



Spurgeon's Sermons Volume 22: 1876

by

Charles Spurgeon

About *Spurgeon's Sermons Volume 22: 1876* by Charles Spurgeon

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Christ the End of the Law

A Sermon

(No. 1325)

Delivered on Lord's-Day Morning, November 19th, 1876, by

C. H. SPURGEON,

At the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”—Romans 10:4.

YOU REMEMBER we spoke last Sabbath morning of “the days of the Son of man.” Oh that every Sabbath now might be a day of that kind in the most spiritual sense. I hope that we shall endeavour to make each Lord's Day as it comes round a day of the Lord, by thinking much of Jesus by rejoicing much in him, by labouring for him, and by our growingly importunate prayer, that to him may the gathering of the people be. We may not have very many Sabbaths together, death may soon part us; but while we are able to meet as a Christian assembly, let us never forget that Christ's presence is our main necessity, and let us pray for it and entreat the Lord to vouchsafe that presence always in displays of light, life and love! I become increasingly earnest that every preaching time should be a soul-saving time. I can deeply sympathize with Paul when he said, “My heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved.” We have had so much preaching, but, comparatively speaking, so little believing in Jesus; and if there be no believing in him, neither the law nor the gospel has answered its end, and our labour has been utterly in vain. Some of you have heard, and heard, and heard again, but you have not believed in Jesus. If the gospel had not come to your hearing you could not have been guilty of refusing it. “Have they not heard?” says the apostle. “Yes, verily:” but still “they have not all obeyed the gospel.” Up to this very moment there has been no hearing with the inner ear, and no work of faith in the heart, in the case of many whom we love. Dear friends, is it always to be so? How long is it to be so? Shall there not soon come an end of this reception of the outward means and rejection of the inward grace? Will not your soul soon close in with Christ for present salvation? Break! Break, O heavenly day, upon the benighted ones, for our hearts are breaking over them.

The reason why many do not come to Christ is not because they are not earnest, after a fashion, and thoughtful and desirous to be saved, but because they cannot brook God's way of salvation. “They have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.” We do get them by our exhortation so far on the way that they become desirous to obtain eternal life, but “they have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.” Mark, “submitted themselves,” for it needs submission. Proud man wants to save himself, he believes he can do it, and he will not give over the task till he finds out his own helplessness by unhappy failures. Salvation by grace, to be sued for *in forma pauperis*, to be asked for as an undeserved boon from free, unmerited grace, this it is which the carnal mind will not come to as long as it can help it: I beseech the Lord so to work that some of you may not be able to help it. And oh, I have been praying that, while this morning I am trying to set forth Christ as the end of the law, God may bless it to some hearts, that they may see what Christ did, and may perceive it to be a great deal better than anything they can do; may see what Christ finished, and may become weary of what they themselves have laboured at so long, and have not even well commenced at this day. Perhaps it may please the Lord to enchant them with the perfection

of the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. As Bunyan would say, "It may, perhaps, set their mouths a watering after it," and when a sacred appetite begins it will not be long before the feast is enjoyed. It may be that when they see the raiment of wrought gold, which Jesus so freely bestows on naked souls, they will throw away their own filthy rags which now they hug so closely.

I am going to speak about two things, this morning, as the Spirit of God shall help me: and the first is, *Christ in connection with the law*—he is "the end of the law for righteousness"; and secondly, *ourselves in connection with Christ*—"to everyone that believeth Christ is the end of the law for righteousness."

I. First, then, CHRIST IN CONNECTION WITH THE LAW. The law is that which, as sinners, we have above all things cause to dread; for the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. Towards us the law darts forth devouring flames, for it condemns us, and in solemn terms appoints us a place among the accursed, as it is written, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." Yet, strange infatuation! like the fascination which attracts the gnat to the candle which burns its wings, men by nature fly to the law for salvation, and cannot be driven from it. The law can do nothing else but reveal sin and pronounce condemnation upon the sinner, and yet we cannot get men away from it, even though we show them how sweetly Jesus stands between them and it. They are so enamoured of legal hope that they cling to it when there is nothing to cling to; they prefer Sinai to Calvary, though Sinai has nothing for them but thunders and trumpet warnings of coming judgment. O that for awhile you would listen anxiously while I set forth Jesus my Lord, that you may see the law in him.

Now, what has our Lord to do with the law? He has everything to do with it, for he is its end for the noblest object, namely, for righteousness. He is the "end of the law." What does this mean? I think it signifies three things: first, that Christ is *the purpose and object* of the law; secondly, that he is *the fulfillment* of it; and thirdly, that he is *the termination* of it.

First, then, *our Lord Jesus Christ is the purpose and object of the law*. It was given to lead us to him. The law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, or rather our attendant to conduct us to the school of Jesus. The law is the great net in which the fish are enclosed that they may be drawn out of the element of sin. The law is the stormy wind which drives souls into the harbour or refuge. The law is the sheriff's officer to shut men up in prison for their sin, concluding them all under condemnation in order that they may look to the free grace of God alone for deliverance. This is the object of the law: it empties that grace may fill, and wounds that mercy may heal. It has never been God's intention towards us, as fallen men, that the law should be regarded as a way to salvation to us, for a way of salvation it can never be. Had man never fallen, had his nature remained as God made it, the law would have been most helpful to him to show him the way in which he should walk: and by keeping it he would have lived, for "he that doeth these things shall live in them." But ever since man has fallen the Lord has not proposed to him a way of salvation by works, for he knows it to be impossible to a sinful creature. The law is already broken; and whatever man can do he cannot repair the damage he has already done: therefore

he is out of court as to the hope of merit. The law demands perfection, but man has already fallen short of it; and therefore let him do his best. He cannot accomplish what is absolutely essential. The law is meant to lead the sinner to faith in Christ, by showing the impossibility of any other way. It is the black dog to fetch the sheep to the shepherd, the burning heat which drives the traveller to the shadow of the great rock in a weary land.

Look how the law is adapted to this; for, first of all, *it shows man his sin*. Read the ten commandments and tremble as you read them. Who can lay his own character down side by side with the two tablets of divine precept without at once being convinced that he has fallen far short of the standard? When the law comes home to the soul it is like light in a dark room revealing the dust and the dirt which else had been unperceived. It is the test which detects the presence of the poison of sin in the soul. "I was alive without the law once," said the apostle, "but when the commandment came sin revived and I died." Our comeliness utterly fades away when the law blows upon it. Look at the commandments, I say, and remember how sweeping they are, how spiritual, how far-reaching. They do not merely touch the outward act, but dive into the inner motive and deal with the heart, the mind, the soul. There is a deeper meaning in the commands than appears upon their surface. Gaze into their depths and see how terrible is the holiness which they require. As you understand what the law demands you will perceive how far you are from fulfilling it, and how sin abounds where you thought there was little or none of it. You thought yourself rich and increased in goods and in no need of anything, but when the broken law visits you, your spiritual bankruptcy and utter penury stare you in the face. A true balance discovers short weight, and such is the first effect of the law upon the conscience of man.

