased blessings; it is all nonsense. God’s children never lost their blessings, though they lost themselves. “Sin entered, and death by sin;” but our blessings were always ours in Christ, without diminution or addition; we sold ourselves for nought; and, saith the Lord, “Ye shall be redeemed without money.” What are we redeemed with? “The precious blood of Jesus Christ.” Is it not our mercy, from time to time, as God’s witnesses of these glorious realities, to triumph in him, and sing that “we have redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace wherein he (God the Father) hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence.” When I make this

remark, it is not my intention to dispute with any one; that is, that we have redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ, but not as some say, that it is in the *efficacy* of his blood. Is there any efficacy in anything, if that thing does not exist? I believe the thing and the efficacy of it must exist together. If there is no blood of the Son of God, no blood of the everlasting covenant, there can be no blood of Jesus Christ, that cleanseth (not that hath cleansed, shall, or will cleanse), but “the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin.” Let us look at the high priest under the law. Did he enter with the efficacy of the blood, or with the blood? I read in my bible, and I know my God tells the truth, that he entered with the blood of others, and he sprinkled the blood on the altar, and he sprinkled it between the cherubims and he sprinkled it round about the altar; and “without shedding of blood there is no remission.” We may have notions about blood, and we may have thoughts about it, and we may read the Word of God concerning the blood; but it is one thing to be a living witness of it by the unction, power, and demonstration of the Spirit; and the effect then made manifest will not only be that it cleanseth from all sin, but that it purgeth the conscience from dead works to serve the living God; and I believe there is no serving God in newness of spirit, in abstractedness from the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

I will stop a moment here just to notice, that the people could not have lived in peace with God without blood, and the high priest could not have had communion with God without blood. And when our Lord Jesus entered into the holiest of all, with his own blood, as our forerunner, there was made manifest the completeness of the salvation of the Church; and when Jesus returned as the Redeemer, and when God the Father proclaimed him, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” where was the Church? In him. Where was their salvation? In him. Where is it now? Where it was then. And this is our daily mercy, “Behold, God is my salvation.” Though I cannot say what our happiness will be when we are disembodied, I can assure you, before God, that these precious truths, realized by faith, make me as happy as I can be out of heaven. I never

thought there was that reality of happiness in Jesus Christ, in my younger days, as I experience now. I thought I must go home to know its blessedness; but thus the mercy is manifested, it is me in Christ and Christ in me. Do bear with me; it may appear tedious to some, who may say it is a repetition. So it is —

“For Jesus Christ is still the same —
Endless blessings on his name.”

Observe another mercy. And it has often delighted my heart that there was never a sacrifice offered for sin under the law, but what God stood at the opening of the tabernacle door and looked on to see the sacrifice slain, to see the priest receive the blood, to see the victim laid on the fire; and there was God’s approbation by his divine presence being there. What is it with the Church now? Believers in Christ, having redemption in his blood, joined to him and one Spirit; that same God the Father that put him to grief, is the same God the Father that made his soul an offering for sin, and is our God and Father, who will rest in his love; and, strange as it may appear, he loveth every member of Christ as he loves Jesus Christ his dear Son. How is it worded? “Thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me.” Do you believe it? Is it more than hearsay, that God the Father loves you and me as he loves Jesus Christ? I do not think it is in a separate way, though we take it personally to ourselves; but it was to Christ and the Church in union to him. God saith, “*Yea*,” he swears to it, “*Yea*, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.” Take notice of another sweet mercy in connection with this. Now the name Moses signifies “drawn out.” Now we should never have moved out of death, nor out of enmity, nor have had any longings or desires after Christ and salvation, if God had not drawn us out; and he saith, “With loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” And thus we express it, whether in the dark or light, crooked things or straight, death or dying, “Draw me, we will run after thee.” We no doubt at times talk about going to the Lord. I do not say it is wrong; and I love to go to him with all my

