

Editor's Note: Some minor punctuation changes as well as spelling correction have been made to this edition. I have changed a few words to be more readable to the modern student. Nothing of any substance or importance has been changed from Mr. Wells original 1870 publication.

TWENTY-FOUR LECTURES
Of The
BOOK OF REVELATION
By JAMES WELLS

London
R. BANDKS, LUDGATE HILL;
And
G. J. STEVENSON, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1870

PREFACE.

My reasons for giving and now printing the following Lectures will appear in the Lectures themselves. There is not anything that so concerns us as the Holy Scriptures; they do with us and for us what nothing else can. They make us wise unto salvation; and we cannot be too conversant with the Holy Scriptures. And knowing that it falls to the lot of many not to have very much time to search the Scriptures, I hope these Lectures may be a help to such.

This Book of the Revelation, like other books of the Bible, was intended not merely for the learned few, but for Christians at large, and comes under the same rule of interpretation as other books of

the Bible, namely, that of explaining Scripture by Scripture. I may here just remind the reader to notice the structure of the book; that the subjects for the most part are ranged as it were in columns side by side, and that the inspired writer takes up one aspect of a subject and goes on with the same to the end, and then goes back again and again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. Hence the twenty first chapter goes back to the beginning of the Christian dispensation, and commences by showing the exchange of the Jewish heaven and earth for the Christian heaven and earth, called "the new heavens and new earth, and no more sea;" evidently meaning no more trouble. For by the new heavens and new earth shall be everlasting joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away; so there shall be no more sea; whereas the Jewish heaven and earth, according to Psalm xlvi., were carried away into a sea of trouble, and there they still remain.

We read of but two leading fallen stars in this book. There could not be more than two, as these two stars represent apostate churches, and there could be but two apostate churches, namely, the Jewish and the Christian. Here are Zechariah's two women from the ephah, with the wind of false doctrine in their wings. I have a hope that I have been enabled in these Lectures to give the main drift of the meaning of this Book of Revelation.

The reader ought to note that this Book of Revelation is a summary,—a summing up, as it were, of the whole of the Holy Scriptures, and contains in substance not anything which is not contained in the previous parts of the Holy Scriptures.

It has been said that a humble individual like myself ought not to have meddled with such a mysterious book, and that had I been a wiser man, I should have let it alone, especially as certain characters "rush in where angels fear to tread." The third verse of the first chapter is to me a perfectly satisfactory answer to this and all such kinds of objections:—"Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Then if God command and bless, who is he that shall reverse it?

The reader would do well to read each chapter in the Book of Revelation, and then read the Lecture upon it; as, to avoid making the Lectures too lengthy, I have quoted as little of the book as possible.

J. W.

New Surrey Tabernacle, Walworth Road,

October, 1870.

Contents

I. THE THRONE OF GOD AND ITS ACCOMPANIMENTS.....	3
II. THE CRYSTAL SEA AND THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES.....	11
III. THE SEALED BOOK.....	19
IV. THE FOUR EQUESTRIAN SEALS.	26
V. THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SEALS.....	35

VI. CONSECRATION AND HALF-HOUR'S SILENCE.	41
VII. THE FOUR TRUMPETS.	49
VIII. THE TWO APOSTATE CHURCHES.	56
IX. THE SIXTH TRUMPET.	63
X. THE END OF JEWISH NATIONAL TIME.....	70
XI. TEMPLE, ALTAR, PEOPLE, AND WITNESSES.	78
XII. THE TWO WITNESSES AND THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.	85
XIII. FIRST PART OF TWELFTH CHAPTER.....	93
XIV. THE DRAGON DEFEATED.....	100
XV. WILD BEASTS.....	107
XVI. GLORY OF THE GOSPEL.	115
XVII. THE VICTORY OBTAINED.....	123
XVIII. THE VIALS OF WRATH.	131
XIX. SIXTH AND SEVENTH VIALS.	139
XX. THE FALSE CHURCH.....	146
XXI. THE MYSTIC BABYLON.....	153
XXII. THE SONG OF THE SAINTS.....	161
XXIII. THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.	169
XXIV. TWENTIETH CHAPTER OK REVELATION.....	177

1. THE THRONE OF GOD AND ITS ACCOMPANIMENTS

CHRISITAN friends, I have had for some time a desire to give a course of lectures upon the Book of Revelation; and my motives chiefly are these two. In the first place, a hope that good will be done, and that we shall find it as profitable to go through this book, and to meet from week to week to contemplate its mysteries, as we do with respect to other parts of the Holy Scriptures. My second motive is this, - to lessen, if possible, what appears to me to be an erroneous impression very prevalent among good people, and among some good and honest ministers of the gospel that we have in our favored land; and that impression is that none but the learned men can understand the Book of Revelation; that in order to enter into its mysteries a man must be a classical scholar, and must be very conversant with the original languages; that he must have read through cart-loads of books petty well, to make himself very familiar with civil and ecclesiastical history; so that by that learning and by that knowledge of ecclesiastical history he can get somewhat at the circumstances set before us so mysteriously in the Book of Revelation. This is the impression. But how does this sort with the Bible itself? For whom what the Bible written? Was it written for a few learned men, or was it written for the world at large? How does the book, even so early

as the third verse, speak upon this matter? "Blessed is he that readeth." That contemplates an age in which, as any one that is at all familiar with ecclesiastical history well knows, very few of the early Christians could read at all; but they were blessed with the spirit of grace and supplication; and in the view of this it says, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear."—so there were many to hear, and very few that could even read —" the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." And Malachi, when looking forward, and placing himself, as it were, in the light of the New Testament dispensation, looks at the disciples, sees them in the fear of the Lord speaking often one to another, and he says, "The Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." Now what book of remembrance was written for them but the New Testament? The Old Testament is a book of prediction; the New Testament is a book of remembrance, presenting to us the great fact that Christ came, and met and fulfilled ancient prediction.

You will therefore see that not human learning, not human acquirements, but the fear of God, the knowledge of God, grace in the heart, and experimental acquaintance with God's truth, these are the people for whom the book was written, and these are the qualifications to understand the book. Not that I would for one moment undervalue human learning, for the more learned our ministers are the better, and the more they are informed of everything pertaining to their position as ministers, so much the greater their advantage. We could not have had the Scriptures in our own language without human learning, and we could not have had the Scriptures, as they now are, translated into so many languages without human learning. But still there are many ministers and many Christians that have not had the advantage of a classical education, that know nothing whatever of the original languages, having had neither time nor opportunity to acquire them. They have had to get an honest living; and they have done so, and better employed themselves than in merely acquiring a little classical knowledge. Also a large number have not had time to read history; and therefore they cannot, by means of human learning and a knowledge of history, get at the meaning of the Book of Revelation. That is one reason that actuates me in this matter, because I find that with many good ministers the Book of the Revelation is almost a blank. Therefore, I enter upon the subject with the hope of doing good, and of showing that while I admire human learning when it is used, and not abused—it is not to be made a parade of, —this Book of the Revelation is to be understood not by human learning; it is to be understood from two sources: the one is the Bible itself, and the other is that experience of the truth of God with which every saved soul is blessed. I therefore just observe that the principle I shall adopt in these lectures will be to take the Bible itself as its own interpreter. And as we go through the book I shall be disappointed if we find anything in it which we do not find in the Old Testament. For the Book of the Revelation is nothing else but a composition from the Old Testament; at the same time, mind, this composition is by special revelation and inspiration of the eternal Spirit of God, John being taught by the Spirit of God to gather up the great subjects of the Old Testament. And as the Old Testament will be our guide in a great measure, and will be the interpreter of this book, you will perceive at once that there is nothing like adopting the principle of which the poet sings, that—

"God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain."

I ought perhaps here just to say that I believe I have read most of the books that have been written by learned men upon the Book of Revelation; and many, many years ago I thought I wish I was as learned as they are; and I fell in with some of them, and thought, — That must be right, and that must be right; — there was a feasibility about it. And I suppose there is hardly any learned man that has written upon this book that has not said some right things; though it does appear to me that the majority of them have

made a great mistake in not adopting the principle that I have suggested, —namely, taking the Old Testament to be their guide to the interpretation of the things contained in this book. But on thinking the matter over (for of course in my position I am always thinking of the Scriptures, I may say night and day), —on thinking the matter over many years ago while going through the Book of the Revelation, I was much struck with one sentence, and that was very instructive to me, in the tenth chapter; —"As he hath declared to his servants the prophets." I was wondering what that chapter could mean, when I came to those words, —"As he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Why, I said to myself, I have been to these learned men to get at the meaning of this book, but I have not gone to the prophets. In what part of the writings of the prophets is it that he has declared these things? I soon found out, and the book became to me a great pleasure and a great advantage; there is no book that I know of which I have read with more pleasure than the Book of the Revelation. And if we find the same subjects in this book as in the Old Testament, and we know how to understand them as we find them there, why should we be at all at a loss to understand them in this book?

Now, of course, this evening I shall have to make a few remarks by way of introduction. My intention is not to begin at the commencement of the book; I do not think it needful to go through the seven churches, because there is nothing there particularly ambiguous; but my intention is to begin at the fourth chapter, for that is, properly speaking, the beginning of the book; the preceding chapters may be looked at as an introduction.' Suffice it, then, just to say, before I enter upon the part that I shall just touch upon this evening for a few minutes, that we meet with something in the very beginning of the book that ought to be very instructive in teaching us that this book must be understood mystically, and not literally—must be understood figuratively more or less all through. You are struck with this at the very beginning of the book;—you meet with seven stars; you cannot, take those seven stars literally; —you meet with seven candlesticks; and we are there told that they must be understood mystically; that these seven candlesticks represented the seven light-bearers, the seven churches that should be light-bearers; but when they put the light away, namely, God's truth, then the Lord took the candlesticks away, as they did not need them any longer, having put away the Lord's truth, the light. This must be understood mystically. So the Nicolaitanes must be understood mystically, meaning destroyers; and so Jezebel, also referred to in the second chapter, must be understood not literally, but mystically.

Then there is another thing before I enter upon the subject, and that is this, that most of the learned have taken the subjects of this Book of the Revelation in chronological order, as though one event in the order of time followed other events, and so I do not know where they have not been carried by taking the book chronologically; whereas we shall see as we go through it that its structure is synchronical; that is to say, that the subjects of this book are not successive, but they are ranged in columns, side by side. It begins at the beginning of the gospel dispensation, goes down some way with that; then takes up another phase of the subject at the beginning of the gospel dispensation again; and such is the structure of the book that it is not successive, or chronological, but synchronical, the subjects running side by side. There are a few apparent exceptions, and I might say real exceptions, to this rule; the general rule is that the subjects are synchronical; that is, they all set out at once, they all go on at once, and they will all terminate at once. The few exceptions to this rule will come before us as we go along; the rule is that of being synchronical, the exception is a few circumstances that must be taken chronologically.

Let us then look for a few moments at the fourth chapter. How does it begin? In a very beautiful way. John says, "I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven." I need not dwell upon this; it is a matter too clear and simple to be dwelt upon; but still I think it is right I should say a word or two, because this door opened in heaven certainly does stand in contrast to the garden of Eden; for at the garden of Eden there was a flaming sword that turned every way. Now we know that flaming sword represents the sword of

justice, that stands against every man, so that you cannot have access to God; the door, the way, is closed. But the Lord Jesus Christ came, and endured the flaming sword: —" Awake, O sword, against my shepherd." So that while the fiery sword of the law turns every way to cut us off from God, Christ met that sword, and he is the way of access to God. So that when John saw a door opened in heaven, he means to say that the Lord Jesus Christ had by his mediatorial work opened a door to all that believe in him, a door which no man can shut; for who can undo the obedient life of Christ? who can undo the atoning death of Christ? who can alter the counsel, the mind, and the will of the great God? He saw a door opened in heaven, and so have we, for the Savior himself says, "I am the door;" and it is by him that we from time to time seek access to God.

Let us go to the next step. "And the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me." Now you well know it is usual in the Old Testament to speak of the proclamation of eternal mercy under the figure of the sounding of a trumpet. Hence the trumpet of jubilee, sounding liberty from one end of the land to the other. And this voice said, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." Let us see what this coming up is; lifting him up near to God, into a position in which he could see things hereafter. Cannot some of you recollect the time when the future judgments of God were so impressed upon your mind that you could be content to live no longer without Christ and without God in the world? Cannot you recollect the time when the eternal glories of Christ were first revealed to you? You saw the judgment that should overtake the one, and the mercy that should be the portion of the other; and thus he showed you things which must be hereafter. What is meant by "coming up hither"? Let us get an Old Testament scripture; for I will keep to my rule of making the Old Testament my guide. Do you not find a scripture in the Old Testament beautifully in accordance with the words there—this trumpet of the gospel bringing up the soul to God? Go to the eighty-ninth Psalm; there you find these words, — "Mercy and truth shall go before thy face," and we know that mercy and truth are by Jesus Christ. Then it goes on to describe what the being called up into this position is: "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound;" that is, the joyful sound of mercy by Jesus Christ, in accordance with God's truth; "they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." If the gospel be acceptable to you, that is a proof that you are accepted of God; and blessed are such that approve of his truth, are not offended with that. "In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Thus you will see that exaltation, so as to see our own future destiny, is by the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ; and whenever the Lord doth so raise us up, we can look forward in the light of Christ's mediation, and see eternal joys our own. So it was with the apostle; he said, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

John then describes the transforming power before he comes to the throne, and he says, "Immediately I was in the Spirit." Does not the Christian know something of this? Is there not such a thing as going to the house of God dead, carnal, careless, and worldly? and when at the house of God is there not such a thing as for the minister so to hold the glass of the gospel that it reflects upon your souls the glory of Christ, the love of God, and what he has done for you, until the sympathies presented by the gospel soothe your sorrows, deathiness, and darkness away? And so the apostle says, " We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." Perhaps I ought not to have dwelt so largely upon this plain part, but my object is to show you in the very beginning that which you already, no doubt, know, that the Book of the Revelation contains as much of vital experience and as much doctrinal and practical direction to the Christian as any other book when properly understood.