The law also shows *the result and mischief of sin*. Look at the types of the old Mosaic dispensation, and see how they were intended to lead men to Christ by making them see their unclean condition and their need of such cleansing as only he can give. Every type pointed to our Lord Jesus Christ. If men were put apart because of disease or uncleanness, they were made to see how sin separated them from God and from his people; and when they were brought back and purified with mystic rites in which were scarlet wool and hyssop and the like, they were made to see how they can only be restored by Jesus Christ, the great High Priest. When the bird was killed that the leper might be clean, the need of purification by the sacrifice of a life was set forth. Every morning and evening a lamb died to tell of daily need of pardon, if God is to dwell with us. We sometimes have fault found with us for speaking too much about *blood*; yet under the old testament the blood seemed to be everything, and was not only spoken of but actually presented to the eye. What does the apostle tell us in the Hebrews? "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people saying, this is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all

things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is not remission.” The blood was on the veil, and on the altar, on the hangings, and on the floor of the tabernacle: no one could avoid seeing it. I resolve to make my ministry of the same character, and more and more sprinkle it with the blood of atonement. Now that abundance of the blood of old was meant to show clearly that sin has so polluted us that without an atonement God is not to be approached: we must come by the way of sacrifice or not at all. We are so unacceptable in ourselves that unless the Lord sees us with the blood of Jesus upon us he must away with us. The old law, with its emblems and figures, set forth many truths as to men’s selves and the coming Saviour, intending by every one of them to preach Christ. If any stopped short of him, they missed the intent and design of the law. Moses leads up to Joshua, and the law ends at Jesus.

Turning our thoughts back again to the moral rather than the ceremonial law, it was intended to teach men *their utter helplessness*. It shows them how short they fall of what they ought to be, and it also shows them, when they look at it carefully, how utterly impossible it is for them to come up to the standard. Such holiness as the law demands no man can reach of himself. “Thy commandment is exceeding broad.” If a man says that he can keep the law, it is because he does not know what the law is. If he fancies that he can ever climb to heaven up the quivering sides of Sinai, surely he can never have seen that burning mount at all. Keep the law! Ah, my brethren, while we are yet talking about it we are breaking it; while we are pretending that we can fulfil its letter, we are violating its spirit, for pride as much breaks the law as lust or murder. “Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one.” “How can he be clean that is born of a woman?” No, soul, thou canst not help thyself in this thing, for since only by perfection thou canst live by the law, and since that perfection is impossible, thou canst not find help in the covenant of works. In grace there is hope, but as a matter of debt there is none, for we do not merit anything but wrath. The law tells us this, and the sooner we know it to be so the better, for the sooner we shall fly to Christ.

The law also shows us *our great need*—our need of cleansing, cleansing with the water and with the blood. It discovers to us our filthiness, and this naturally leads us to feel that we must be washed from it if we are ever to draw near to God. So the law drives us to accept of Christ as the one only person who can cleanse us, and make us fit to stand within the veil in the presence of the Most High. The law is the surgeon’s knife which cuts out the proud flesh that the wound may heal. The law by itself only sweeps and raises the dust, but the gospel sprinkles clean water upon the dust, and all is well in the chamber of the soul. The law kills, the gospel makes alive; the law strips, and then Jesus Christ comes in and robes the soul in beauty and glory. All the commandments, and all the types direct us to Christ, if we will but heed their evident intent. They wean us from self, they put us off from the false basis of self-righteousness, and bring us to know that only in Christ can our help be found. So, first of all, Christ is the end of the law, in that he is its great purpose.

And now, secondly, he is *the law’s fulfillment*. It is impossible for any of us to be saved without righteousness. The God of heaven and earth by immutable necessity

demands righteousness of all his creatures. Now, Christ has come to give to us the righteousness which the law demands, but which it never bestows. In the chapter before us we read of “the righteousness which is of faith,” which is also called “God’s righteousness”; and we read of those who “shall not be ashamed” because they are righteous by believing unto righteousness.” What the law could not do Jesus has done. He provides the righteousness which the law asks for but cannot produce. What an amazing righteousness it must be which is as broad and deep and long and high as the law itself. The commandment is exceeding broad, but the righteousness of Christ is as broad as the commandment, and goes to the end of it. Christ did not come to make the law milder, or to render it possible for our cracked and battered obedience to be accepted as a sort of compromise. The law is not compelled to lower its terms, as though it had originally asked too much; it is holy and just and good, and ought not to be altered in one jot or tittle, nor can it be. Our Lord gives the law all it requires, not a part, for that would be an admission that it might justly have been content with less at first. The law claims complete obedience without one spot or speck, failure, or flaw, and Christ has brought in such a righteousness as that, and gives it to his people. The law demands that the righteousness should be without omission of duty and without commission of sin, and the righteousness which Christ has brought is just such an one that for its sake the great God accepts his people and counts them to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. The law will not be content without spiritual obedience, mere outward compliances will not satisfy. But our Lord’s obedience was as deep as it was broad, for his zeal to do the will of him that sent him consumed him. He says himself, “I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart.” Such righteousness he puts upon all believers. “By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”; righteous to the full, perfect in Christ. We rejoice to wear the costly robe of fair white linen which Jesus has prepared, and we feel that we may stand arrayed in it before the majesty of heaven without a trembling thought. This is something to dwell upon, dear friends. Only as righteous ones can we be saved, but Jesus Christ makes us righteous, and therefore we are saved. He is righteous who believeth on him, even as Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness. “There is therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus,” because they are made righteous in Christ. Yea, the Holy Spirit by the mouth of Paul challengeth all men, angels, and devils, to lay anything to the charge of God’s elect, since Christ hath died. O law, when thou demandest of me a perfect righteousness, I, being a believer, present it to thee; for through Christ Jesus faith is accounted unto me for righteousness. The righteousness of Christ is mine, for I am one with him by faith, and this is the name wherewith he shall be called—“The Lord our righteousness.”

Jesus has thus fulfilled the original demands of the law, but you know, brethren, that since we have broken the law there are other demands. For the remission of past sins something more is asked now than present and future obedience. Upon us, on account of our sins, the curse has been pronounced, and a penalty has been incurred. It is written that he “will by no means clear the guilty,” but every transgression and iniquity shall have its just punishment and reward. Here, then, let

us admire that the Lord Jesus Christ is the end of the law as to penalty. That curse and penalty are awful things to think upon, but Christ has ended all their evil, and thus discharged us from all the consequences of sin. As far as every believer is concerned the law demands no penalty and utters no curse. The believer can point to the Great Surety on the tree of Calvary, and say, "See there, oh law, there is the vindication of divine justice which I offer to thee. Jesus pouring out his heart's blood from his wounds and dying on my behalf is my answer to thy claims, and I know that I shall be delivered from wrath through him." The claims of the law both as broken and unbroken Christ has met: both the positive and the penal demands are satisfied in him. This was a labour worthy of a God, and lo, the incarnate God has achieved it. He has finished the transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting righteousness. All glory be to his name.