troubles and sorrows. He never refuses me, nor rejects me as being too vile, though I have been constrained to tell it all out to him. But he never frowned on me, but I have thought he did. But here is the glorious secret, “With loving-kindness have I drawn thee.” This is something like the dear woman that had the bloody issue. She came behind him in the crowd; there his drawing was manifested, for nothing could keep her from coming to Jesus. And if you have a broken heart, and a heart full of hungry desires, there is nothing can keep you from Jesus Christ. You may have many enemies, and many obstacles, that try to prevent your coming, but you will be like the dear woman; she not only came to him, but she pressed through the crowd and touched him; and Jesus said, “Virtue is gone out of me.” Where did it go? Into that poor creature’s heart. Then mark with me, a sound heart is the life of the flesh. But this poor woman had an infirmity, and so have we; that poor woman had a broken heart, and so we have. And there was only one object and one subject that she desired, or that could do her good. Is it not so with you and me? All the physicians in the world must go into the back-ground — it must be Jesus only; and “let the God of my salvation be exalted.” It is really more sweet and precious to me than ever it was — Jesus only. Now how is it with us day by day? There is always something pressing against us; there is always something to exercise the mind with, and there is always something to try, vex, and tease us; yet if we had not these things we should not feel our need of Jesus Christ as we do now; and nothing can unfit us for him, the friend of publicans and sinners. “Jehovah Rophi, I am the Lord that healeth thee.”

Let me be familiar with you on this sweet and precious part of experience. Now, when we have been wounded, and have called in some one to attend to it, did they tell us to look at the wound, and it would get healed? I think not. And so it is with our precious Lord Jesus, amidst all we are the subject of, though our wounds may be rankling, yea, our sores may run in the night; but here is the command, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and beside me there is no saviour.” Mind, it is no use to look down to the earth, to see the sun or the moon; you must

look up; and we direct our prayer to the Lord, and look up; and it is certain, if we look up, we are not looking at ourselves. And I will tell you another thing — and you that are parents will know what I mean — that we never taught our children to walk by telling them to look at their feet; and God’s children learn to walk by looking up; and by looking up we look over all mountain tops; and by looking up we behold the Lamb of God, see Jesus, yea, behold the King in his beauty; there is the attraction and the drawing, that we may increase in the knowledge of the Son of God. I have heard of some, and I think I have known such, that have been satisfied with what they have attained to, and that required no more instruction concerning God’s truths and the experience of them; and I have known some that have set down the preaching of the word as nothing, for they knew all they wanted. But may God keep you and me from settling on our lees; rather let us have thorns in the nest, and be stirred up that we may seek the Lord, and cry unto him, casting all our care upon him, for he careth for us. And let me quote in connection with this, and it is a most precious and heart-comforting truth, “Be careful for nothing.” This is what I call the dear effect arising from casting all our care upon the Lord. Why? “He careth for you.” But are we to stop there, and live like libertines, without the Word of God? Nay. “But by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known unto the Lord.” And I hope, trust, and believe, that as we belong to Christ, we shall have more than one request to the Lord every day. Why, I love to walk praying, to sit praying, to kneel praying; and I cannot live without praying, but I do not live by it; I live by life, I pray because of the life, and the life is more than meat. I would just draw an inference from the testimony of the Holy Ghost concerning the movements of the hidden man of the heart, the life communicated. What did the Lord say about it, in John iv., when he talked to the poor woman as he sat thus on the well? the disciples wondered at it, and well they might, for she was a Samaritan. What is the mercy? “The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into eternal life.” Have you had any springing up lately? or else is it as we read of in