We now come to the throne. John says, "And, behold, a throne was set in heaven;" that is, the heavenly dispensation, including heaven and earth too; that is, Christ as he is in heaven and Christ as he is on earth, in the heavenly dispensation. "And one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone." There are two things conveyed in this, —his being compared to a jasper, and a sardine stone. It in the first place impresses upon our minds the value of such a throne; that there is something valuable about it, something precious about it. And there is another thing you must not lose sight of, —that this scene is laid in the temple. You know where the throne was in the temple of old, that it was on the Ark of the Covenant, that it was the mercy-seat, and there was the shining presence of the blessed God. I think this is one thing intended, then, —the preciousness. And can you imagine anything more pleasant and precious than the reign of Christ, the reign of his grace, the reign of his mercy?

Then, secondly, it also means that this king is exceedingly rich, infinitely rich; and hence, concerning the prosperity of Christ in his reign, Solomon has a very beautiful proverb, —that "a gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth." You will observe, therefore, that this throne is a throne of grace and of mercy to the people of God; but at the same time it is a throne of judgment and of wrath to the enemies of God; just the same as the gospel is a savor of life unto life to the believer, but it is as a savor of death unto death to the unbeliever. Therefore, this throne means that there is a throne of grace established; that the Lord reigns by the preciousness of Christ, that Christ is that pearl of great price, that he is that precious stone, that sure foundation stone by which grace reigns; and he in his humiliation having overcome every foe, and brought mercy and truth together, righteousness and peace embracing each other, therefore it is that grace reigns.

Here, then, is that throne of grace to which we are to come, and here the Lord shows his glory, hears our petitions, and answers them. Daniel foresaw this throne. Let us look at the words again. "And a throne was set," —was fixed, established. Let us have Daniel's explanation of this. In his seventh chapter he says, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down;" that is, as we shall find before we get to the end of this book, the thrones there mean the truths of the gospel, and they were cast down; they were cast down by the enemies; the Savior found them cast down when he came, and they are very much cast down now. Hence you read of truth falling in our streets. "And the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow," to denote the purity of Christ, that he had travelled through this world, —for Daniel now sees him in his exaltation, after he had completed his humiliation work; —that he had travelled through this world undefiled, that he had lived unspotted; that after the life of sorrow, and grief, and provocation he had gone through, he offered himself without spot to God; and therefore rises in all the purity in which he lived and in which he died. "Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." "And the hair of his head like the pure wool," setting forth his glory; "his throne was like the fiery flame." What does this mean? The throne there represents his government that his government is as the fiery flame; that fiery flame meaning the brightness of the gospel, the living power of the gospel. "And his wheels as burning fire;" and what are those wheels but the eternal truths of the gospel, which we may well call the circles of eternity.

Such is the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ, the gospel in its living power; here we have the living God denoted by this brightness. But Daniel goes on a little further; he says, "A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him." What is this fiery stream but the gospel?" Is not my word like fire, says the Lord?" Are we altogether strangers to this? Hath not the Lord said that he will make his ministers a flame of fire? and does not the gospel sometimes come at one and the same time with an illuminating power and with a wonderfully warming power? When the Savior began at the beginning of the Bible, went through the Old Testament, and expounded unto them all things concerning himself, did not the disciples say, "Did not our heart burn within us?" Do you not sometimes hear a sermon and say, Well, I never saw

that before? and at the same time a power attends the word, there is light and heat. This is the fiery stream of the yea and amen gospel that issues and comes forth from before him. Habakkuk means the same thing when he says, "His brightness was as the light;" and so it is. It is wonderful what we can understand by keeping close to Jesus Christ. He hath said, "He that followeth me shall not abide in darkness." "His brightness was as the light; he had horns coming out of his hand:" the word "horns" there means, of course, rays of light; "and there was the hiding of his power." Ah, how his power was hidden in the prophets, how it was hidden in Christ himself, and how it was hidden in the apostles! but while it was hidden in them, yet how it displayed itself under different circumstances, which I must not stop to mention. Thus, then, this throne means that living throne of grace where we have the living God, the living Spirit of God, the living Savior, the living gospel, and a living people; there is no death where his throne is; he hath reigned over death, swallowed it up in victory, brought life and immortality to light. And Daniel sees two things in connection with this throne; he sees a great number gathered in to serve Christ, and he sees the Savior sitting on his throne, and surveying the whole human race, the whole population of the globe. He describes it thus:—"thousand thousands ministered unto him;" that will mean those that are gathered in. To minister unto him means to serve him; and so Daniel looked forward to the apostolic age, when thousand thousands were brought to serve Christ. How happy for us that we ourselves are brought to believe in him, to love and serve him, and to pray for the prosperity of his kingdom, and that the circles of eternity, the glorious truths of the gospel, may go burning on, in order to bring life into dead sinners, to enlighten the benighted, and to draw them to God by the Lord Jesus Christ!" Thousand thousands ministered unto him." Then comes the whole population of the globe; "and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him." Now take the seventeenth of John:—"Thou hast given him power over all flesh;" there is the ten thousand times ten thousand that stand before him. But when he ascended to his throne, and surveyed the whole human race; he saw you, and he saw you, and he saw all down to the end of time; and amidst the teeming millions whom he saw he distinguished his own from them all, even before they were born;—"that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." See how Daniel was led into this wonderful mystery. "Thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand," the whole human race, "stood before him;" he takes his own, leaves the others; lost, lost they must be. May that not be the lot of any one of you. Then Daniel says upon this matter of the throne, quite in accordance with this Book of the Revelation, "The judgment was set." That has nothing to do with the last great day; Daniel is not referring to the last great day at all, he is referring to the beginning of the gospel dispensation, that there was a certain judgment set in the beginning of the gospel dispensation:—"The judgment was set, and the books were opened." Now just look at it; in this fourth of the Revelation you get the throne; in the very next chapter you get the sealed book opened. See how Daniel and John accord; Daniel sees the throne in its brilliancy and glory, and then sees in connection with that throne a judgment set, and the books opened; John sees the throne, sees the sealed book, sees the book opened, and sees the contents of that book. Now what was the judgment set? You all know what the judgment set was when Christ began to reign. The judgment that he set was this,—that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath—the best thing that he can have—" everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son of God shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." That is the judgment; and ministers are to go forth with that decision, that "he that believeth on the Son of God hath everlasting life;" God is on that man's side; "but he that believeth not on the Son of God shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him;" being all of us by nature children of wrath, and under wrath. And so here Daniel says the judgment was set; John says the throne was set-; where is the difference? They both mean the same thing. Daniel says, "the books were opened."

As soon as ever the Savior proclaimed the law of faith, it opened the Old Testament directly; the apostles and the rest of the early Christians could understand the Old Testament directly. But all the time men were governed by the traditions of the elders, the Old Testament was closed; it was sealed, and nobody

could understand it. They had smothered the meaning by their traditions; they believed in the letter of Moses' writings, but they did not know the spirit and the meaning of his writings. Therefore, when this law of faith came in the books were opened.

Now I do not know whether I am understood or not. In the first place, then, here is Jesus Christ, who has opened the door into heaven by his mediatorial work; here is the gospel calling souls up by his righteousness into fellowship with God, and to look forward in that light to what there is yet to come; and we do from time to time look forward, and rejoice to do so; and here is a throne of grace and mercy to all the people of God, as I have described.

We will go on a little further with this throne. I shall not have time this evening to enter into what some of you perhaps expect; these things will come in as we proceed with the book. Now it is said, "There was a rainbow round about the throne." This I need not enlarge upon; it denotes, of course, the peaceful character of the throne. In the tenth chapter the Savior had a rainbow about his head, to denote that he is the messenger of the new, the better, the everlasting covenant. I must therefore now notice the accompaniments of the throne, for our subject this evening, strictly speaking, is the throne of God and its accompaniments. Now the first accompaniment that I notice is that "round about the throne were four and twenty seats," literally rendered "thrones;" the original word being thrones;" and upon the seats," or thrones, "I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." Now I believe the general view of the learned is this, and I go with them so far, though I think that is not exactly the meaning; they tell us that these four-and-twenty elders represent the twelve patriarchs and the twelve apostles, and that they are sitting all together before the same throne. I do not think that is the meaning, but still it is a good thought, and I like it very much. They say it denotes the unity of the twelve patriarchs and the twelve apostles. Well, much may be said upon this, for it is a truth that there is a beautiful unity between the Old Testament and the New Testament Church; there is a beautiful unity between Abraham Isaac, and Jacob, and all the saints down to the end of time, for these three were, as well as others, patterns of that faith, by which we are saved. So that if we take the twelve patriarchs to represent the Old Testament Church, and the twelve apostles the New Testament Church, and if the twenty-four sitting together round about the throne denote the unity of the Old and New Testament Church, there is a great deal of truth in that, and it is a very beautiful truth; and, indeed, I can hardly forbear quoting a scripture or two just to show this unity.

Now take the eleventh of Hebrews, —all the Old Testament saints there lived and died by faith in the promises of God; they saw the promises afar off; they had not received them in actual fulfilment, for Christ was not yet come, but they saw them afar off, were persuaded of them, and embraced them; and these all died in faith. Friends, is not this the way you wish to live by the promise of God? You cannot carry the precept out acceptably to God but by the grace of the promise. What is the promise? Why, one promise is that he will bless you with the Spirit of grace and of supplication; he shall guide you unto all truth. So that there is a beautiful unity between the Old Testament and the New Testament saints, though I do not think that this is the meaning. For myself I would rather take another circumstance as referred to here.

The twenty-four elders. Here they are clothed in white raiment, which denotes their consecration to God; having on their heads crowns of gold, denoting that they are crowned with success. The white raiment shows not only their sanctification and justification, but their consecration to God; and the golden crowns show that they are kings as well. Now where shall we go in the Old Testament to find these twenty-four elders, the typical twenty-four? If we get at the typical twenty-four, we shall very easily get at the antitypical.

It is remarkable that they should be found in a twenty fourth chapter; —here are twenty-four elders, and they are found in a twenty-fourth chapter. If you go to the twenty-fourth chapter of the First Book of Chronicles, you will find there that David, who delighted in God's eternal truth, had arranged and divided the service of the priesthood into twenty-four courses; hence it is said of Zacharias in the first of Luke, that he was "of the course of Abia." And over every course there was a chief priest, and over all these chief priests there was the high priest. Now I consider these twenty-four elders, then, to be taken from the twenty-fourth chapter of the First book of Chronicles, and there they are priests; so these elders represent all the people of God. The new covenant does not know anything of any one class of men as priests.

The Roman Catholic ministers are called priests, to denote that they are not like the people; and the Puseyite ministers call themselves priests too; but the New Testament knows nothing whatever of any one class of Christians being priests to the exclusion of the others; for all the people of God are priests, they are all a royal priesthood, a holy nation, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. These twenty-four elders, then, represent the whole church of God in their consecration to him; and the crowns they wore denoted that they were kings as well as priests; and both these they get by oneness with Jesus Christ. They are consecrated to God by his sacrifice, and they are crowned with eternal glory by the achievement of the Lord of lords and of the King of kings. Now there were four-and-twenty thrones, for so I shall render it, and these were before the throne, and united them with the throne, to denote that all the people of God should live near to him. And if I should not be going too far in spiritualizing these seats or thrones, these seats of honor, I should take them to mean the truths of the gospel. Try it just for a moment. Take the love of God; if you can take your position there, does it not bring you near to God? What will bring you nearer to God than God's love? Hear the language; —"I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Do we not sometimes sing upon this very subject, —

"The place of John I covet
More than a seraph's throne;

To lean on my Beloved,
And breathe my final groan "?

Then, again, take election. Why, election grasps me, lays hold of me, and blesses me with all spiritual blessings. Therefore, him that the Lord hath chosen he will cause to draw near unto him, that he may rejoice that his name is written in heaven. Then take calling; —what does regeneration do? Why, it lifts us up from the dust and from the dunghill, brings us up into the knowledge of the Lord, and sets us as on a throne of glory. Then take the dear atonement of Jesus; does not that bring us near to God? What a lovely enthronement is that! Who can shake these eternal thrones of the elders, the ancients of Israel? Then take the righteousness of Christ; then take God's sworn covenant, then take the promises; —these are the thrones that bring us near to God.

So, then, here are the four-and-twenty elders, representing all the people of the living God.

"And out of the throne proceeded lightning's." What for? To strike conviction into the sinner's mind. "His arrow shall go forth as lightning." On the day of Pentecost God's word fell like lightning upon three thousand, struck conviction into their consciences and souls; they were pricked in the heart. "And thundering's." What for? Why, to alarm. So you read, in Mark iii. 17, that the Savior named James and John, Boanerges, that is, "sons of thunder." They should not go forth crawling along, with all your refinement and careful studying of their manners and words, and all the rest of it, lest they should hurt

the feelings of this refined gentleman and that refined lady. No; a man that means to be of any use must go on just as the Lord leads him, and speak out plainly, cut the sinner up, root and branch, bring forward the thunders of God's word; and thus, where the lightning strikes, the thunder of God's word will be heard, the thunders of Sinai will be heard, and the alarm will be kept up until the third step is taken. The lightning's to strike and to quicken, the thunders to alarm; "and voices." After the sinner is thus struck with the lightning of conviction, and the thunders of God's law roll over his soul, and he is made to tremble, then will come in the still small voices of the holy prophets, or the Lord by them, and say, —then comes the voice of Calvary's cross, —"Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." As I some time ago said, that is not a voice from Sinai, nor is it a voice from God's throne direct, but a voice from Calvary's cross, —"I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Ah, says the sinner, I can't believe it. But in will come another prophet, then another prophet; in will come an apostle, then another apostle, then the Lord himself, and all these voices will give the man sweet peace. Oh, he says, the lightning seemed against me, the thunder seemed against me, but now here is the voice of Calvary's blood for me, here is the voice of eternal mercy for me, here is the voice of yea and amen promise for me.