Moreover, not only has the penalty been paid, but Christ has put great and special honour upon the law in so doing. I venture to say that if the whole human race had kept the law of God and not one of them had violated it, the law would not stand in so splendid a position of honour as it does today when the man Christ Jesus, who is also the Son of God, has paid obeisance to it. God himself, incarnate, has in his life, and yet more in his death, revealed the supremacy of law; he has shown that not even love nor sovereignty can set aside justice. Who shall say a word against the law to which the Lawgiver himself submits? Who shall now say that it is too severe when he who made it submits himself to its penalties. Because he was found in fashion as a man, and was our representative, the Lord demanded from his own Son perfect obedience to the law, and the Son voluntarily bowed himself to it without a single word, taking no exception to his task. "Yea, thy law is my delight," saith he, and he proved it to be so by paying homage to it even to the full. Oh wondrous law under which even Emmanuel serves! Oh matchless law whose yoke even the Son of God does not disdain to bear, but being resolved to save his chosen was made under the law, lived under it and died under it, "obedient to death, even the death of the cross."

The law's stability also has been secured by Christ. That alone can remain which is proved to be just, and Jesus has proved the law to be so, magnifying it and making it honourable. He says, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." I shall have to show you how he has made an end of the law in another sense, but as to the settlement of the eternal principles of right and wrong, Christ's life and death have achieved this forever. "Yea, we established the law." said Paul, "we do not make void the law through faith." The law is proved to be holy and just by the very gospel of faith, for the gospel which faith believes in does not alter or lower the law, but teaches us how it was to the uttermost fulfilled. Now shall the law stand fast forever and ever, since even to save elect man God will not alter it. He had a people, chosen, beloved, and ordained to life, yet he would not save them at the expense of one principle of right. They were sinful, and how could they be justified

unless the law was suspended or changed? Was, then, the law changed? It seemed as if it must be so, if man was to be saved, but Jesus Christ came and showed us how the law could stand firm as a rock, and yet the redeemed could be justly saved by infinite mercy. In Christ we see both mercy and justice shining full orbed, and yet neither of them in any degree eclipsing the other. The law has all it ever asked, as it ought to have, and yet the Father of all mercies sees all his chosen saved as he determined they should be through the death of his Son. Thus I have tried to show you how Christ is the fulfillment of the law to its utmost end. May the Holy Ghost bless the teaching.

And now, thirdly, he is the end of the law in the sense that he is *the termination of it*. He has terminated it in two senses. First of all, his people are not under it as a covenant of life. "We are not under the law, but under grace." The old covenant as it stood with father Adam was "This do and thou shalt live": its command he did not keep, and consequently he did not live, nor do we live in him, since in Adam all died. The old covenant was broken, and we became condemned thereby, but now, having suffered death in Christ, we are no more under it, but are dead to it. Brethren, at this present moment, although we rejoice to do good works, we are not seeking life through them, we are not hoping to obtain divine favour by our own goodness, nor even to keep ourselves in the love of God by any merit of our own. Chosen, not for our works, but according to the eternal will and good pleasure of God; called, not of works, but by the Spirit of God, we desire to continue in this grace and return no more to the bondage of the old covenant. Since we have put our trust in an atonement provided and applied by grace through Christ Jesus, we are no longer slaves but children, not working to be saved, but saved already, and working because we are saved. Neither that which we do, nor even that which the Spirit of God worketh in us is to us the ground and basis of the love of God toward us, since he loved us from the first, because he would love us, unworthy though we were; and he loves us still in Christ, and looks upon us not as we are in ourselves, but as we are in him; washed in his blood and covered in his righteousness. Ye are not under the law, Christ has taken you from the servile bondage of a condemning covenant and made you to receive the adoption of children, so that now ye cry, Abba, Father.

Again, Christ is the terminator of the law, for we are no longer under its curse. The law cannot curse a believer, it does not know how to do it; it blesses him, yea, and he shall be blessed; for as the law demands righteousness and looks at the believer in Christ, and sees that Jesus has given him all the righteousness it demands, the law is bound to pronounce him blessed. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Oh, the joy of being redeemed from the curse of the law by Christ, who was "made a curse for us," as it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Do ye, my brethren, understand the sweet mystery of salvation? Have you ever seen Jesus standing in your place that you may stand in his place? Christ accused and Christ condemned, and Christ led out to die, and Christ smitten of the Father, even to the death, and then you cleared, justified, delivered from the curse, because the curse has spent itself on your

Redeemer. You are admitted to enjoy the blessing because the righteousness which was his is now transferred to you that you may be blessed of the Lord world without end. Do let us triumph and rejoice in this evermore. Why should we not? And yet some of God's people get under the law as to their feelings, and begin to fear that because they are conscious of sin they are not saved, whereas it is written, "he justifieth the ungodly." For myself, I love to live near a sinner's Saviour. If my standing before the Lord depended upon what I am in myself and what good works and righteousness I could bring, surely I should have to condemn myself a thousand times a day. But to get away from that and to say, "I have believed in Jesus Christ and therefore righteousness is mine," this is peace, rest, joy, and the beginning of heaven! When one attains to this experience, his love to Jesus Christ begins to flame up, and he feels that if the Redeemer has delivered him from the curse of the law he will not continue in sin, but he will endeavour to live in newness of life. We are not our own, we are bought with a price, and we would therefore glorify God in our bodies and in our spirits, which are the Lord's. Thus much upon Christ in connection with the law.

II. Now, secondly, OURSELVES IN CONNECTION WITH CHRIST—for "Christ is the end of the law *to everyone that believeth.*" Now see the point "to everyone that believeth," there the stress lies. Come, man, woman, dost thou believe? No weightier question can be asked under heaven. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" And what is it to believe? It is not merely to accept a set of doctrines and to say that such and such a creed is yours, and there and then to put it on the shelf and forget it. To believe is, to trust, to confide, to depend upon, to rely upon, to rest in. Dost thou believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead? Dost thou believe that he stood in the sinner's stead and suffered the just for the unjust? Dost thou believe that he is able to save to the uttermost them that come unto God by him? And dost thou therefore lay the whole weight and stress of thy soul's salvation upon him, yea, upon him alone? Ah then, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to thee, and thou art righteous. In the righteousness of God thou art clothed if thou believest. It is of no use to bring forward anything else if you are not believing, for nothing will avail. If faith be absent the essential thing is wanting: sacraments, prayers, Bible reading, hearings of the gospel, you may heap them together, high as the stars, into a mountain, huge as high Olympus, but they are all mere chaff if faith be not there. It is thy believing or not believing which must settle the matter. Dost thou look away from thyself to Jesus for righteousness? If thou dost he is the end of the law to thee.