another place, “The stone was on the well’s mouth,” and the damsel could not remove it? Who did it? Jacob. And our almighty Jacob, Jesus, the Son of God, hath all power in heaven, and on earth, and “His grace is sufficient for us, his strength is made perfect in weakness.” “I have redeemed thee.” Jesus only, the most high God, is our Redeemer. Whatever he did admits of no alteration, and it stands the same for ever, He redeemed the Church from all iniquity, though iniquity may plague and tease us; and I have wished, thousands of times, there was no sin, iniquity, nor transgression. Yet, remember, these things work in us that we may know the preciousness of Jesus and redemption. At the time when everything appears in confusion, and every evil apparently going on, yet then we are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; not only so, but the glorious Redeemer is living in the presence of God for us. It hath often comforted my heart, when thinking, that God the Father never looks at me but as I am in Christ Jesus, in all the fulness of eternal redemption and salvation; and he beholds you and me, in union with Christ, in all the perfections of the Lamb of God; and himself is our holiness, “made of God, unto us, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that, as it is written, he that glorieth let him glory in the Lord.” I know this; if you belong to Christ you will say the same. “I will make my boast in the Lord,” and will sing, “We have salvation in him, with eternal glory.” What did our Lord purchase us from? From the power of the law, and the inflexibility of the justice of God, by whom we should have been held, not only through time, but to all eternity; therefore, remember, when we sinned we fell, and came under the law, consequently, under the curse, and divine justice reigned over us, and shut us up in prison, and would have kept us there, had it not been that Jesus lived and died; then the lawful (not lawless) captive was delivered. Who delivered them? He that redeemed them. How is it worded? “Deliver him from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom;” “And the Deliverer shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” As he hath turned away ungodliness from Jacob, ungodliness can never come near Jacob; and as

the Lord turned away ungodliness it is that we should live holy in Christ Jesus, worship God in spirit, and rejoice in Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh. May our minds be led, in meditations sweet, of these precious and divine realities.

When the Lord brought his children into the promised land, there is a sweet expression concerning Joshua circumcising them — that it was to roll away the reproach of Egypt. Is this done concerning the Church? Blessed be God it is. How was it done? When the Redeemer said to his God and Father, “Reproach hath broken my heart;” so we are free from reproach. A knowledge of this will make our Jesus Christ most precious. We often reproach ourselves, and we are often reproached by others; but only think, the Lord has rolled away our reproach, and reproach broke the heart of our most glorious Christ. I tell you, poor sinners, these truths, realized in the heart, will not only keep us in peace with God, but will keep us from finding fault with one another, and we shall sing, “Let the God of my salvation be exalted.” And he also saith, “The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me.” Now, as the Lord leads us on in the glorious secret, in peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, he has not only redeemed us from all iniquity, and removed the iniquity of that land in one day, but he has redeemed us unto God by his blood, and has redeemed us from death and the curse of the law. Then “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?” They may bring charges against you, and they may seem to stick close to you, and Satan may tempt to lay it on you; but stop a little, do not attempt to rub these dirty things off, let them dry, and they will soon fall off; we have no need to trouble ourselves about it. “Then happy is he that is reproached for the sake of Jesus Christ.” Yes, let us rejoice, and be exceeding glad, as we are living for the Lord. Not one stain of sin, nor one particle of anything shall ever rest on a child of God to bring him into condemnation before his God. “I have called thee by thy name.” Then it is evident we did not procure our own name, nor receive it from our father and mother naturally. Our names, as creatures, may be emblazoned on brass, and it may continue for many

years, like the great and noble, who have their escutcheons, with their names, handed down to their successors; but they are gone, and their name, and they with their fame, are separated, and become extinct for ever. Where is our name? If we are the children of God, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life. The devil could never look into that book, though he can quote scripture; he cannot read our names there, but he reads to us our name sinner; and I have had many lectures from him until I have trembled from head to foot. But now, hear what the Lord saith of the name on a particular occasion, in Isa. xlix.; and he asks a question, and answers it, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands," &c. Then, it is certain, that God cannot look upon his hands without seeing our names thereon; and "All thy saints are in his hands;" and "I will hold thee with my hand." These are some of the mysteries for faith; they warm the heart, and animate the mind —

"Makes sovereign mercy dear to me,
And Jesus all in all."