Here, then, is a glorious throne, here is a peaceful throne; here are the representatives of the whole church, the twenty-four elders; and here are the lightning's, the thundering's, and the voices.

"And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne," taken from the Old Testament, you see, the seven lamps in the temple; and these are explained thus: — "which are the seven Spirits of God." The number seven is sometimes used to denote completeness, and I think, therefore, that the seven Spirits denote the completeness of the gospel; that the Holy Spirit does not testify of an incomplete gospel, of an incomplete Christ. That is one idea, I think, meant here,—that the Holy Spirit appears in his completeness; and the other is that he who thus began this good work of striking conviction into your heart, rolling the thunders of God's word over your soul, and then, by the voices of mercy, giving you peace, he not only ministers a gospel that is complete, but he carries on his work until it is complete; and so, by the eternal Spirit carrying on his work, you will be kept in the faith, and presented through the body of the Savior's death blameless, and unrepensible in his sight, at the last great day; and thus come to a completeness of light and knowledge, and in every sense completeness.

II. THE CRYSTAL SEA AND THE FOUR LIVING CREATURES.

Our theme this evening will be the crystal sea and the four living creatures, as spoken of in the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation, following our last lecture.

First, the crystal sea. You read that "before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal," because of its clearness. Now this unquestionably has a spiritual meaning; and the Old Testament will, I think, very clearly show to us that this pure sea before the throne of God represents the gospel of God. We go to the seventh chapter of the First Book of Kings, and we read there of a sea that was between the altar and the temple, and that this sea stood upon twelve oxen, and three oxen had their faces towards each cardinal point of the heavens. And if the Old Testament dispensation was a type or shadow of good things to come, then surely the Holy Spirit would not have given us all those particulars concerning the brazen sea without its having a meaning. Where shall we get the explanation? We almost instinctively run from the brazen

sea and the twelve oxen to the twelve apostles; those twelve oxen appear to be so very strikingly a type or shadow of the twelve apostles; and their faces were towards the four cardinal points of the heavens. We go to the last chapter of Matthew, and then we go to the last chapter of Mark; we need not go further; for when we look at that brazen sea, and the twelve oxen in their position, we seem to hear a voice arising from that sea, saying, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Then we go to the last chapter of Mark, —" Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Now this sea is said to be clear as crystal, or like unto crystal for its clearness. Just the same thing is said of this sea that is said of the river in the last chapter of this book, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb. What a wonderful amount of gospel would that one circumstance preach to those who in that age understood the same! It is not my intention to enlarge or occupy much of your time upon this brazen sea, but there are some things that one cannot get away from. And let me say here that what I shall aim at in my lectures upon this book is to let you see for yourselves; I do not wish you to trust me in any one thing whatever. My whole business is to point out what the Lord himself says about his own truth. There is the brazen sea, there are the twelve oxen, open to you all, and in the New Testament there is the world-wide mission, — that is open to you all; and that the apostles did go and preach according to the mission given is also open to you all. And perhaps they were represented by oxen to denote two things, —their patient labor, and their being sacrificed in the service of God. Hence says one, "My time is at hand, and I am ready to be offered up." That was a glorious time, when they realized so much of the power and presence of the Lord, and thought so much of heaven as to think but little of earth; so much of eternity as to think but little of time. But just mark that while there were twelve oxen, there were not twelve seas, there was only one sea; so, though there were twelve apostles, there was only one gospel; and all those twelve are united by this one gospel. And so you find in the eleventh of Hebrews, when the apostle commences with the first manifest believer, namely, Abel, and traces downwards, he never once changes his note; it is the same kind of faith, the same Christ, the same gospel, all along; only one gospel. So that when the apostles, like the prophets, were several hundreds or even thousands of miles apart, they were all still preaching one and the same gospel. There is but one pure, free-grace gospel; we must all be saved by one washing of one regeneration, by one mediation, by one eternal covenant; we must be all brought into the unity of the same faith.

Then, I think, its being called a sea denotes its abundance. What a mercy for us, friends, that there is no scarcity in the gospel; that the mercy of our God is abundant mercy, that the grace of our God is abundant grace; that he doth abundantly pardon, that he doth infinitely and eternally delight in the salvation of sinners!

But there is another thing to be said concerning this brazen sea, and that is this, —that the priests and Levites were to wash their hands and their feet at this crystal sea, for they could not acceptably perform the service of the Lord without their hands and their feet being thus washed; —you can see this for yourselves in the thirtieth of Exodus, and it says, "lest they die," so that it actually was death to attempt to serve the Lord without this brazen sea. Now I think none of you will doubt that this crystal sea typifies or shadows forth the gospel; and here we have again a truth of very great importance, if I can in a few words make it clear. You will perceive that in all age's people have tried to serve the Lord without the gospel. They have said, Never mind about doctrine; never mind about this doctrine, never mind about that, never mind about the other; if we love God, that's enough; if we love Christ, that's enough; if we love religion, that's enough. And the priests might have reasoned and said, If we offer the sacrifice, that's enough; if we plead the blood, that's enough; we can serve the Lord without this brazen sea. But not so. This sea, therefore, is a beautiful type of God's blessed truth. You are aware that the word is spoken of

again and again as water. Now what that water was to them, to enable them to serve the Lord acceptably,—what that water was to their bodies, the word must be to our souls. Let me make this as clear and as plain as I possibly can. You see when the hands were unclean, to go in that unclean state represents hands that are spiritually unclean; and when their feet were unclean, they did in that literally unclean state represent those who are spiritually unclean. The hands being unclean will represent hands of hostility against God. Now, says David, "I will wash mine hands in innocency;" that is to say, you must come to God by faith in his promise. If you come to God in prayer or confidence with enmity in your mind against his free-grace truth, against mediatorial perfection, against covenant immutability, then you come with unclean hands spiritually, that is, you come in a state of unbelief of his truth, and of enmity against it; and the Lord never accepts service that is attempted to be rendered to him, pretending to be a friend to him, and at the same time an enemy to his truth. Now how did Abraham, as it were, wash his hands and feet? that is to say, how did he prove himself to be a friend to God? —that is the idea; and how did Abraham walk consistently with God? Why, when the Lord gave the promise to Abraham, Abraham believed it, and Abraham became the friend of God; and hereby he had clean hands, hereby he walked with God by faith; he walked with God cleansed from blindness, so that he saw God's truth, and saw the blessed God by that truth; and he also walked with God in a state of entire reconciliation to him. And while we from time to time have many rebellions against the dealings of the Lord, does not the word sometimes come to us in a way that reconciles us, as it were, afresh to God? and is not that the fulfilment of what the Savior means when he says, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet"? So that we need from time to time the word to keep us in a state of reconciliation to God, and to keep us walking by faith, in love to God's truth. If you once get into a state of antipathy against his truth, then your hands are unclean, and you cannot serve God acceptably; but while you are in that state of antipathy to his truth, the Savior says, "I know you, that ye have not the word of God in you." You have human tradition in you, you believe in the traditions of the elders, you believe in the precepts of men, but you have not the word of God in you. So, then, this crystal sea represents the gospel, pointing to the world-wide mission which that gospel should realize; and I have noticed its spiritual use; if the priests and the Levites attempted to serve God without this crystal sea, they would be put to death; and as sure as the world, friends, if you and I live and die in a religion in which we are ignorant of God's truth, if that truth be not our shield and buckler, we may be good and righteous, and clean and pure in our own eyes, but not so in his eyes; we must, in order to be clean in his eyes, be washed by him. Therefore, the one idea intended by the washing of the hands is that of reconciliation to God's truth, reconciliation to him by his truth.

Let us hear before we leave this part what Paul says upon it; —"To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Now perhaps I need not say more upon this. And this sea was before the throne to denote that it was God's sea, it was God's gospel, and to denote that that gospel should go to earth's remotest bounds, as far as he should send it. These twelve mystic or spiritual oxen were to go forth east, west, north, and south; and just so far as these crystal, these celestial, these spiritual, these divine waters cover the sea of this world, just so far shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and no farther. Whithersoever these waters come they minister life, they make the man alive; he rises up by this living water into the knowledge of the truth. This is the crystal and spiritual sea. Happy the minister, then, who is engaged in diffusing these waters abroad; for as I have said, just so far as the waters of this heavenly sea cover the sea of this world, just so far shall the earth be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and no further.

We come now to the four living creatures. And here I must trespass upon your patience a little. There are in the Book of the Revelation two kinds or orders of creatures spoken of, and they are both in our version called "beasts;" so that when we read the Book of the Revelation, we cannot distinguish by the English

word "beast" the difference that exists between these orders of creatures. Now it is my intention to refer to the original language as little as possible, because I wish to speak in a way that the plainest people can understand; but still I must just make the remark here that there are in the Greek language in the Revelation itself two words: one word that describes a creature that is wild and venomous; so that wildness and venomousness is the reigning meaning of one word. This is the word by which the beasts you read of that we shall come to in a few lectures' time are nominated. Then there is the other word, by which these four beasts before the throne are in the original nominated. The word simply means "life," and is evidently taken from what is said in the first and tenth of Ezekiel, —the living creatures. So that these beasts, then, before the throne, the original word simply signifies "living creatures;" and the Greek word zoon, meaning "living creature," and the Greek word theerion, meaning "wild, venomous creature," are named in the original about twenty times in this book. And I have a translation at home, the writers of which think (for it was written by several learned men) that the word rendered "beasts" here, pertaining to those before the throne, ought to have been rendered "living creatures." Well, that would have been, it is true, an explanation as well as a translation; but I make these remarks in order that you might see that we really have in these two orders of creatures the friends of God on the one hand, and the enemies of God on the other.

The next remark I have to make is this; you must not for a moment suppose that any such creatures actually existed as are here presented. Why, they are said to have the face of a lion, the face of a calf, the face of a man, and the face of an eagle. You must not understand that such creatures actually existed, or that such creatures ever will exist. Look at it, see how absurd it would be. Why, you would be frightened if you were to meet a person with such faces as these. Why, you would say, I met a man with four faces, — a lion's face, and a calf's face, and a man's, and an eagle's face. You would not know what to think; it would be a strange sort of thing. No, friends, no such creatures ever did or ever will exist. They are nothing else but forms in which the Lord was pleased to present to our sight spiritual and eternal things. Now I wish to establish this point, in order that you may see more clearly the beautiful meaning contained in these symbols. For instance, when a sheet was let down from heaven, you read that there were four footed beasts, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. Now do you suppose that there literally were those creatures, that they were actually in heaven, and actually came down, and were actually drawn up again, so that when you get to heaven you will see a number of four footed beasts, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air? No, say you, I could not understand such a thing as that. Then, again, you find the Scriptures very much abound with symbols, which, of course, have no actual existence, as I shall presently, if possible, more clearly prove. For instance, when the Holy Spirit is called a dove, and appeared in bodily shape like a dove, you do not believe that he was actually a dove, and that there was a dove there actually. Then, again, you read in this same book that Jesus Christ hath seven eyes and seven horns. Why, friends, you would not understand that literally, that he appears there with seven eyes. You can hardly imagine how absurd the idea is; and if he had seven horns growing out of his head, I should think it would be a very great encumbrance. But if we take it as we ought to take it, and as it is intended, the seven eyes as explained to denote the seven Spirits of God, a completeness of knowledge, and the seven horns to denote a completeness of power, then we get the meaning. Then, again, in Zechariah we read that "upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, says the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." Now you do not understand for a moment that there was literally a stone, and that the Lord did literally engrave seven eyes upon a stone. But if you understand the stone figuratively to mean the Lord Jesus Christ, and that he underwent all those sufferings by which he acquired a perfect knowledge of our misery on the one hand, and a perfect knowledge of God's truth on the other, a perfect knowledge of everything—for he learned obedience by the things that he suffered, and thereby removed the iniquity of his people,—then we can understand it. And I cannot doubt in my own mind but that the cherubim in Ezekiel and the living creatures here in

Revelation are nothing else but one and the same. We are not to understand that any such creatures as the cherubim ever existed or will exist; or that any such creatures ever existed or will exist here, any more than we can take the seven churches to be seven literal candlesticks, or any more than we can take the seven ministers to be seven literal stars. But let us take the symbols as symbols, then we shall understand them.

Now after thus observing that the original word translated "beasts" would be better rendered, I think, "living creatures," and that these are the servants of God, and that they are spoken of in these shapes and forms for our instruction, I will now remind you of what you well know, that it is beyond all dispute, there positively is no room to dispute it, but that these living creatures are nothing else but saved sinners. Now let us go to the fifth chapter, and there we shall learn what they are. And I want as we go along to have a little fellowship in these things, and that we may feel that we ourselves are a part of the friends of God, that we are a part of the living creatures.