Now observe that there is no question raised about the previous character, for it is written, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to *every one that believeth.*" But, Lord, this man before he believed was a persecutor and injurious, he raged and raved against the saints and haled them to prison and sought their blood. Yes, beloved friend, and that is the very man who wrote these words by the Holy Ghost, "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." So if I address one here this morning whose life has been defiled with every sin, and stained with every transgression we can conceive of, yet I say unto such, remember "all manner of sin and of blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." If thou believest in the Lord

Jesus Christ thine iniquities are blotted out, for the blood of Jesus Christ, God's dear Son, cleanseth us from all sin. This is the glory of the gospel that it is a sinner's gospel; good news of blessing not for those without sin, but for those who confess and forsake it. Jesus came into the world, not to reward the sinless, but to seek and to save that which was lost; and he, being lost and being far from God, who cometh nigh to God by Christ, and believeth in him, will find that he is able to bestow righteousness upon the guilty. He is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, and therefore to the poor harlot that believeth, to the drunkard of many years standing that believeth, to the thief, the liar, and the scoffer who believeth, to those who have aforetime rioted in sin, but now turn from it to trust in him. But I do not know that I need mention such cases as these; to me the most wonderful fact is that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness *to me*, for I believe in him. I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day.

Another thought arises from the text, and that is, that there is nothing said by way of qualification as to the strength of the faith. He is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth, whether he is Little Faith or Greatheart. Jesus protects the rear rank as well as the vanguard. There is no difference between one believer and another as to justification. So long as there is a connection between you and Christ the righteousness of God is yours. The link may be very like a film, a spider's line of trembling faith, but, if it runs all the way from the heart to Christ, divine grace can and will flow along the most slender thread. It is marvelous how fine the wire may be that will carry the electric flash. We may want a cable to carry a message across the sea, but that is for the protection of the wire, the wire which actually carries the message is a slender thing. If thy faith be of the mustard-seed kind, if it be only such as tremblingly touches the Saviour's garment's hem, if thou canst only say "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," if it be but the faith of sinking Peter, or weeping Mary, yet if it be faith in Christ, he will be the end of the law for righteousness to thee as well as to the chief of the apostles.

If this be so then, beloved friends, all of us who believe are righteous. Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ we have obtained the righteousness which those who follow the works of the law know nothing of. We are not completely sanctified, would God we were; we are not quit of sin in our members, though we hate it; but still for all that, in the sight of God, we are truly righteous and being qualified by faith we have peace with God. Come, look up, ye believers that are burdened with a sense of sin. While you chasten yourselves and mourn your sin, do not doubt your Saviour, nor question his righteousness. You are black, but do not stop there, go on to say as the spouse did, "I am black, but comely."

"Though in ourselves deform'd we are,
And black as Kedar's tents appear,
Yet, when we put Thy beauties on,
Fair as the courts of Solomon."

Now, mark that the connection of our text assures us that being righteous we are saved; for what does it say here, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord

Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be *saved*." He who is justified is saved, or what were the benefit of justification? Over thee, O believer, God hath pronounced the verdict "*saved*," and none shall reverse it. You are saved from sin and death and hell; you are saved even now, with a present salvation; "He hath saved us and called us with a holy calling." Feel the transports of it at this hour. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God."

And now I have done when I have said just this. If any one here thinks he can save himself, and that his own righteousness will suffice before God, I would affectionately beg him not to insult his Saviour. If your righteousness sufficeth, why did Christ come here to work one out? Will you for a moment compare your righteousness with the righteousness of Jesus Christ? What likeness is there between you and him? As much as between an emmet and an archangel. Nay, not so much as that: as much as between night and day, hell and heaven. Oh, if I had a righteousness of my own that no one could find fault with, I would voluntarily fling it away to have the righteousness of Christ, but as I have none of my own I do rejoice the more to have my Lord's. When Mr. Whitefield first preached at Kingswood, near Bristol, to the colliers, he could see when their hearts began to be touched by the gutters of white made by the tears as they ran down their black cheeks. He saw they were receiving the gospel, and he writes in his diary "as these poor colliers had no righteousness of their own they therefore gloried in Him who came to save publicans and sinners." Well, Mr. Whitefield, that is true of the colliers, but it is equally true of many of us here, who may not have had black faces, but we had black hearts. We can truly say that we also rejoice to cast away our own righteousness and count it dross and dung that we may win Christ, and be found in him. In him is our sole hope and only trust.

Last of all, for any of you to reject the righteousness of Christ must be to perish everlastingly, because it cannot be that God will accept you or your pretended righteousness when you have refused the real and divine righteousness which he sets before you in his Son. If you could go up to the gates of heaven, and the angel were to say to you, "What title have you to entrance here?" and you were to reply, "I have a righteousness of my own," then for you to be admitted would be to decide that your righteousness was on a par with that of Immanuel himself. Can that ever be? Do you think that God will ever allow such a lie to be sanctioned? Will he let a poor wretched sinner's counterfeit righteousness pass current side by side with the fine gold of Christ's perfection? Why was the fountain filled with blood if you need no washing? Is Christ a superfluity? Oh, it cannot be. You must have Christ's righteousness or be unrighteous, and being unrighteous you will be unsaved, and being unsaved you must remain lost forever and ever.

What! has it all come to this, then, that I am to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness, and to be made just through faith? Yes, that is it: that is the whole of it. What! trust Christ alone and then live as I like! You cannot live in sin after you have trusted Jesus, for the act of faith brings with it a change of nature and a renewal of your soul. The Spirit of God who leads you to believe will also change your heart. You spoke of "living as you like," you will like to live very differently

from what you do now. The things you loved before your conversion you will hate when you believe, and the things you hated you will love. Now, you are trying to be good, and you make great failures, because your heart is alienated from God; but when once you have received salvation through the blood of Christ, your heart will love God, and then you will keep his commandments, and they will be no longer grievous to you. A change of heart is what you want, and you will never get it except through the covenant of grace. There is not a word about conversion in the old covenant, we must look to the new covenant for that, and here it is—“Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and an new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.” This is one of the greatest covenant promises, and the Holy Ghost preforms it in the chosen. Oh that the Lord would sweetly persuade you to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that promise and all the other covenant engagements shall be fulfilled to your soul. The Lord bless you! Spirit of God, send thy blessing on these poor words of mine for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Romans 10.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—231, 535, 647.

Christ the Conqueror of Satan

A Sermon

(No. 1326)

Delivered on Lord's-Day Morning, November 26th, 1876, by

C. H. SPURGEON,

At the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”—Genesis 3:16

THIS IS THE FIRST gospel sermon that was ever delivered upon the surface of this earth. It was memorable discourse indeed, with Jehovah himself for the preacher, and the whole human race and the prince of darkness for the audience. It must be worthy of our heartiest attention.

Is it not remarkable that this great gospel promise should have been delivered so soon after the transgression? As yet no sentence had been pronounced upon either of the two human offenders, but the promise was given under the form of a sentence pronounced upon the serpent. Not yet had the woman been condemned to painful travail, or the man to exhausting labour, or even the soil to the curse of thorn and thistle. Truly “mercy rejoiceth against judgment.” Before the Lord had said “dust thou art and unto dust thou shalt return,” he was pleased to say that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head. Let us rejoice, then, in the swift mercy of God, which in the early watches of the night of sin came with comfortable words unto us.