"I have called thee by thy name." You, who are in the habit of searching the scriptures, know what name he has called his Church. In one place he calls her his Jedediah, which signifies, "my delight is in her." Now, many like to talk about the titles of Jesus Christ; but I would say, these are personal names, not titles. If we talk about titles we may look at one or two things. Now the word king appears to be a title, yet it is a personal name; and so is a prince; but God also saith, she is my love and dove, that will kill a sinner to himself; it will make him lively; it will constrain a sinner to shout, and it will constrain him to laugh and sing; it will constrain him to weep, and although he walks sorrowing, yet always rejoicing in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh. Then notice another mercy: it is generally to be observed, that every family has a personal name; and the family name is handed down to posterity; but if there is no seed the name

becomes extinct. Now, think of our everlasting Father, think of the children of God, of whom Jesus saith, "I will write my new name upon them;" they are called by his name. The Lord gave no wrong name to his people. He not only calls the Church the married wife, but he calls her his spouse, and he declares she is his fair one. "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." I am very glad of that. Why? "I am black, but comely." Did you ever take notice of what is said of Jacob's flock, how he had the spotted and speckled, &c., to be his flock. There is always something in God's Word to warm a sinner's heart. Now there are many that will talk about their supposed spots; but we will say to the Lord "I am black," and he will tell us about his purity, his holiness, his grace, and his mercy; then we shall sing, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." As that name is written in the Lamb's book of life, no one has access to it but the Holy Three, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; and none can read that name with their spectacles of duty faith religion; but, as the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, we see light in his light; and when God in his light puts us to read our name, it is then the name of Jesus Christ becomes a sweet savour, like the very ointment poured forth; down we sink at his dear feet, and we sing, "Let the God of my salvation be exalted." We are the property of none but the Lord; no one in heaven or on earth has any right to us but the Lord.

Now I must quote part of the next verse, for we may feel a little more of it in the coming year than we have felt before; "When thou passest" — not stop in the middle, and be drowned, but — "when thou *passest through* the waters, I will be with thee." We may go overboard, like Jonah, and we may sink to the bottom, but nothing can drown God's children; but we read of some that are drowned in perdition. Think of the greatness of the mercy, "When thou walkest through the fire (do not be afraid of it) thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour." Now look at the 4th verse—and it will never alter, no more than our most glorious Christ can, and it is most blessed — "Because thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give

men for thee;” and he hath given the man Christ Jesus for us, and people for our life. Amen.

Now, let me speak a word or two to you in love. I shall never, while I live on the earth, forget God’s Church in London. I have had reason (and I have done it thousands of times) to bless God on their behalf; the Lord brought us together, and it is his good pleasure that we should be separated, as to bodily presence; but there can be no separation to us, as we are all one in Christ Jesus. One said, “If I go up to heaven thou art there, and if I take the wings of the wind, and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth, thou art there also;” and although distance will prevent us seeing one another, it will not prevent intercourse one with another in spirit, when pouring out our hearts before God; and when worshipping God, in spirit and in truth, nothing can intervene there. Then let me add, and may you and me lie submissive in his hands, and wait, and watch; and may the Lord keep us from speaking unadvisedly with our lips; but in oneness of spirit say, “It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.” I thank many for their great kindness towards me; not only so, but with bearing with my infirmities; and it is a mercy to bear one with another. What can I say but only this, “The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock , and let the God of my salvation be exalted.” Should we never meet more in the flesh, the time is just come when we shall sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of our Father — sorrows, sighings, troubles, cryings, afflictions, vexations and temptations will cease, and we shall be for ever with the Lord. Hallelujah.

We will close by singing the following verse: —

“Jesus, attend before we part,
Be this the language of each heart,
For that immortal song prepare;
Let us thy great salvation know,
And if we meet no more below,

Grant us a happy meeting there.”