Now let us see what these living creatures are. Go to the fifth chapter; —when Jesus had taken the book, "the four living creatures and four-and-twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." Just one word upon the harps; "having every one of them harps." The harp is nothing else mystically and spiritually but God's truth. Seventy-first Psalm, twenty-second verse, —"I will praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God; unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel." So, then, God's truth is that that is set forth by the psaltery and by the harp; and if everyone had a harp, then everyone had the truth. "He shall guide you into all truth." And oh! let us ask, has not the truth of God charmed our sorrows away, and been to us many times the sweetest music?

"No angel's harp such music yields
As what my Shepherd speaks."

Ah, when he through the preacher speaks the word, there is indeed a sweetness in it, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. "And golden vials," the new heart, new creature-ship, "full of odors," full of sympathies towards Christ, full of desires after God, full of admiration, and saying, "Thou art the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely;" full of sincere and supreme affection to their covenant God. "Full of odors, which are the prayers of saints." The prayers of the saints, if I may so speak, are spicy with many other graces besides the desire itself; their prayers go up with all the sympathies and feelings of their souls in the confidence of faith. We are now trying to get at who these living creatures are; in fact, I am trying to see whether we are these living creatures. "And they sung a new song;" or, as it says in the fourteenth chapter, "as it were a new song." Why does it say "as it were a new song"? What is that for? Do not pass it by; we must stop at those words, —"they sung as it were a new song." What does that mean, —a new song as it were? I can tell you, though you already know. It was an ancient song, but it was now got into a new form. In ancient times they sung of what the Lord Jesus would do when he should come; but now these living creatures sung of its being done. So it was the ancient song in a new form. The Old Testament saints sung of what the Lord would do; these "New Testament living creatures sing of what he has done. "As it were a new song;" it is the ancient theme in a new form. It stood before in the shape of promise; now it stands in the shape of actual accomplishment; the work is done, the victory won, Satan conquered, death gone, sin removed, captivity led captive, the dear Savior on high. Now mark, —"saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast," —ah, the Old Testament saints sung of what he should do; but "thou wast slain." These are the four living creatures, these are the four beasts, these are the four-and-twenty elders; can you doubt, then, who the people are that are represented by them?" Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God." Then they were once away from

God, and were brought to God only by the blood of Christ. "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us;"—these four living creatures, called four, you see, as the Israelites encamped in a four square, even typifying in that, the blessed truth that the gospel should go east, west, north, and south, and gather in poor sinners from the four quarters of the globe, out of every nation, kindred, people, and tongue. Can we then doubt as to who they are?—"and hast made us unto our God kings and priests;" that is what they are. So you see you must not take, as I have said, the creatures here to be in the actual shape and form intended; but we shall presently see what is the meaning of all those forms in which they appear. "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests." Now we know from the Lord's own word that none can sing of redemption as themselves being redeemed but the redeemed; none others can learn the song, none others can boast of being raised up from the dust and from the dunghill, and made to inherit the throne of glory. Now what say we to these living creatures, so far as I have gone? Can we not somewhat join with them? Do we not say that the dear Savior is worthy to take everything into his hands? for if he were able to bear our sins, if he were able to bear the curse, if he were able to conquer death and hell, if he were able to redeem us to God, then he was able to do anything.

But, again, they are said to have four faces and six wings, and to be full of eyes within. Now take it literally, eyes within; you can hardly imagine, if you had eyes inside your bosom, how they could see there. You see if you attempted to take it literally it would be absurd. I am quite aware it is very easy to spiritualize the literal meaning of the Scriptures away; and that while we are avoiding with all care possible the whirlpool of Charybdis, we may fall upon the rocks of Scylla; so we shall avoid both;— wherever the Scriptures can be taken literally, we will do so; and where they cannot be taken literally without the veriest absurdity, we must then take them spiritually. When I read, for instance, of the birth, and life, and death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I take all that literally. But when I hear him say, "Except a man eat my flesh and drink my blood, he hath no life in him;" "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day," I must take that spiritually. So if we are careful in our attention to the Holy Scriptures, we shall soon see what must be taken literally and what must be taken figuratively. A great many scriptures can be taken both ways,—first literally, and then get at the spiritual meaning. But here we have symbols that are formed, for we have no such creatures in nature as are here presented.

Now look in the first place at their faces, and let us see if the Scriptures will help us. Here is the face of a lion. Do you not read of some of David's mighty men, that their faces were as the faces of lions, —bold and determined and decided for God? Why, is not this a quality of the Christian? These characteristics, therefore, are not to be understood literally, but mystically, to set forth Christian qualities. What is a minister without boldness? Why, if I were to consult one half of my teachers, I should be in one shape to-day, in another shape to-morrow; I should be going to Jericho one day, going to Jerusalem another day, going to Egypt another day, and to Babylon another day. I do not seek to accommodate any one, nor to please any one, but I do earnestly seek to profit all. Here, then, if I know what I am talking about, I shall be bold. And so you—you know what it is to feel that you are a poor lost sinner in and of yourself, that if you are saved it must be by the grace of God; you know you are indebted to God alone for your salvation; and you must therefore put on the lion's face, and be bold for God. "We were bold," says the apostle, "to speak unto you the gospel of God." And David, when speaking of Saul and Jonathan in their military prowess, says, They were swifter than eagles, and stronger than lions. So you see, friends, it is an Old Testament way of setting forth that boldness and decision that become the Christian. The Christian must set his face like a flint; he must be daunted at nothing. Besides, there is a promise to you under this very figure in the fifth of Micah. "The remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people, as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go

through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver. Thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries, and all thine enemies shall be cut off." And if Jesus Christ were bold for us, and he be the Lion of the tribe of Judah, if we partake of his Spirit we shall partake of his boldness. The adversaries of old, when they saw the lion-like decision, when they heard the thundering testimony of Peter and John, and saw they could not move them, took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. That is one of the characteristics of the living creatures, —decision, boldness. "None of these things," says one, "move me."

The next is the face of a calf. Say you, What will you make of that? Why, make it what it is, —a young ox. Let the calf alone, and it will become an ox by and by. Fourth of Malachi, "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." As I observed last Wednesday evening, that is a promise to the apostles; they were taken in their infancy, not in their natural infancy, but in their spiritual infancy; that is the man born of God. He is a little sacrifice at present, a calf, as it were, a little one just to begin with; but by and by he will grow, and become the strong, laborious, patient ox, and be willing at any time to shed the last drop of his blood rather than put off the yoke of the gospel, be severed from the love of God, or give up his eternal truth. "I am now ready," said the apostle, "to be offered." He knew that the Lord could throw sensations into his soul that should overcome, and more than overcome, all the pains his enemies could inflict upon his body. Ah, he said, I have been up into the third heavens; I did not know whether I was in the body or out of the body. See what he suffered, see how they treated him; why, his back was cut to pieces pretty well sometimes; what must have been the pain, the smarting he endured! But he was taken up into the third heavens, and that neutralized the whole of it, so that he actually did not even know whether he had a body, —whether in the body or out of the body he could not tell. Some of the martyrs on the rack have felt just the same, and been enabled then to say, "Through Christ I can do all things, and can bear all sufferings, if my Lord be there." That, then, is the meaning, to my mind, of the face of the calf.

Then comes the face of a man. Yes, Christian, you will need not only the boldness, the labor, and the willingness to be sacrificed, but you will need the wisdom, the prudence, the carefulness, and the wariness of the man. "Be ye wise as serpents, and harmless as doves." You want the wariness of the man. We do not wish to be fools, —no; we want wisdom, prudence, forethought, and care; and the more the Lord blesses us with these qualities the better. The face of the man; —it helps the lion's face to look bold and fearless; it helps the ox, I was going to say, to be willing to be sacrificed.

And then comes the eagle. Naturalists tell us that the eagle flies higher than any other bird, that its range is wider, that it can sustain its flight longer than any other. And the Christian rises sometimes very high, bless the Lord, when he fulfils his promise, "They shall rise with wings as eagles." And the visual power of the eagle is wonderful; he can look at the sun, and enjoy the sight, whereas it would put our eyes out. So when the Lord raises us up, we shall so see his glory as to be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, and that by the Spirit of our God.

It is true the living creatures are not always spoken of in this order, that the first was the lion, the second the calf, the third the man, and the fourth the eagle; but that may only simply denote that these respective qualities may be more conspicuous in one than in the other. And so you will find some Christians thoroughly bold, but somehow or another there is not much patience about them. And then the man. There are some Christians in whom this is very conspicuous. They are amazingly cautious. I could mention some of you, that look at this, and that, and the other; get you to move a step till you see your way, not you; you are as wary and cautious and careful as possible. I have often blessed the Lord for having such people with me; I have had and shall have cause to do so. And then comes one more conspicuous as the

eagle; he is always either dreadfully down or else most gloriously up, one or the other. Hence poor David, when he had lost his feathers, see how wretched he was; but when he recovered his feathers again he said, "Thou renewest my youth like the eagles."

These living creatures, then, had not only the face of the lion to represent the boldness of the Christian, but the face of the calf, or the ox, to denote his devotion, willingness to be sacrificed to God in life and death; the face of the man to denote his oneness with Christ in prudence, wisdom, forethought, and wariness; and the face of the eagle to denote his activity and delight in the ways of the Lord.

Then these living creatures are also said to be "full of eyes before and behind," and to be "full of eyes within." One of Toplady's hymns is as good a comment upon that as can be: —

"'Tis sweet to look inward,
And attend the whispers of his lore;
And sweet to look upward to the place

Where Jesus reigns above:
And sweet to look back and see my name

In life's book set down,
And sweet to look forward and behold

Eternal joys my own."

So the Christian looks back, and sees how the Lord has been coming towards him from everlasting; —he looks back, and he says, There was a time when I was blind, but now, thank God, I see; there was a time when I cared naught for eternal things, but now my soul thirsts for them; there was a time when I was Satan's slave, the world's slave, under sin, under darkness, under everything that was wretched; but now I have to look back and to remember the way the Lord has led me in the wilderness.

"I muse on the years that are past,
Wherein my defense thou hast proved."

"And eyes within." The Christian looks to his own heart, he looks to his own soul, examines himself; he says, Are my convictions real? are my desires after the Lord real? is my heart right with the Lord? There are the eyes within. Then here are eyes before, to look forward. The Christian looks forward to the rest that remains for the people of God; he looks forward and says, How shall I do in the swelling of Jordan? how shall I get through this trouble, that, and the other? Thus, then, if we take the faces figuratively and the eyes figuratively, is there any difficulty in understanding the meaning? Does it not precisely describe the qualities of which I trust we are partakers, and precisely describe the experiences of every real child of God?

Then they are said to have six wings. But only imagine —six wings! Yes; and these six wings would denote that heart, hands, and feet were all at work in God's service, all active, all moving, the man is all alive, — a thorough Christian from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. Why, here is a man at work with his head, and his heart, and his hands, and his feet! Sometimes when the Christian hears the gospel preached, he feels as if he could hardly keep still; he wants to give the pew a knock, can hardly keep his feet still. Sometimes the minister so speaks as to set the soul alive from top to toe. Now, Christians, what must heaven be, what must it be there, where the soul in all its capacities shall be developed to the utmost

perfection; it shall be all alive from top to toe! Hence the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision "ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning." Those are sweet seasons when we are thus favored.

Well, says one, I do not get on like that. Very well, we will be a little merciful to you. Now, Isaiah vi. 2, — "With twain he covered his face,"—afraid to look up, afraid the Lord is not his. Ah, say you, I can do that a little. Well, that is better than nothing. "And with twain he covered his feet." I will not go on into full assurance; I will not go on to cry Abba, Father; perhaps it would be wrong if I were to say the Lord is mine; perhaps it will be wrong if I go on into something like full assurance. How do you get on? Do you feel you belong to the Lord? No, I am rather cautious, rather afraid. "And with twain he did fly." So with two wings he did not fly very fast, just fast enough to keep up among some of the hinder ones. There is our poor brother, two wings over his face, two over his feet, and only two left to fly with. So the soul goes on in the truth, in the path of Ezekiel's living chariot, and shall live, and not die, and forever praise the name of the Lord.

Thus we get the crystal sea and the living creatures. I hope next lecture to have the sealed, or rather the unsealed book.

III. THE SEALED BOOK.

We learn from the nineteenth verse of the first chapter of this book, that John was to write the things which he had seen, and the things that were, and the things that were to be hereafter. And the things that had been, the things that were, and the things that were to be, were the same. For what had there been before him? Why, two things, — mercy and judgment. In all ages the Lord showed mercy to his friends and ministered judgment to his foes. And what was there in the time of John? The same things, — mercy and judgment. And what was there to be thereafter? The same things, —mercy and judgment. Therefore, when the Lord in the fourth chapter calls John up to the revelation of the things contained in this book, he says, "Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter." That, synthetically speaking, means that the things that were to come were mercy and judgment; and this book goes analytically into these two great matters.

Now the subject of our lecture this evening is the sealed book, as described in the fifth chapter. The first question is, What is that book? how shall we find out what that book is? The answer is that we must find out what the book is by its contents. And the definition I have already given, you will see, will apply to this Book of the Revelation, and will apply indeed to the whole of the Scriptures, —namely, mercy and judgment. These are the two things that run all through the Scriptures. Let us look, then, carefully first at the contents of this book, in order to ascertain what book that is that is sealed with seven seals; then we must show, in the second place, why it was that none but the Savior could open the book; then we must show why it was that John wept, and wept much; then we must show in what relations or characters the Savior opened up the book; and then we must show some of the happy consequences that flowed from this book being opened up.