These words were not directly spoken to Adam and Eve, but they were directed distinctly to the serpent himself, and that by way of punishment to him for what he had done. It was a day of cruel triumph to him such joy as his dark mind is capable of had filled him, for had he indulged his malice, and gratified his spite. He had in the worst sense destroyed a part of God’s works, he had introduced sin into the new world, he had stamped the human race with his own image, and gained new forces to promote rebellion and to multiply transgression, and therefore he felt that sort of gladness which a fiend can know who bears a hell within him. But now God comes in, takes up the quarrel personally, and causes him to be disgraced on the very battle-field upon which he had gained a temporary success. He tells the dragon that he will undertake to deal with him; this quarrel shall not be between the serpent and man, but between God and the serpent. God saith, in solemn words, “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed,” and he promised that there shall rise in fulness of time a champion, who, though he suffer, shall smite in a vital part the power of evil, and bruise the serpent’s head. This was the more, it seems to me, a comfortable message of mercy to Adam and Eve, because they would feel sure that the tempter would be punished, and as that punishment would involve blessing for them, the vengeance due to the serpent would be the

guarantee of mercy to themselves. Perhaps, however, by thus obliquely giving the promise, the Lord meant to say, "Not for your sakes do I this, O fallen man and woman, nor for the sake of your descendants; but for my own name and honour's sake, that it be not profaned and blasphemed amongst the fallen spirits. I undertake to repair the mischief which has been caused by the tempter, that my name and my glory may not be diminished among the immortal spirits who look down upon the scene." All this would be very humbling but yet consolatory to our parents if they thought of it, seeing that mercy given for God's sake is always to our troubled apprehension more sure than any favour which could be promised to us for our own sake. The divine sovereignty and glory afford us a stronger foundation of hope than merit, even if merit can be supposed to exist.

Now we must note concerning this first gospel sermon that on it the earliest believers stayed themselves. This was all that Adam had by way of revelation, and all that Abel had received. This one lone star shone in Abel's sky; he looked up to it and he believed. By its light he spelt out "sacrifice," and therefore he brought of the firstlings of his flock and laid them on the altar, and proved in his own person how the seed of the serpent hated the seed of the woman, for his brother slew him for his testimony. Although Enoch the seventh from Adam prophesied concerning the second advent, yet he does not appear to have uttered anything new concerning the first coming, so that still this one promise remained as man's sole word of hope. The torch which flamed within the gates of Eden just before man was driven forth lit up the world to all believers until the Lord was pleased to give more light, and to renew and enlarge the revelation of his covenant, when he spake to his servant Noah. Those hoary fathers who lived before the flood rejoiced in the mysterious language of our text, and resting on it, they died in faith. Nor, brethren, must you think it a slender revelation, for, if you attentively consider, it is wonderfully full of meaning. If it had been on my heart to handle it doctrinally this morning, I think I could have shown you that it contains all the gospel. There lie within it, as an oak lies within an acorn, all the great truths which make up the gospel of Christ. Observe that here is the grand mystery of incarnation. Christ is that seed of the woman who is here spoken of; and there is a hint not darkly given as to how that Incarnation would be effected. Jesus was not shadowed of the Holy Ghost, and "the holy thing" which was born of her was as to his humanity the seed of the woman only; as it is written, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel." The promise plainly teaches that the deliverer would be born of a woman, and carefully viewed, it also foreshadows the divine method of the Redeemer's conception and birth. So also is the doctrine of the two seeds plainly taught here—"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, between thy seed and her seed." There was evidently to be in the world a seed of the woman on God's side against the serpent, and a seed of the serpent that should always be upon the evil side even as it is unto this day. The church of God and the synagogue of Satan both exist. We see an Abel and a Cain, an Isaac and an Ishmael, a Jacob and an Esau; those that are born after the flesh, being the children of their father the devil, for his works they do, but those that are born again—being born after the Spirit, after the power

of the life of Christ, are thus in Christ Jesus the seed of the woman, and contend earnestly against the dragon and his seed. Here, too, the great fact of the sufferings of Christ is clearly foretold—"Thou shalt bruise his heel." Within the compass of those words we find the whole story of our Lord's sorrows from Bethlehem to Calvary. "It shall bruise thy head": there is the breaking of Satan's regal power, there is the clearing away of sin, there is the destruction of death by resurrection, there is the leading of captivity captive in the ascension, there is the victory of truth in the world through the descent of the Spirit, and there is the latter-day glory in which Satan shall be bound, and there is, lastly, the casting of the evil one and all his followers into the lake of fire. The conflict and the conquest are both in the compass of these few fruitful words. They may not have been fully understood by those who first heard them, but to us they are now full of light. The text at first looks like a flint, hard and cold; but sparks fly from it plentifully, for hidden fires of infinite love and grace lie concealed within. Over this promise of a gracious God we ought to rejoice exceedingly.

We do not know what our first parents understood by it, but we may be certain that they gathered a great amount of comfort from it. They must have understood that they were not then and there to be destroyed, because the Lord had spoken of a "seed." They would argue that it must be needful that Eve should live if there should be a seed from her. They understood, too, that if that seed was to overcome the serpent and bruise his head, it must auger good to themselves: they could not fail to see that there was some great, some mysterious benefit to be conferred upon them by the victory which their seed would achieve over the instigator of their ruin. They went on in faith upon this, and were comforted in travail and in toil, and I doubt not both Adam and his wife in the faith thereof entered into everlasting rest.

This morning I intend to handle this text in three ways. First, we shall notice *its facts*; secondly, we shall consider *the experience within the heart of each believer which tallies to those facts*; and then, thirdly, *the encouragement* which the text and its connection as a whole afford to us.

I. THE FACTS. The facts are four, and I call your earnest attention to them. The first is *Enmity was excited*. The text begins, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." They had been very friendly; the woman and the serpent had conversed together. She thought at the time that the serpent was her friend; and she was so much his friend that she took his advice in the teeth of God's precept, and was willing to believe bad things of the great Creator, because this wicked, crafty serpent insinuated the same. Now, at the moment when God spake, that friendship between the woman and the serpent had already in a measure come to an end, for she had accused the serpent to God, and said, "The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat." So far, so good. The friendship of sinners does not last long; they have already begun to quarrel, and now the Lord comes in and graciously takes advantage of the quarrel which had commenced, and says, "I will carry this disagreement a great deal further, I will put enmity between thee and the woman." Satan counted on man's descendants being his confederates, but God would break up this covenant with hell, and raise up a seed which should war against the Satanic power. This we have here God's

first declaration that he will set up a rival kingdom to oppose the tyranny of sin and Satan, that he will create in the hearts of a chosen seed an enmity against evil, so that they shall fight against it, and with many a struggle and pain shall overcome the prince of darkness. The divine Spirit has abundantly achieved this plan and purpose of the Lord, combating the fallen angel by a glorious man: making man to be Satan's foe and conqueror. Henceforth the woman was to hate the evil one, and I do not doubt that she did so. She had abundant cause for so doing, and as often as she thought of him it would be with infinite regret that she could have listened to his malicious and deceitful talk. The woman's seed has also evermore had enmity against the evil one. I mean not the carnal seed, for Paul tells us, "They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." The carnal seed of the man and the woman are not meant, but the spiritual seed, even Christ Jesus and those who are in him. Wherever you meet these, they hate the serpent with a perfect hatred. We would if we could destroy from our souls every work of Satan, and out of this poor afflicted world of ours we would root up every evil which he has planted. That seed of the woman, that glorious *One*,—for he speaks not of seeds as of many but of seed that is one,—you know how he abhorred the devil and all his devices. There was enmity between Christ and Satan, for he came to destroy the works of the devil and to deliver those who are under bondage to him. For that purpose was he born; for that purpose did he live; for that purpose did he die; for that purpose he has gone into the glory, and for that purpose he will come again, that everywhere he may find out his adversary and utterly destroy him and his works from amongst the sons of men. This putting of the enmity between the two seeds was the commencement of the plan of mercy, the first act in the programme of grace. Of the woman's seed it was henceforth said, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Then comes the second prophecy, which has also turned into a fact, namely *the coming of the champion*. The seed of the woman by promise is to champion the cause, and oppose the dragon. That seed is the Lord Jesus Christ. The prophet Micah saith, "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah; though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth." To none other than the babe which was born in Bethlehem of the blessed Virgin can the words of the prophecy refer. She it was who did conceive and bear a son, and it is concerning her son that we sing, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." On the memorable night at Bethlehem, when angels sang in heaven, the seed of the woman appeared, and as soon as ever he saw the light the old serpent, the devil, entered into the heart of Herod if possible to slay him, but the Father preserved him, and suffered none to lay hands on him. As soon as he publicly came forward upon the stage of action, thirty years after, Satan met him foot to foot. You know the story of the temptation in the wilderness, and how there the woman's seed

fought with him who was a liar from the beginning. The devil assailed him thrice with all the artillery of flattery, malice, craft and falsehood, but the peerless champion stood unwounded, and chased his foeman from the field. Then our Lord set up his kingdom, and called one and another unto him, and carried the war into the enemy's country. In divers places he cast out devils. He spake to the wicked and unclean spirit and said, "I charge thee come out of him," and the demon was expelled. Legions of devils flew before him: they sought to hide themselves in swine to escape from the terror of his presence. "Art thou come to torment us before our time?" was their cry when the wonder-working Christ dislodged them from the bodies which they tormented. Yea, and he made his own disciples mighty against the evil one, for in his name they cast out devils, till Jesus said, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." Then there came a second personal conflict, for I take it that Gethsemane's sorrows were to a great degree caused by a personal assault of Satan, for our Master said, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." He said also, "The Prince of this world cometh." What a struggle it was. Though Satan had nothing in Christ, yet did he seek if possible to lead him away from completing his great sacrifice, and there did our Master sweat as it were great drops of blood, falling to the ground, in the agony which it cost him to contend with the fiend. Then it was that our Champion began the last fight of all and won it to the bruising of the serpent's head. Nor did he end till he had spoiled principalities and powers and made a show of them openly.

"Now is the hour of darkness past,
Christ has assumed his reigning power;
Behold the great accuser cast
Down from his seat to reign no more."

The conflict our glorious Lord continues in his seed. We preach Christ crucified, and every sermon shakes the gates of hell. We bring sinners to Jesus by the Spirit's power, and every convert is a stone torn down from the wall of Satan's mighty castle. Yea, and the day shall come when everywhere the evil one shall be overcome, and the words of John in the Revelation shall be fulfilled. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Thus did the Lord God in the words of our text promise a champion who should be the seed of the woman, between whom and Satan there should be war for ever and ever: that champion has come, the man-child has been born, and thought the dragon is wroth with the woman, and made war with the remnant of her seed which keep the testimony of Jesus Christ, yet the battle is the Lord's, and the victory falleth unto him whose name is Faithful and True, who in righteousness doth judge and make war.

The third fact which comes out in the text, though not quite in that order, is that *our Champion's heel should be bruised*. Do you need that I explain this? You know how all his life long his heel, that is, his lower part, his human nature, was perpetually

being made to suffer. He carried our sicknesses and sorrows. But the bruising came mainly when both in body and in mind his whole human nature was made to agonize; when his soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death, and his enemies pierced his hands and his feet, and he endured the shame and pain of death by crucifixion. Look at your Master and your King upon the cross, all disdained with blood and dust! There was his heel most cruelly bruised. When they take down that precious body and wrap it in fair white linen and in spices, and lay it in Joseph's tomb, they weep as they handle the casket in which the Deity had dwelt, for there again Satan had bruised his heel. It was not merely that God had bruised him, "though it pleased the Father to bruise him," but the devil had let loose Herod, and Pilate, and Caiaphas, and the Jews, and the Romans, all of them his tools, upon him whom he knew to be the Christ, so that he was bruised of the old serpent. That is all, however! It is only his heel, not his head, which is bruised! For lo, the Champion rises again; the bruise was not mortal nor continual. Though he dies, yet still so brief is the interval in which he slumbers in the tomb that his holy body hath not seen corruption, and he comes forth perfect and lovely in his manhood, rising from his grave as from a refreshing sleep after so long a day of unresting toil! Oh the triumph of that hour! As Jacob only halted on his thigh when he overcame the angel, so did Jesus only retain a scar in his heel, and that he bears to the skies as his glory and beauty. Before the throne he looks like a lamb that has been slain, but in the power of an endless life he liveth unto God.

Then comes the fourth fact, namely, that while his heel was being bruised, *he was to bruise the serpent's head*. The figure represents the dragon as inflicting an injury upon the champion's heel, but at the same moment the champion himself with that heel crushes in the head of the serpent with fatal effect. By his sufferings Christ has overthrown Satan, by the heel that was bruised he has trodden upon the head which devised the bruising.

"Lo, by the sons of hell he dies;
But as he hangs 'twixt earth and skies,
He gives their prince a fatal blow,
And triumphs o'er the powers below

Though Satan is not dead, my brethren, I was about to say, would God he were, and though he is not converted, and never will be, nor will the malice of his heart ever be driven from him, yet Christ has so far broken his head that he has missed his mark altogether. He intended to make the human race the captives of his power, but they are redeemed from his iron yoke. God has delivered many of them, and the day shall come when he will cleanse the whole earth from the serpent's slimy trail, so that the entire world shall be full of the praises of God. He thought that this world would be the arena of his victory over God and good, instead of which it is already the grandest theatre of divine wisdom, love, grace, and power. Even heaven itself is not so resplendent with mercy as the earth is, for here it is the Saviour poured out his blood, which cannot be said even of the courts of paradise above. Moreover he thought, no doubt, that when he had led our race astray and brought death upon them, he had effectually marred the Lord's work. He rejoiced that they would all

pass under the cold seal of death, and that their bodies would rot in the sepulchre. Had he not spoiled the handiwork of his great Lord? God may make man as a curious creature with interwisted veins and blood and nerves, and sinews and muscles, and he may put into his nostrils the breath of life; but, "Ah," saith Satan, "I have infused a poison into him which will make him return to the dust from which he was taken." but now, behold, our Champion whose heel was bruised has risen from the dead, and given us a pledge that all his followers shall rise from the dead also. Thus is Satan foiled, for death shall not retain a bone, nor a piece of a bone, of one of those who belonged to the woman's seed. At the trump of the archangel from the earth and from the sea they shall arise, and this shall be their shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Satan, knowing this, feels already that by the resurrection his head is broken. Glory be to the Christ of God for this!