First, then, I take the sealed book to mean the Scriptures at large. There may be a special reference to the Old Testament, but I think we had better take it to mean the Scriptures at large. Now as to the contents of the book, there seems to be an allusion in this sealed book to the twenty-ninth of Isaiah. Perhaps I had

better name the twofold sense in which the Scriptures are sealed. First that the natural man cannot get at their spirituality. Therefore, in the twenty-ninth of Isaiah you have these words: —" The vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he says, I cannot; for it is sealed: and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee; and he says, I am not learned." Now that is one sense in which the Scriptures are sealed, that the natural man cannot get at them in their spiritual meaning. But this is infinitely short of the full meaning; the real substantial meaning lies, as we shall see, very much deeper than this. I will just notice in the twenty-ninth of Isaiah a kind of sample which the Lord gives of the whole gospel, and you will see in this Book of the Revelation that which answers to it as closely as can be. It there says, "In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book," meaning of course the book of God; but the prophet there gives a kind of sample of what the gospel book is: —" In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness;" here, you see, are eyes opened to see something concerning this book. "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." So that after the eyes are thus opened, the man becomes meek, humbled down, and is made conscious of his poverty. Then the prophet brings in the victory which the Lord Jesus Christ should achieve. "The terrible one is brought to nought." I need not quote all the words, but there is in that paragraph a description of the conquest of Christ over the enemy. Now when the enemy is conquered, the prophet, or the Lord by the prophet, uses these words:—"Therefore thus says the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed;" now that Jesus Christ hath brought the terrible one to naught; now that Jesus Christ hath consumed the scorner; now that all that watch for iniquity, to lay something to the charge of God's elect, are cut off; now that he that would make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate, and turn aside the just for a thing of naught, is cut off; now that Jesus Christ hath brought in his complete victory,—now it is that Jacob shall not be ashamed, and his face now shall not wax pale.

The face waxing pale is expressive of guilt, sickness, death, mortality; and therefore the face not waxing pale denotes that the guilt is gone, that mortality is gone, that death is gone, and that life, and eternal bloom, eternal beauty, take the place thereof. "But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands in the midst of him;" — here go to the seventh chapter of the Revelation; there you see the multitudes that were brought in; see how beautifully it answers;—"the work of mine hands;" and so it was the work of God to bring in that mighty multitude; "they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel. They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." Now, you see four things there; first, you see the book, what it contains, — that life and light by which souls are brought to God; second, the conquest the Savior hath wrought; third, the oneness of the people; and fourth, that the erring, those that are in some degree of error, shall be set right.

But we will come to the opening of this book. None but Jesus Christ could open the book. John says, "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." Now let us see if we can clearly and beyond a dispute understand the meaning; and if I can bring the meaning out, I am sure you will see it is a very blessed and solemn meaning. But before I do so, I will mention two or three circumstances that may enable me to set it forth with more clearness.

We will call the fifteenth chapter of Genesis a book, and that in that book there are the promises that the Israelites should be delivered from Egypt. Abraham's descendants were delivered from Egypt. Now Moses took that book, and Moses, as the servant of God, opened that book, and practically carried it out, and wrought that deliverance which the fifteenth of Genesis promised. Secondly, there is the fifteenth of Exodus, we will call that a book, the promise there that they should take possession of the promised land; Joshua opened that book practically, and carried it out, and gave them possession of the promised land, as the Lord said. Thus Moses opened one book; Joshua practically opened another. And then there were promises that the Israelites should enjoy liberty in their land, and David wrought out that liberty, so that the Israelites settled down in that land; and David therefore opened the book that pertained to that department also. The Lord had promised that the time should come when there should be no poor in the land; that is another book, and Solomon opened that book, and carried out that; for in the days of Solomon silver was accounted nothing of, gold was so plentiful; and you read that there was neither any adversary nor any evil concurrent. Thus these four men each opened the book.

But now let us come to this book. Here is a book that contains not a temporal salvation from Egypt, but the eternal salvation of the soul. Who can open that? Who can carry that out? Servants cannot; it requires the Son, the Son of God; God the Son; he only hath that omnipotence by which he can accomplish salvation. Every promise must remain forever mute, every blessing must remain forever hidden, every mercy must remain forever apart from us, the mercy of God and our souls can never come together, unless some person be found. Christ had already, when this proclamation was made, mediatorially wrought salvation on earth; but then here is the carrying of that salvation out. Moses could not carry his salvation out; he lost the greater part of his people; when he got to the end of his journey he had but very few left of those that set out with him. Not so with the Lord Jesus Christ: —

"Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves them to the end."

Therefore, it is that no man in heaven nor on earth could undertake the eternal salvation of the soul. Hear what the apostle Paul says, bearing upon this very thing: "For unto the angels hath he not put into subjection the world to come, whereof we speak?" We respect the holy angels, the holy prophets, the holy apostles, and the saints of God; but we must still take up the great principle advocated by the Psalmist when he says, "My soul, wait thou only upon God, for from him cometh my salvation." Now, do you understand me, that the Bible contains promises of eternal salvation? Moses, the servant, could carry out the temporal, but Christ alone has that sacrifice, that righteousness, and that authority, and has done that work by which eternal salvation can be carried out. Oh, how we might here, were it not for rather hindering our time, run a contrast between the religion of the Son of God and the religions of men, and see how paltry and contemptible are all the pretensions of fallen mortals to pardon sins, to save the soul, or to help on the great work of eternal salvation! None but Jesus could open the book. Again, Joshua could open the temporal book; he could work out the temporal promise; but who can work out the promise of eternity; who can bring eternal life; who can give us possession of heaven; who can give us possession of that inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away? Only he who is heir of all things. Moses was not heir of all things, Joshua was not heir of all things, but Christ is; therefore, he alone can open the book, and carry out the promise of eternal glorification. Why, not an angel from heaven could look upon it; he cannot bring souls to heaven; therefore, not a saint nor an angel could undertake to have any hand in it. "No man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." You might almost hear an angel saying, I can't look at it; it is something so magnificent. Why, the person that can open that book must swallow up death in victory, bring in eternal life; the person that can open that book, heaven must belong to him. How could he give heaven to others

if it did not belong to himself? Therefore, Christ gives heaven to others by virtue of heaven belonging to himself; for all things belong to Christ, all things belong to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Says Christ, "All thine are mine, and mine are thine;" there is no difference. So that he who should thus practically open up the book, and give heaven to the people, heaven must be his to give;— not that heaven was Christ's to give apart from the Father; for when a mother besought him that her two sons might sit, one on his right hand and another on his left in his kingdom, he replied, "It is not mine to give;"—that is to say, not apart from the Father; it was his, but not apart from the Father; it was already disposed of, already settled;—therefore he said, "It shall be given unto them for whom it is prepared."

Thus, then, while David, as a servant, worked out the temporal liberty of the people, who but Christ could work out our deliverance from hell, our freedom from sin, from wrath, and from the threatening's of the Bible? Is there any difficulty in this matter? Then, again, Solomon filled the land with glory, but it was only temporal, it pertained only to the body; but Jesus Christ will fill the church, before he has done with it, with the glory of God; he will make the living God all and in all. Thus, if you look at the contents of the book you will see that it simply means the holy Scriptures, especially the gospel part, necessarily connecting the judgments therewith; because a great many of God's judgments are defensive; there are many judgments that he ministers to his foes in defense of his people; and it does say in one place, "Let Mount Zion rejoice because of thy judgments." And tremendous as the thought may be, the time will come when, with an eloquence that no angel can equal, you will have to join in the solemn anthem, "Alleluia. And the smoke of her torment," the false church, the enemy, "ascended up for ever and ever." Thus then here is the book, which can be opened only by the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was sealed with seven seals, to denote the completeness. Look at it for one moment, —can you think of one eternal blessing you can get at without Christ? If you speak of life, or light, or sanctification, or justification, or whatever you may, there is not one blessing you can get at without the Lord Jesus Christ. And while everything is thus entirely out of the reach of the creature, yet the dear Savior was to open the seven seals; so that the revelation we have by him shall be complete; and one blessing shall come in by him after another, until all are complete, until everything is perfect. What a glorious scene we have before us! How great the contrast! —while in a state of nature the book is sealed; we are under sin, and under the law, and shut out from everything; but by this mighty revolution wrought by the Savior, and the bringing in by him of these eternal blessings, we shall ultimately be brought into the possession of that perfection that is in Christ. There is something very beautiful in this.

But we will notice John's weeping. He says, —"I wept much." I think there are three things meant by his weeping. The fact is that if, when the dear Savior died and had ascended to heaven, he, for some mysterious reason or another, had there left the matter, had not gone on to open the seals, and to minister the life, the mercy, and the grace which he ascended on high to minister, —supposing such a thing as this, where would the world have been? Well, in heathen darkness, in satanic darkness. John saw the world in vision, —he saw these things in vision; the world passed before him like a diorama, —I will not say panorama, seeing them all at once, but like a diorama; and he says, —"There they go, myriads, myriads of creatures; no gospel, no mercy, no grace, no life. Ah, poor fallen world! miserable world! better anything be taken from thee than the word, the spirit, the grace, and salvation of God, his friendship and his love. "I wept much." I think that is one thing intended, the awful condition we should be in without the gospel. What a state of degradation is that man or that woman in who glories in being without the gospel! Is there one such here this evening? Do you glory in what they call not being religious, in making no profession of religion? So you glory in insulting your Maker; you glory in despising him; you glory in everything that is hostile to him and to the welfare of your soul.

Such is our state by nature. Not so with John; —he entered into those deep sympathies which every Christian has in relation to the precious souls of men. And then the next thing intended by his weeping is to represent the people of God in their mourning after the Lord. Ah, when the sinner is brought to know his state, but does not yet see there is mercy for him, he goes forth weeping, bearing the precious seed of faith in God's word, the precious seed of prayer; —he goes forth weeping; by and by the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David steps in, opens up to him the provision, and he comes again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. But I do think, friends, in my own mind, that John's weeping, and weeping much, means another thing. Recollect that this Book of the Revelation is particularly a figurative and a representative book; so that there are not only in it symbolical things, but symbolical actions as well; and I think, therefore, that the third thing represented by John's weeping is the destiny of the lost. He is made to weep as expressive of the dreadful destiny of the lost. "There shall be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth." And John wept much. Oh, how much is the grief, how much is the agony, how much is the sorrow, how much is the suffering, how much is the writhing of the lost man!

He looks up, and says, "I pray thee, send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water." Ah, man, there is no book of promise to thee, and therefore no one to open the book of promise to thee. Ah, lost man, the day is gone; thou art shut out of the world, and thou art shut up in hell; there is a great gulf fixed. Ah, lost man, if thou canst point to a book containing a promise from God directed towards those that are in hell, then thou may with some degree of confidence call for a drop of water. Ah, when he found there was no book of grace, no book of mercy, no book of pity or compassion to be opened to him, would he not weep much? —when he heard the terrible accents, "Beside all this, between you and us there is a great gulf fixed; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." "I wept much." Oh, if we take it in this last sense, how solemnly expressive it is! What are the few griefs, what are the few trials, the few difficulties, the few troubles we have during life, compared with the eternal tribulation, that everlasting anguish, that await the lost soul? Thus, then, I take the sealed book to mean the Holy Scriptures, and then, as none but Christ could open the book, I take it to mean that none but Jesus Christ could meet and destroy the curse, overcome death, and bring out the blessings contained in the book.

I will now notice, in the next place, the relations in which the Savior opened the book. "Weep not." Let us have one word of encouragement here. How often do I weep and grieve that I cannot get anything. Here is Sunday coming, or here is Wednesday night coming, or here is Friday night coming,—I can get nothing. Oh, how many, many times the Lord hath in substance—I do not say in the precise words—said, "Weep not; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book." Presently the book is opened up, my soul is expanded, Christ is precious; and his word takes up its abode in my understanding, my memory, my affections; and it is a very rare thing for me to lose my sermons. I have heard ministers say, "Oh, I got a sermon, and lost it." Ah, then you did not have it from the Lord; if you had got it from him, you would have kept it. And if your religion be of the Lord, you will keep it; if you have received the truth of God from the Lord, you will keep it. I do sometimes lose some points of a sermon.

And art thou going to the house of God mourning because thou hast got nothing lately? The time is not far off when, from the pulpit, or from the Bible, or from a hymn, or else without any outward means, the Lord will secretly and effectually say to thy soul, "Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath done everything for thee; these things shall not be hidden from thine eyes; thou shalt see the King in his beauty, and behold the land that is very far off."

But let us look at the relations in which the Savior opened the book. First, as the Lion of the tribe of Juda. There he evidently is referred to as a conqueror, —the lion "who if he go through treadeth down, teareth in pieces, none can deliver." Therefore, Jesus Christ is here represented as a conqueror. Now what did he conquer? What Moses never conquered, —sin. What did Christ conquer? What Moses never conquered, —death; "Jesus broke the bars of death, which none e'er broke before." What did Jesus conquer? Why, Satan; trod him under his feet, and bound him down during the whole of the gospel dispensation with a chain; —the length of that chain the Lord alone knows. Satan goes about seeking whom he may devour; and when he gets very near to you, he says, If my chain were but two links longer I would kill that man; if my chain had been two links longer, as sure as the world I would have killed that Job. He got so near to Job that he could reach his property, and touch his skin, and make him look very ugly outside, but he could not get at his vitals. The Lord very often shortens Satan's chain, but he never lengthens it. "Thus far shalt thou come, but no farther." Now Jesus Christ is the only person that could conquer Satan, conquer sin, conquer hell, conquer death, and conquer all adverse powers.