In multitudes of other ways the devil has been vanquished by our Lord Jesus, and so shall he ever be till he shall be cast into the lake of fire.

II. Let us now view OUR EXPERIENCE AS IT TALLIES WITH THESE FACTS. Now, brothers and sisters, we were by nature, as many of us as have been saved, the heirs of wrath even as others. It does not matter how godly our parents were, the first birth brought us no spiritual life, for the promise is not to them which are born of blood, or of the will of the flesh, or of the will of man, but only to those who are born of God, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh"; you cannot make anything else and there it abides, and the flesh, or carnal mind, abideth in death; "it is not reconciled to God, neither indeed can be." He who is born into this world but once, and knows nothing of the new birth, must place himself among the seed of the serpent, for only by regeneration can we know ourselves to be the true seed. How does God deal with us who are his called and chosen ones? He means to save us, and how does he work to that end?

The first thing he does is, he comes to us in mercy, and *puts enmity between us and the serpent*. That is the very first work of grace. There was peace between us and Satan once; when he tempted we yielded; whatever he taught us we believed; we were his willing slaves. But perhaps you, my brethren, can recollect when first of all you began to feel uneasy and dissatisfied; the world's pleasures no longer pleased you; all the juice seemed to have been taken out of the apple, and you had nothing at all. Then you suddenly perceived that you were living in sin, and you were miserable about it, and though you could not get rid of sin yet you hated it, and sighed over it, and cried, and groaned. In your heart of hearts you remained no longer on the side of evil, for you began to cry, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" You were already from of old in the covenant of grace ordained to be the woman's seed, and now the decree began to discover itself in life bestowed upon you and working in you. The Lord in infinite mercy dropped the divine life into your soul. You did not know it, but there it was, a spark of the celestial fire, the living and incorruptible seed which abideth for ever. You began to hate sin, and you groaned under it as under a galling yoke; more and more it burdened you, you could not bear it. So it was with you: is it so now? Is

there still enmity between you and the serpent? Indeed you are more and more the sworn enemies of evil, and you willingly acknowledge it.

Then came the champion: that is to say, “Christ was formed in you the hope of glory.” You heard of him and you understood the truth about him, and it seemed a wonderful thing that he should be your substitute and stand in your room and place and stead, and bear your sin and all its curse and punishment, and that he should give his righteousness, yea, and his very self, to you that you might be saved. Ah, then you saw how sin could be overthrown, did you not? As soon as your heart understood Christ then you saw that what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, Christ was able to accomplish, and that the power of sin and Satan under which you had been in bondage, and which you now loathed, could and would be broken and destroyed because Christ had come into the world to overcome it.

Next, do you recollect how you were led to see *the bruising of Christ's heel* and to stand in wonder and observe what the enmity of the serpent had wrought in him? Did you not begin to feel the bruised heel yourself? Did not sin torment you? Did not the very thought of it vex you? Did not your own heart become a plague to you? Did not Satan begin to tempt you? Did he not inject blasphemous thoughts, and urge you on to desperate measures; did he not teach you to doubt the existence of God, and the mercy of God, and the possibility of your salvation, and so on? This was his nibbling at your heel. He is at his old tricks still. He worries whom he can't devour with a malicious joy. Did not your worldly friends begin to annoy you? Did they not give you the cold shoulder because they saw something about you so strange and foreign to their tastes? Did they not impute your conduct to fanaticism, pride, obstinacy, bigotry, and the like? Ah, this persecution is the serpent's seed beginning to discover the woman's seed, and to carry on the old war. What does Paul say? “But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.” True godliness is an unnatural and strange thing to them, and they cannot away with it. Though there are no stakes in Smithfield, nor racks in the Tower, yet the enmity of the human heart towards Christ and his seed is just the same, and very often shows itself in “trials of cruel mockings” which to the tender hearts are very hard to bear. Well, this is your heel being bruised in sympathy with the bruising of the heel of the glorious seed of the woman.

But, brethren, do you know something of the other fact, namely, that *we conquer, for the serpent's head is broken in us*? How say you? Is not the power and dominion of sin broken in you? Do you not feel that you cannot sin because you are born of God? Some sins which were masters of you once, do not trouble you now. I have known a man guilty of profane swearing, and from the moment of his conversion he has never had any difficulty in the matter. We have known a man snatched from drunkenness, and the cure by divine grace has been very wonderful and complete. We have known persons delivered from unclean living, and they have at once become chaste and pure, because Christ has smitten the old dragon such blows that he could not have power over them in that respect. The chosen seed sin and mourn it, but they are not slaves to sin; their heart goeth not after it they have to say sometimes “the thing I do,” but they are wretched when it is so. They consent with their heart

to the law of God that it is good, and they sigh and cry that they may be helped to obey it, for they are no longer under the slavery of sin; the serpent's reigning power and dominion is broken in them.

It is broken next in this way, that the guilt of sin is gone. The great power of the serpent lies in unpardoned sin. He cries "I have made you guilty: I brought you under the curse." "No," say we, "we are delivered from the curse and are now blessed, for it is written, 'Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.' We are no longer guilty, for who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Since Christ hath justified, who is he that condemneth? Here is a swinging blow for the old dragon's head, such as he never will recover.

Oftentimes the Lord also grants us to know what it is to overcome temptation, and so to break the dead of the fiend, Satan allures us with many baits; he has studied our points well he knows the weakness of the flesh: but many and many a time blessed be God, we have foiled him completely to his eternal shame! The devil must have felt himself mean that day when he tried to overthrow Job, dragged him down to a dunghill, robbed him of everything, covered him with sores, and yet could not make him yield. Job conquered when he cried, "Though he slay me yet will I trust in him." A feeble man had vanquished a devil who could raise the wind and blow down a house, and destroy the family who were feasting in it. Devil as he is, and crowned prince of the power of the air, yet the poor bereaved patriarch sitting on the dunghill covered with sores, being one of the woman's seed, through the strength of the inner life won the victory over him.

"Ye sons of God oppose his rage.

Resist, and he'll be gone:

Thus did our dearest Lord engage

And vanquish him alone."

Moreover, dear brethren, we have this hope that the very being of sin in us will be destroyed. The day will come when we shall be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing; and we shall stand before the throne of God, having suffered no injury whatever from the fall and from all the machinations of Satan, for are "they are without fault before the throne of God." What triumph that will be! "The Lord will tread Satan under your feet shortly." When he has made you perfect and free from all sin, as he will do, you will have bruised the serpent's head indeed.