Moses could not do this, therefore could not open the book to bring the blessings; Joshua could not do this, therefore could not open the book to bring the blessings; David could not do this, therefore could not open the book to bring the blessings; and Solomon was as unwise in his old age as a man well could be, so we must not look to him. We must come away from all, and fall down at the feet of the dear Redeemer, and do as they did here, in this very chapter, —they fell down before the throne, and ascribed the glory to God and the Lamb. That is one relation. Next, as the Root of David. In the first relation you have victorious power; and now, in the second relation, you have undying vitality. "The Root of David." Ah, Satan, thou hast marred his manhood, thou hast mocked his manhood, thou hast crucified and put to death his manhood; but, Satan, dost thou know that that same person has a nature that thou hast not even wounded? There was in Christ an undying vitality, and that undying vitality was his eternal deity. That deity sustained his human nature, and put itself forth in the omnipotency of its power; —he thus weighed the mountains in scales—our sins, —and the hills in a balance; meted out the heavens with his span, and thus took up the isles as a very little thing, —rolled everything away. There was an undying vitality, —that when sin touched him it dropped dead at his feet; when the curse touched him it dropped dead at his feet. Hence what does the apostle say in the eighth of the Romans? "And for sin, condemned sin in the flesh,"—that is, in Christ. I say it with the deepest reverence, that sin could not be condemned to death anywhere else. Sin was condemned in fallen angels, but the condemnation overcame them, and they sank under it, and sin holds them fast to this day. Sin was condemned in the first Adam, but they sank under it, and sin holds them fast to this day. But sin was condemned in Christ in such a way that Christ survived the condemnation. Sin died, the Savior lived; death died, the Savior lived; hell lost all its power, Christ took the key, and got possession of the territories. Here, then, is this vitality. If Christ had not this divine vitality, there would have been an end of his work when he died; —so that he was living while he died. If you think I am going too far upon this question, let us hear what John says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made"—in this everlasting covenant, —for I rather understand John spiritually there. "In him," in this divine Word, "was life,"— Divine life; you cannot injure the life of deity. It is said by some that Jesus Christ as man is our life; but do not let us separate his natures; let us distinguish between the two, but hold the oneness of his person. If Jesus Christ as man be our life, what becomes of David's testimony when he says, "Jehovah is the strength of my life"? When he shall die, I shall die; when deity gives way, my religion will lose its vitality; when Christ ceases to be God, I shall cease to have a life that shall be as certain as the existence of the blessed God himself.

Here, then, is the root of David, —everything arising from his wonderful person, his eternal deity. Take this away, and the book could not be opened. "No man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon;" no saint or angel either. But the Savior says, Let me look at it, and see what I can do with it. When he comes in, all is well. That religion, then, that does not receive him in his eternal deity is not a religion worth having. How clear this is, then, that none but the Savior could overcome the curses, and bring in the blessings to us by his power, and by his undying vitality!

But John turns round to see the Lion, —"and lo, in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb." Here is another character. There is the lion to conquer; —there is eternal deity to maintain the vitality of the church to all eternity; then comes his power and sacrificial excellency, the Lamb; and then connect with these the vitality, —the root of David. So give me this victory, give me this vitality, and then give me the sacrificial Lamb, and I shall appear before God victorious, I shall appear before God in this vitality; for "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory;" you shall appear before God as spotless as the spotless Lamb, to present you holy unblameable, through the body of his death; —"if ye continue in the faith." Why, the Lord knows that there is nothing we more solemnly desire than that we may continue in this precious faith.

Thus, then, you see the three characters; —here is the lion to conquer, the root to give vitality, and the Lamb to take away every spot, to take away every stain, to take away every fault, and to present us spotless before the eyes of his eternal glory; and the more we are favored to see these things in the glass of God's word, the more we are assimilated thereto. Thus the Savior, as I so often say, is a Lamb to his people, but a Lion for them, and he is vitality to them. He appears as the Lamb. Hence when the first seal was opened, John says, "I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals." I like that uncommonly well. Many times I have come to the house of God very cast down, and very distressed, and the Lord has given me some sweet views of Christ in his sacrifice, and it has opened up mercy and lovingkindness and heaven, it has opened up my heart, and put all my troubles out, and let the Lord's triumphs in; it has opened up my soul, and put all my fears out, and brought in faith and love; and I have gone away from this place as happy as possible. "I saw when the Lamb opened it." Oh, we cannot know him without loving him, admiring him, and joining with all heaven to worship God and the Lamb.

Now we last Thursday evening noticed some of the anthems that followed upon the book being opened, which I need not repeat; because we did that in order to show that these four beasts, or living creatures, are nothing else but the people of God; therefore, just a word or two more upon a verse in this chapter, and then we close, passing by the acclamations and anthems which they sung, the new song, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain." He achieved while here below that that entitles him to reign for ever and ever. John realized the scene,—he was favored in this vision to look all through time, to look over the sea, the world, the plains of heaven, and to look into all the graves of all that ever died in the Lord, and John says, "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth"—there are believers on earth,— "and under the earth"— there are those that are dead and buried,—"and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." John saw in vision that this would follow upon the opening of the book in the sense I have stated, —that is, the blessings being opened up and brought to the people. Now you must all judge for yourselves, you know, friends; but I think that the creatures there spoken of that ascribe glory to God, must of necessity be new creatures. It cannot mean every creature on earth and in the sea, because how many thousands are there that care nothing about their souls, nothing about eternal things! And then John says, "and under the earth,"—the tomb of every Christian hath a voice. I think, therefore, that the "every creature" there must be every new creature, because no natural man can join in that song. And besides, this fifth chapter tells us of the

opening of the book, and the very opening of the book brings life, and brings you into new creatureship. Then if I can join with them now in that song, I shall have no difficulty in joining with them when I get to heaven. I am not at all afraid that when I get there one will say, You must not come and sing that song here, there is too much free will about you. I left that behind a long time ago; I have got too far from it to go back to it again. Therefore, if you can find a response in your soul to the anthems of those that are in heaven, it will show that you are one of the people that the Lord hath formed for himself. But let us look at it. Why are the things ascribed so collocated? —"Blessing, honor, glory, and power." Do not lose the beauty of the collocation or succession of words. Why is "blessing" put first? Because the first thing that God did with us was to bless us with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, rather too early for the taste of man; he did it before the world was. "Blessed are the poor in spirit: theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "And honor." Oh, what an honor to be a Christian! It is to be a king and a priest unto God. There is honor indeed! Then comes "glory,"—eternal glory. But it does not stop there; —"Blessing, and honor, and glory;"—if it stopped there, there would be something wanting. What is the next word? "And power." Ah, says the devil, that is the worst of it; —I should not care about the blessing, and honor, and glory so much, but the worst of it is the power; —"kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Therefore —

"How can we sink with such a prop,
That bears the earth and her huge columns up?"

These are the ascriptions that John heard which followed the opening up of the book. "And the four living creatures," that were already called by grace, said, "Amen;" they made short of it. They were like a good man of God in the country, —his name was Goodchild; —he never heard me preach without saying "Amen" out loud four or five times during the sermon. Well, once he did not say "Amen," and I looked down from the pulpit, and said, "Why, brother, you have not said 'Amen.'" "Bless the Lord," said he, "I am so happy, I quite forgot it;" and he said four or five Amens. So these four living creatures gave a very hearty Amen to the dear Savior opening the book, and to that ascription, —"Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." "Amen," said the four living creatures; "and the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever." Here are then the living creatures and the elders, all of one mind.

These are some of the happy results of the heavenly book being opened; but these things amount, as far as I have gone, to a mere nothing in comparison of the great things that follow. Well may it be said of the prophets of old, "Searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." May that glory be increasingly revealed to us, and we attracted thereto, for his name's sake. Amen.

IV. THE FOUR EQUESTRIAN SEALS.

THE subject, friends, for our address this evening is the four equestrian seals that we read of in the sixth of Revelation. There are, as you are aware, when those seals are opened, presented to us successively four horses,—the white, the red, the black, and the pale, concerning which, of course, there are very many opinions. Some have thought the four horses meant four of the Roman emperors; but that is an opinion so far off from the meaning that it is hardly worth repeating. Others, with much more feasibility, have thought that while the first represents the Savior, the second horse, the red, represents Rome pagan; the third horse, the black, represents Rome papal; and the pale horse infidelity. These are opinions that many

years ago I myself had a little inclination to fall in with. It did not strike me then that the Old Testament was the place to go to for the interpretation of this book. It did not then so powerfully strike me that as the cherubim's on the mercy-seat looked one towards the other, so the Old Testament looks to the New, and the New Testament looks to the Old; and like the windows in Solomon's temple, opposite each other, throw light upon each other, so that God's own book is the place to go to concerning the book itself.

Now I may just, before I enter upon the subject, remind you that the Bible is both an ancient and an Oriental book, and that the Oriental usages in illustration were very different from our own. To us some of them seem farfetched and very uncouth, but that is because we do not catch the spirit and the meaning of those similes which are used. Let us, therefore, before I enter upon the subject, distinctly understand that while these four horses, or the vision of these four horses, is taken, as we shall see, from the sixth chapter of the prophecies of Zechariah, the horses are not intended to represent persons at all; they are intended to represent qualities, and the riders on them are of course intended to represent persons. And perhaps it will help us to be clear upon the subject if I just in this part remind you that in the sixth chapter of Zechariah, where you have the same things, we have the explanation given. When the prophet asked what these four chariots were—that is, what they were intended to represent, the answer was, "These are the four spirits of the heavens which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth."

I think in my first lecture I reminded you that the book of the Revelation contains a great many repetitions, and we shall have the same things in different forms brought before us again and again. Now what are the four spirits of the heavens but the anticipated at that time general and universal mission of the gospel?" Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." I therefore conclude that the horses in Zechariah and the horses in this vision represent not persons, but qualities, which we shall find in the Savior, which we shall find in the apostles, which we shall find in all true ministers of the gospel, and which we shall find in all the people of God. Thus, then, while the riders are to represent persons, the horses are to represent qualities; those qualities I will presently state, after I have just reminded you that you have a similar form of speech in the nineteenth chapter, a similar representation of Christ and his people, differing in form, but substantially the same. There you read of Christ riding upon a white horse, and there you read of his judging and making war in righteousness; and you read there that the armies of heaven did follow him upon white horses. Now we cannot take this literally. When we deal with spiritual things, we must take literal things as the representatives to us of spiritual things. We cannot suppose that horses are in heaven, or that horses are used in spiritual matters. They are, therefore, simply representations of qualities. Now what are the qualities represented? I will look at our subject to-night under these two thoughts: —First, what the qualities are; secondly, I will go, if time permit, through these four equestrian seals, in those details in which they are presented to us in this sixth chapter.

Now the first thing you must fix in your mind is, that these horses represented in this vision are war horses, — they are all four in the war. There is some great, solemn, and tremendous war to be carried on, and these horses are war horses. We shall therefore trace out presently their qualities, after I have just quoted a plain scripture or two that will show the spirit and meaning of these war horses. Now the horse will denote strength, and a great many qualities that follow from that strength. The apostle's words, I think, will throw a little light upon this quality, or the reason why this kind of representation is given to us, when he says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God,"—here is the quality, you see, the strength, —"of God unto salvation." Then again, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." Therefore, now that the Savior hath achieved his work, that war is with those powers of darkness, to cast Satan out, and to bring immortal souls savingly to Jesus Christ and to the blessed God.

Let us trace these qualities out. I cannot but think that the Holy Spirit hath in the thirty-ninth of Job a spiritual meaning. Let us look there at the qualities attributed to the war horse, and look at them sacredly; do not look at them frivolously; for I must remind you that it is one of the easiest things in the world to turn even God's word into ridicule; it is one of the easiest things in the world to make light even of that which is intended for our instruction. Therefore, do not let us find fault with the similes which the Lord hath used, but let us be thankful that he has condescended to instruct us at all, and that he condescends to open unto us any of the meaning of his word at all; for without the meaning of his word we must remain in the dark. Therefore, if we can approach his word—for "unto the pure all things are pure"—in the spirit of humility and of prayer, I believe its mysteries will not be hidden from us; for "the meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way."

The first quality then is that of strength. "Hast thou given the horse strength? hast thou clothed his neck with thunder?" Now the Savior was armed with those terrible testimonies that were as thunder, and the apostles were armed with those terrible testimonies against the enemies that were as thunder, —hence some of them are called the "sons of thunder." Here you will see, then, strength is the idea intended, —something beyond the strength of the creature; and that strength which they had from the Lord, the Lord is pleased thus to represent. And then, while they went forth with those testimonies that should shake the sinner like mighty thundering's, and remind him of Sinai, and what stands against him, then comes the courage of the apostle, or the minister, and Christ of course the perfection of the same, "Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? the glory of his nostrils is terrible." What is this but expressive of the undaunted courage of these riders on the horses, expressive of their determined decision for God?" The glory of his nostrils is terrible," expressive of their breathing out their unbending and unalterable decision for the great and blessed God. And then, to show that this represents the quality not only of strength and of courage, but of willingness, it says, "He paweth in the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength." "He paweth in the valley," expressive of defiance. Let us hear the apostle's testimony here, which means the same thing, —when he was in a very deep valley, and Satan said, Surely his strength is overcome now, surely he is not defiant now, surely he is cast down and out of heart now. No; he still bears this testimony, —"We are exceeding joyful in all our tribulations." So that he, as it were, pawed in the valley to denote his defiance of his foes, and rejoiced in his strength. Ah, let us be brought ever so low, even in the valley of the shadow of death, even in that solemn hour, if God be with us and be our strength, we can defy the foe, rejoice in our strength, because God is our strength, proportioning our strength to our day. "He goeth on to meet the armed men." Who are the armed men? Alas! alas! I ought to say it with tears, I ought to say it with trembling, I ought to say it in the deepest possible tones of solemnity and lamentation, when I answer the question, Who are the armed men? I answer, the whole human race. There is not a man or woman that is not by nature armed with a panoply of hell against their own souls, against God's truth, and against God's Christ, and against eternal things; and until the stronger One comes and takes from us this Satanic armour, and brings us down to the feet of the great Conqueror, there is no yielding, —until he take the armour from us, and spoil the adversary: then is the prey delivered, then is the soul delivered. This is the very simile the Savior himself uses, —" When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusteth, and divideth his spoils." When Jesus Christ comes, he spoils the whole of this Satanic armour, and the unbeliever becomes a believer, the prayerless man becomes a praying man, the presumptuous man becomes a God-fearing man, the sinner becomes a saint, the haughty man becomes a humble man, the whole-hearted, hardened man becomes a broken-hearted man, and becomes willing to be led captive by the glorious gospel of the blessed God.

The apostles therefore went on to meet the armed men. "He mocketh at fear," so did they; —see the holy apostles standing before the terrors of civil and of ecclesiastical tribunals; see how undaunted they were. Listen to a humble man, but at the same time having God to be his strength, saying, "Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." You see how undauntedly they stood before kings and rulers, and whatever they had to encounter, counting not their lives dear unto them. "He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted;"—all the things they could heap upon them could not at all frighten them. The horse represents these noble qualities. Would that I could see a few of these qualities shine a little more among ministers and Christians in the day in which we live. "He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted." Hear the testimony of another: —he says, "None of these things move me;"—I mock at the fear, I despise the fear, I hold it in contempt. Or, to go to the Old Testament for a scripture, —when all the terrors of an army of a hundred fourscore and five thousand came against the little few at Jerusalem, what was the answer? "The daughter of Zion hath despised thee, she hath shaken her head at thee, she hath laughed thee to scorn." "He goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted; neither turneth he back from the sword." Christ never turned back from the sword; the apostles never turned back from the sword. Hear what the apostle Paul says about it: —"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" And among the many things raised against him he names the sword: —"Shall the sword?" What cared they for the sword? They knew as they stood in Christ nothing could hurt them; they knew the Savior's promise, —"I give you power over all the power of the adversary." He himself had all power, and therefore he could give it. "All power in heaven and in earth is given unto me." "I give you all power; ye shall tread on serpents and scorpions, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." Again, "The quiver rattleth against him, the glittering spear and the shield;" the spear to pierce his side, and to pierce them, and the shield. Does this cool them down? does this stop them? does this make them show the white feather? Nay, "he swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage;" it only makes their zeal burn the higher and the hotter; and so it was with the dear Savior, —nothing could move him; so it was with the apostles, —that the more the glittering spear rattled against them, and the more they were threatened the higher their courage rose, the more strength the Lord bestowed. They could shake the foundations of prisons, they could shake off the chains of the prisoner, and stand there like spiritual kings, like monarchs of all they surveyed. They could smile at locks, and bolts, and bars, they could smile at all creature powers; there was no tower, there was no castle, there was no prison that could hold them when the Lord was pleased to appear to and for them.

I am afraid some of us know but very little of this power of godliness compared with what, in the apostolic age, was realized by those wonderful men. "Neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet." What does that mean? They believed it was the sound of a trumpet, but not the sound of the trumpet. The Pharisees sounded the trumpet of their religion, but the apostles did not believe it was the sound of the trumpet, and so they would not hearken to the summons; and the Pope has in times past sounded a trumpet, —he might as well keep it quiet now; —he has sounded a trumpet, but the martyrs did not believe it was the trumpet. "He says among the trumpets," among the various false gospels, "Ha, ha,"—laughs at them all, just as you do: —you laugh at false gospels, do you not? I hope you do. "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh." We hold every gospel in infinite contempt but the glorious gospel of the blessed God. "And he smelleth the battle afar off." The Savior—let us apply it to him first, —long before he came, foresaw the battle, recognized the battle; he knew what he would have to encounter, he knew the tactics that he should follow, he knew the stand that he should take, the ground that he should hold, he knew the achievements that he should accomplish, he knew the honors with which he should return. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" "He smelleth the battle afar off." The enemies fight blindly; but Christ with his eyes open; he always knew where he was, but they did not know where they were; Christ always knew what he was doing, but the enemies did not know what they were doing; and the Savior had compassion on them in the midst of it, and said, "Father, forgive them, for

they know not what they do;" but the dear Redeemer knew, recognized the battle afar off; "the thunder of the captains, and the shouting." Who are the captains? The prophets. What are their thunders? The testimonies they put upon record against the adversaries. What are their shouting's? There is not a prophet that did not shout victory through the blood of the Lamb before that victory was wrought; there is not one prophet that did not look forward and exult and rejoice that his holy arm should gain the victory.

Here are the thunders of the captains, and the shouting's: and the Savior confirmed them all. He never turned round and said, —Moses, you said that I was a rock, and my work was perfect, —you began to shout too soon; and David, you began to shout too soon; and so of the rest of the prophets, —not one. The prophets watched him here below, and just as he was about to enter upon the worst of all, the greatest of all, the most solemn of all, heaven itself seemed to say, —Moses and Elias, go down, meet him in the land, come back and tell us how it is. And they went, and he was transfigured. They came to him, and he was brought up, as it were, to them, transfigured before them, and they spoke there and then of the decease that he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Now go and tell the prophets, the captains: —they were captains; they led their little flocks along from strength to strength, from victory to victory, from advantage to advantage, from conquest to conquest, from blessing to blessing, till they all got to heaven together. Now go ye to heaven, and tell them I will accomplish my decease. It shall be at the place where it is appointed; as the place was appointed where I was to be born, the place is appointed where I am to die; I will be there, I will accomplish the work. "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." Moses, to represent the old covenant as taken out of the way; and Elias to represent the prophets, ascended up on high, spread the news throughout heaven; so that Jesus confirmed the thunder and the shoutings of the captains.

Then again, just to confirm the idea that all this hath a spiritual meaning, (I am now trying to read out the qualities, the strength, the indomitable courage, the undauntedness, the decision, the aggressive progression, the sure conquest, and the eternal shouts); we have similar language in the tenth of Zechariah: —"The Lord of hosts hath visited his flock, the house of Judah, and hath made them as his goodly horse in the battle." And then again, you know, while I have said the horses refer to qualities, (and the very colors of the horses will say something to us presently), nevertheless even persons are represented in the word of God by horses. For instance, in Solomon's Song, —"I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." Why, if a young man were to say that now to his sweetheart, she would wonder what in the world he meant by such a compliment as that, because it is not our usage of speech; she would not understand it. And yet it is taken from this idea. "I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." I will not now stop to remind you wherein lie the things represented thereby; I merely quote it to show that this is one of the usages of the word of God; and it is for us to bless his holy name for that word, and pray to be taught thereby.

In this sixth chapter, then, we have the Savior first. John says, "I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals." In our last lecture we showed, I hope to your satisfaction, that none but Jesus Christ could open the seals; therefore, I will not go over any of that ground again; but it is remarkable that in speaking of the opening of the seals the Lamb is said to open them; that is to remind you that Jesus Christ achieved these blessings for us by his atonement. "And I heard, as it were, the noise of thunder;" the thunder there of course means the voice of God, calling the living creatures' attention to eternal things; "one of the four living creatures saying, Come and see." Now, just look at the Christian experience that is in this. Here is a sinner convinced of his state, and he goes to the house of God, hoping the minister will come to him and point out what his conviction means. Here is a sinner fearing and trembling; he has heard the thunder of heaven in a way he never did before, and he fears that the wrath of God will fall upon him; and he says, as it were, to the minister, "Come and see:" that is, tell me what my experience means; tell me what these

convictions mean; tell me what these thunders mean; tell me what these troubles mean. And is it not so, that you sometimes come to the house of God, and all but wonder how it is that the minister comes so direct to where you are? and have not some of you said,—well I will not say some of you, but at least in different places, I will not say in this place, lest you should think I am speaking egotistically; but have you not sometimes, when you have heard a minister, said, Well, if I could tell out my soul's exercises and experiences, and the way of salvation, as well as this minister has done it, I would join the church directly; but I am so afraid if I were to come I should not be able to say anything. So the living creature says, "Come and see." And the minister ought to feel the force of this; for you must understand, that in ancient times,— I do not know whether we have lost the honor or not, lost the title or not; if we have lost the honor and the privilege, I say, let us pray the Lord to restore it to us,—aforetime prophets were called "seers ;" I question almost if some of us that are ministers see so well now; we are such poor purblind things, I am afraid if you call us prophets you will hardly allow us the title of seers; aforetime they were called seers, because they saw into things, and opened up and explained things, and brought things to light, and the people were then delighted to listen to them.

I dare not here give way to my feelings for a moment in relation to the Reformation. When Luther appeared, what a seer that man was. He saw things, and opened up things that the people had not heard before; and so of John Knox, and Calvin, and many others that the Lord hath raised up; and we have a hope that some seers will be raised up by and by in the Roman Catholic Church. I believe when that system falls to pieces it will be by the Lord raising up some good people in that church, and bringing them out of it, that are acquainted with all the movements of the devil there. An old poacher makes a good gamekeeper; and so it is with an old thief, if he can but be made an honest man, he makes a good detective. So it was with Luther. He was aware of all the crafty movements of that system, and therefore was well prepared to encounter those crafty movements. He could see through the whole. He was a seer. So the living creatures said, "Come and see." And John was a seer, and saw what we have now to describe.

"And I saw, and behold a white horse;" there is Christ. I will use no arguments to prove it was the Savior, because I think you will all fall in with that idea; there is the Savior in his purity and perfection. "And he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering and to conquer;" but I will come back to that presently. Is not this part, think you, taken from the forty-fifth Psalm? Does it not there say, "Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O most mighty, with thy glory"—his glory was his finished work—"and thy majesty"—his magisterial authority, founded on the work that he had achieved. "And in thy majesty ride prosperously because of truth,"—new covenant truth, yea and amen truth, sworn truth—"and meekness,"—there is his humiliation, —"and righteousness,"—there is the righteousness that he hath brought in. "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee." Oh what a happy day that was when the arrow of conviction reached our conscience, and we became pricked in the heart, and we fell, as it were, under him; and we desire to be kept under his protection, under the shadow of his wings; glad to sit down at his sacred feet, and bless the happy day that ever he brought us down. "He went forth conquering and to conquer;" he means to conquer. Now this shows that our faith should be in him. When we meet here on the Lord's day, all our hope of Satan being cast out, sinners being converted, and the people of God strengthened, helped, and refreshed, all our confidence and expectation should be in Jesus Christ. And if the minister wishes to be a victor, he must preach Christ; he must know nothing among the people but Jesus Christ; and then he will often have to say with the disciples, "Even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." What will not the name, in other words, the testimony of Jesus, do when attended by Almighty power! There is nothing, no, not anything, that can stand before it. But this point is so self-evident that I need not enlarge upon it, and this same subject will come before us again in the nineteenth chapter.

Now the second was a red horse. "There went out another horse, that was red; and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another; and there was given unto him a great sword." This represents one part of the ministry of God's word. But let us look at the color of the horse; the horse represents in color the objects of his judgments. But how does this rider do this? how does he take peace from the earth? Testimonially. They bore testimony that Jerusalem should be destroyed; they thus testimonially took peace from the earth. They bore testimony that the wicked should be destroyed, that there is no peace to the wicked, and thus they testimonially and prophetically took peace from the earth. "Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth, but a sword." Here is one part of the ministry of the word. "And that they should kill one another." This is one of God's ways of dealing with his enemies. Look at the Jews,—when the Roman armies were somewhat quiet, they filled up the interval by killing one another. Not only did the Jews do this, but Rome pagan did this, and Rome papal, as you all know well, has done this. Therefore, "that they should kill one another." This was his testimony. "And there was given unto him a great sword," because he had to proclaim great judgments. Hence this seems taken from the twenty-seventh of Isaiah. "In that day the Lord with his sure, and great, and strong sword,"—meaning, of course, the declarations of his judgments,—"shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea." Thus they did it testimonially, as in the 149th Psalm; there you read, "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;" not a sword literally; you are informed in God's blessed word that "the sword of the Spirit is the word of the Lord." Therefore, that word, that pierceth to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, is compared to the sword. And have we not some of us trembled at this great sword? I know the time when I did, and I don't know that I do not now sometimes. When God opened my eyes I saw there was a great judgment, a great and a naming sword to cut me off. So this rider, then, in the strength of truth represents the terrible judgments of the most high God. Hence says the apostle, "We are a savor of death unto death to the one." But while these testimonies go forth God is pleased in mercy to alarm many sinners, awaken them up, to teach them how to fly from the sword, and to see that Jesus met the sword for poor sinners; and those that fly to him from the sword will escape the sword. Just as the Israelites by the paschal lamb escaped the sword of the angel of death, so those that are favored to fly to Jesus shall escape the sword of the judgment of God. But the horse was red. Now, mind, I am merely giving what I humbly, very humbly, think to be the meaning; I do so with all the diffidence and deference that become me; but is there a scripture anywhere that will explain this part of the matter, that the horse is said to be red? What can be the reason of it? There must be a reason? What does John mean? Well, in some scriptures the term is used to denote the judgments of God. Hence you read in Isaiah, "I will feed them that oppress thee with their own flesh; and they shall be drunken with their own blood, as with sweet wine;" that is, the judgments of God shall confound and confuse them. Therefore the red denotes the deadly character of the judgments that will come upon them, and represents the persons that are marked with this character. What is the mark? How am I to know whether I am one to whom this judgment belongs? Well, hatred is a sign of murder in the heart; and if you hate God's truth, that hatred is murder in the heart. David, supposing he wrote the fifty-first Psalm, I question whether he did or not; at any rate, whoever the author of that Psalm was, saw himself by nature a blood red murderer of Christ; therefore he said, "Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness." The blood-guiltiness there was his native, blood-red enmity, murderous enmity by nature against Christ. Therefore every character that has this enmity is represented by this horse, the color of this horse. In looking at this matter I must say my mind was exceedingly solemnized. I went to the twenty-fifth verse of the twenty-fifth of Genesis, and that verse never so struck me before; it very much solemnized my mind in connection with the color of this horse. It is said of Esau that he was called Esau because he was red; and from that very circumstance the country, as you know, where he lived was called Edom, which signifies "red." I thought, What was Esau? Why, he was a lover of this world, and this world only; he despised the priesthood, he hated Jacob. That appeared

to me to help out the meaning of the color of this horse. May it not be our unhappy lot to be under this great sword, to be running counter to God's truth, God's Christ, for he is the only way of escape!