And your resurrection, too, when Satan shall see you come up from the grave like one that has been perfumed in a bath of spices, when he shall see you arise in the image of Christ, with the same body which was sown in corruption and weakness raised in incorruption and power, then will he feel an infinite chagrin, and know that his head is bruised by the woman's seed.

I ought to add that every time any one of us is made useful in saving souls we do as it were repeat the bruising of the serpent's head. When you go, dear sister, among those poor children, and pick them up from the gutters, where they are Satan's prey, where he finds the raw material for thieves and criminals, and when through your means, by the grace of God, the little wonderers become children of the living God, then you in your measure bruise the old serpent's head, I pray you do not spare

him. When we by preaching the gospel turn sinners from the error of their ways, so that they escape from the power of darkness, again we bruise the serpent's head. Whenever in any shape of way you are blessed to the aiding of the cause of truth and righteousness in the world, you, too, who were once beneath his power, and even now have sometimes to suffer from his nibbling at your heel, you tread upon his head. In all deliverances and victories you overcome, and prove the promise true,—“Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him I will set him on high, because he hath known my name.”

III. Let us speak awhile upon THE ENCOURAGEMENT which our text and the context yields to us; for it seems to me to abound.

I want you, brethren, to exercise faith in the promise and be comforted. The text evidently encouraged Adam very much. I do not think we have attached enough importance to the conduct of Adam after the Lord had spoken to him. Notice the simple but conclusive proof which he gave of his faith. Sometimes an action may be very small and unimportant, and yet, as a straw shows which way the wind blows, it may display at once, if it be thought over, the whole state of the man's mind. Adam acted in faith upon what God had said, for we read, “And Adam called his wife's name Eve (or Life); because she was the mother of all living” (verse 20). She was not a mother at all, but as the life was to come through her by virtue of the promised seed, Adam marks his full conviction of the truth of the promise though at the time the woman had borne no children. There stood Adam, fresh from the awful presence of God, what more could he say? He might have said with the Prophet, “My flesh trembleth from the fear of thee,” but even then he turns round to his fellow-culprit as she stands there trembling too, and he calls her Eve, mother of the life that is yet to be. It was grandly spoken by Father Adam: it makes him rise in our esteem. Had he been left to himself he would have murmured or at least despaired, but no, his faith in the new promise gave him hope. He uttered no word of repining against the condemnation to till with toil the unthankful ground, nor on Eve's part was there a word of repining over the appointed sorrows of motherhood; they each accept the well-deserved sentence with the silence which denotes the perfection of their resignation; their only word is full of simple faith. There was no child on whom to set their hopes, nor would the true seed be born for an age, still Eve is to be the mother of all the living, and he calls her so. Exercise like faith, my brother, on the far wider revelation which God has given to you, and always extract the utmost comfort from it. Make a point, whenever you receive a promise from God, to get all you can out of it if you carry out that rule, it is wonderful what comfort you will gain. Some go on the principle of getting as little as possible out of God's word. I believe that such a plan is the proper way with a man's word; always understand it at the minimum, because that is what he means; but God's word is to be understood at the maximum, for he will do exceeding abundantly above what you ask or even think.

Notice by way of further encouragement that we may regard our reception of Christ's righteousness as an installment of the final overthrow of the devil. The

twenty-first verse says, “Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God made coats of skins, and clothed them.” A very condescending, thoughtful, and instructive deed of divine love! God heard what Adam said to his wife, and saw that he was a believer, and so he comes and gives him the type of the perfect righteousness, which is the believer’s portion—he covered him with lasting raiment. No more fig leaves, which were a mere mockery, but a close fitting garment which had been procured through the death of a victim; the Lord brings that and puts it on him, and Adam could no more say, “I am naked.” How could he, for God had clothed him. Now, beloved, let us take out of the promise that is given us concerning our Lord’s conquest over the devil this one item and rejoice in it, for Christ has delivered us from the power of the serpent who opened our eyes and told us we were naked, by covering us from head to foot with a righteousness which adorns and protects us, so that we are comfortable in heart, and beautiful in the sight of God, and are no more ashamed.

Next, by way of encouragement in pursuing the Christian life, I would say to young people, expect to be assailed. If you have fallen into trouble through being a Christian, be encouraged by it; do not at all regret or fear it, but rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy, for this is the constant token of the covenant. There is enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent still, and if you did not experience any of it you might begin to fear that you were on the wrong side. Now that you smart under the sneer of sarcasm and oppression rejoice and triumph, for now are ye partakers with the glorious seed of the woman in the bruising of his heel.

Still further encouragement comes from this. Your suffering as a Christian is not brought upon you for your own sake; ye are partners with the great seed of the woman, ye are confederates with Christ. You must not think the devil cares much about you: the battle is against Christ in you. When, if you were not in Christ, the devil would never trouble you. When you were without Christ in the world you might have sinned as you like, your relatives and workmates would not have been at all grieved with you, they would rather have joined you in it; but now the serpent’s seed hates Christ in you. This exalts the sufferings of persecution to a position far above all common afflictions. I have heard of a woman who was condemned to death in the Marian days, and before her time came to be burned a child was born to her, and she cried out in her sorrow. A wicked adversary, who stood by said, “how will you bear to die for your religion if you make such ado?” “Ah,” she said, “Now I suffer in my own person as a woman, but then I shall not suffer, but Christ in me.” Nor were these idle words, for she bore her martyrdom with exemplary patience, and rose in her chariot of fire in holy triumph to heaven. If Christ be in you, nothing will dismay you, but you will overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil by faith.

Last of all, let us resist the devil always with this belief that he has received a broken head. I am inclined to think that Luther’s way of laughing at the devil was a very good one, for he is worthy of shame and everlasting contempt. Luther once threw an inkstand at his head when he was tempting him very sorely, and though the act itself appears absurd enough, yet it was a true type of what that greater reformer was all his life long, for the books he wrote were truly a flinging of the

inkstand at the head of the fiend. That is what we have to do: we are to resist him by all means. Let us do this bravely, and tell him to his teeth that we are not afraid of him. Tell him to recollect his bruised head, which he tries to cover with a crown of pride, or with a popish cowl, or with an infidel doctor's hood. We know him, and see the deadly wound he bears. His power is gone; he is fighting a lost battle; he is contending against omnipotence. He has set himself against the oath of the Father; against the blood of the incarnate Son; against the eternal power and Godhead of the blessed Spirit, all of which are engaged in the defence of the seed of the woman in the day of battle. Therefore, brethren, be ye steadfast in resisting the evil one being strong in faith, giving glory to God.

“Tis by thy blood, immortal Lamb,
 Thine armies tread the tempter down;
 ‘tis by thy word and powerful name
 They gain the battle and renown.
 “Rejoice ye heavens; let every star
 Shine with new glories round the sky;
 Saints, while ye sing the heavenly war,
 Raise your Deliverer's name on high.”

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Genesis 3.
 HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—335, 477, 322.