But we notice the third seal. When the third seal was opened, the living creature still said, "Come and see"— still wished to get the meaning. It is a good sign when people want to get the meaning, not for mere speculative purposes, but for spiritual, good, vital, practical purposes, by which we may more extensively glorify God. Now when the third seal was opened, there was a black horse; and his rider had a pair of balances in his hand; and there was a voice from the midst of the four living creatures associated with this black horse, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Still keep up the idea that the rider on the black horse is a gospel minister, for the gospel minister testifies of both sides—the judgment and the mercy. Now you all know that in time of war provision for the army is a very important matter. As the late Duke of Wellington said, "If you don't feed the men well, and give them sufficient rest, you must not expect to achieve many victories." There seems to be connected with this black horse—shall I call it—a kind of commissariat, that is to say, the provision, the daily allowance, "A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine." Now in the time of war, if the commissariat is not attentive and careful, but suffers the provisions to be damaged, see what evil consequences ensue. I believe from this very cause many of our men died in the Crimea. There seems an allusion here, then, to these human customs in battle: "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine." This rider, then, represents the bringing in of the provision. He comes into the field of battle and says, Here are some loaves for you, here is some wheat; and to those who are very hungry, here is some barley bread for you; and here is some oil to make your faces shine; don't look down about it, for the battle is not yours, but the Lord's, and he will feed you and give you rest. "See thou hurt not the oil and the wine;" the oil representing the grace of God, the wine representing the blood of the everlasting covenant. And how can we hurt it? Why, we can hurt it, not in reality, but relatively, as far as words can do it; as the apostle describes, "We are not as many, that corrupt the word of God." The original idea there, is that they mix water with the wine, because the wine without the water is too strong. As a publican said some time ago, he reckoned himself a good friend to the teetotal society, for he took care that every gallon of spirits he sold should be half water, and so he would help the cause. And so this softening matters down is to help the cause. You high Calvinists, your election is too strong, say they. And so when we go into some of those places for a drop of heavenly wine, we often do not even get wine and water, but only water and wine; and as to the oil, I don't know what sort of stuff that is—they call it grace, but it is more like grief than grace.

Now here was to be by this commissariat the daily provision; here was to be the oil and the wine. That minister is highly favored that hath this office, because you see that, having the provision with him, he can live pretty well himself, and he can say to the others, "Eat, O friends; drink abundantly, O beloved." He can invite them, as it were, between the battles, under the vine and the fig-tree, and there they can sit down and make a good meal and rest themselves.

Now he had a pair of balances in his hand, and you read nothing of weighing the provisions, because he had something else to weigh. I want to join the church, says one. Ah, I must put you into the scales, then, to see what you weigh. I will put you in one scale, —you have got your own works, your own duties, your own doings; and I will put the law in the other. You will not do at all; you are as light as a feather; you may go off again, you won't do. But if the poor sinner comes by faith in Christ, and that sinner, Christ with him, is put into the one scale, and the law put into the other, —that sinner having received Christ into his heart as the end of the law for righteousness —now you will do. Thou art weighed in the balance, and not found wanting; Christ is thy weight; he has outweighed all thy sins, all the judgments of God, all that stood against thee; and "a just weight is the Lord's delight." But we have not got the color of the horse yet; so

let us go to the sixth of Zechariah; the black horses went forth into the north country. What does the north mean? The law of God. "Fair weather cometh out of the north;" explanation, —"with God is terrible majesty." There is a sinner in darkness, mourning, and woe; the commissariat brings in the provisions of the gospel, enters into all the mourning, all the soul trouble, all the tribulation, all the darkness, and blackness, and trembling. That poor sinner says, "I am black." Ah, says this commissariat, I am come with the provisions for poor, perishing sinners; the blacker you are the better; that is, the blacker in your own eyes. If you are black, then you will be glad of the blood that can wash you white. "I am black, but comely." If you feel what a poor, Ethiopian sinner you are, you will be glad of the provisions of the gospel. "And the white go forth after them;" the white horses in Zechariah went after them. So, just as the commissariat brought in the provision for these poor mourning creatures, in came the white horses with the conquest of the dear Redeemer, took them up, carried them off to Zion; for "they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord, out of all nations, upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules," and so on; "they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." And it is said in Zechariah, "Behold, these that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country," by two things; they have met all that my law demands, by bringing Christ in, and they have delivered my dear children from Babylon; and therefore I am quiet, the people are quiet, the law and the gospel are quiet; the whole matter is settled.

Now a few words upon the fourth seal; we shall gather up some of the fragments we leave behind, perhaps, in another chapter. "When he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, Come and see. And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth." Now if any one of you were under a sentence of condemnation, —if you saw a man coming up the valley, that man having with him your death-warrant, —would not that make you in a moment personify Death itself? Ah, you would say, the name of that horse is Death, it brings my death-warrant; the name of that rider is Death, he brings my death-warrant. And, oh! my hearers, mark the next words, —"Hell followed with him." "A savour of death unto death." The minister brings the death-warrant of every man and woman that lives and dies in unbelief, that lives and dies unacquainted with Christ. "And Hell followed with him." "In hell he lifted up his eyes." Ah, how solemn is this! This is one of the solemn characters of the minister of the gospel; the pale horse. Ah, my hearer, the second death, I was going to say, is enough to make an archangel turn pale. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living • God."

But there is another point I will just notice: "power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth." Now who will give us an idea upon that? who will help us out? to whom shall we go to get an interpretation? We must not have anything merely fanciful; we must have something solid, something real. "Power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth." Why had they not power over all the earth? For this simple reason, that three parts of the earth, here intended, were gone before this horse set out, before this rider began his work. Go to the seventh of Daniel, there are the four successive kingdoms, —the Babylonian, the Persian, the Grecian; and the Roman is the fourth. Therefore, this rider has no power over the Babylonian, that is gone; nor over the Persian, that is gone; nor over the Grecian, that is gone; but only over the fourth part, —the Roman: the fourth metal in Daniel's second chapter, and the fourth beast, or tyrannical empire, in his seventh chapter. He had dominion there testimonially, and such solemn dominion that everything came to pass that was there said; "Hell followed." There he had power to kill, —that is, testimonially. And I need not tell you that the Roman empire, as Gibbon clearly shows, as well as Josephus (who describes the literal fulfilment of the Savior's prediction relating to

Jerusalem)— the Roman empire became a perfect Aceldema, —a field of blood; so that the testimony of this rider concerning the judgment that should come upon Rome pagan did come to pass.

But then Rome pagan includes Rome papal, and Rome papal embodies the spirit that down to the end of time shall persecute the church. Therefore, the fourth part of the earth will mean all the wicked that should live after the time of the three preceding empires.

V. THE FIFTH AND SIXTH SEALS.

The chief theme of our lecture this evening will be from the sixth chapter, —the fifth and sixth seals, — which I may term the martyrological and the revolutionary seals. But before alluding to them, it will perhaps be needful to make a few remarks just to confirm the view we took last week of the four equestrian seals described in this chapter. We observed that those four equestrian seals were taken from the sixth of Zechariah. There you have the four chariots, from between the two mountains, and horses of the same color as those which John saw in this sixth chapter. And those four chariots are in that same chapter explained to be the four spirits of the heavens; evidently setting forth the universal mission of the gospel, given to the apostles, —" Go ye into all the world;"—therefore called the four spirits of the heavens, because they were to go with the glorious gospel of God to the four winds. And these four chariots are said to go forth from standing before the Lord of the whole earth. That phrase, —"the Lord of the whole earth," marks the period there referred to as being the New Testament dispensation; because the expression, the Lord of all the earth, there refers to Jesus Christ; and that he did by his mediatorial work, as we have already shown, acquire universal dominion; and he called those disciples to be with him; and they stood with him and before him, and stood firm; he himself granulates them in having continued with him in his temptations. These persons being thus taught of God, having the Spirit of God, and proving the reality of their character, were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Therefore, you will observe that the four chariots there spoken of, and the horses and the four equestrian seals in this sixth chapter of Revelation, are evidently one and the same subject.

But it will perhaps be well for me to say a word or two upon the mountains. These four chariots, or four ruling powers, gospel powers, apostolic powers, came from between two mountains, and these mountains were mountains of brass; so that they were remarkable first for conspicuousness, and secondly for stability. How conspicuous is a mountain of brass; and secondly, how stable or firm. We cannot doubt, therefore, that these two mountains mean the law of God and the gospel of God; this we have means of all but, I was going to say, demonstrating beyond dispute. And when a sinner is convinced of sin, what is then so conspicuous to that man as his condemnation by the law of God? what is there more conspicuous to that man than the fact that the wrath of God is against him? The man's condemnation stands out before his eyes; there is the law in its stability, firmness, and certainty, —in its unalterable character; not one jot nor tittle of the law shall fail. And is it not so with us? Has not the Lord been pleased to make this department as clear to us as we could wish it to be made? Is not our condemnation in the first Adam as clear to us as the sun at noon-day? Conspicuousness and stability, then, are the features of these mountains of brass. And on the other hand how conspicuous is the gospel to us. It stands before us, in its dignity, majesty, and stability; and while concerning the law it is written, "Not one jot nor tittle shall fail till all be fulfilled;" on the other hand, pertaining to the gospel, the Savior hath said, "The heavens and the earth may pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Now Zechariah's reference to these two mountains seems to be taken from the eleventh of Deuteronomy; two mountains are mentioned there, which are named again in the twenty-seventh of Deuteronomy, and also in the eighth of Joshua; those two mountains were Gerizim and Ebal; the blessings were to be pronounced on the one mountain, and the curses on the other. Now these chariots or ministers coming from between the two mountains, would know something both of the curses and of the blessings. And no man, I am sure, is fit to preach the gospel unless he knows something of both these mountains,—Sinai and Zion; or, to keep to the names in Deuteronomy, Ebal and Gerizim. So that the chariots coming out from between the two indicates acquaintance with the curses and with the blessings. Of course the curses will come first, and I will show in few words how we are to deal with that department. Why will the curses come before the blessings? Because in our mortal existence sin stands first. We sinned in Adam; all of us were conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity. Sin stands first, and so the curse stands first. There is the sin, and there is the curse; and there are the blessings, but how are we to get the blessings? Here is the sin that causes the curse, and here are the curses; how are we to get the blessings? What is to be done? There are the blessings, but here is our sin and the curse of the law between us and the blessings;—how shall we get them? Here are the two mountains; there is the mountain of wrath, there is the mountain of blessing. And see what a sweet and lovely answer the Lord hath provided for us. In the eighth of Joshua you read that Joshua built an altar unto the Lord —where? On Mount Ebal, where the curses were. Do you not catch the idea in a moment—that the Lord Jesus Christ came to where the curses were, that we may be where the blessings are; that he came to where sin was, that we may come to where the blessings are; that he came into darkness and into death, that he came into all our sorrows and all our woes. But then there is this difference,—he could come into these evils and overcome them, and put them, which he has done, eternally away. So we look to Mount Ebal, or to the law, and we see Jesus there the end of that law; we see Jesus there in his redeeming power, redeeming us from the curse of the law; we see Jesus there, redeeming us from that grave into which the curse has brought us; we see Jesus there, delivering us from the wrath to come. Here are the two mountains; and every Christian will know something of both; he will know something of his lost condition; and as the altar was to be on Mount Ebal, so it is one of the lessons we have to learn, —we have learnt it in part, and we shall go on to learn it, —that none but Jesus could deliver us from the curse.

Every Christian must know something of his need of this altar. Now, in the eighth of Joshua it is said that this altar was built for burnt offerings and for peace offerings. Can we really want anything more than this? The burnt offering—there is an end to the wrath; the peace offering—there is reconciliation to God. We come between these mountains; —we look at the law, Mount Ebal, —nothing against us there; the sacrifice has quenched all the fire, made up the breach, the quarrel, filled up the gulf, hushed everything into an eternal calm; —that calm will never, never be disturbed, for our God is the God of peace through the blood of the everlasting covenant. We look round to Gerizim—to the gospel, and from the first item to the last there is nothing but blessing; it begins with blessing, goes on with blessing, and ends with blessing; thus the saints shall be abundantly blessed, and that for ever and ever. I have made these few remarks to show that there is a oneness between the gospel powers represented in the sixth of Zechariah, and the four equestrian seals represented in this chapter.

We must now notice the fifth seal. "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." I must just say a word upon what they were slain for; —"for

the word of God,"—but it very skillfully and very wisely adds something else, and yet not something else,—"and for the testimony which they held." You must take the two together. What does it mean? First, it means that they were men who believed that none but the eternal God could reveal his own mind; that none but the eternal God knew what was needful for the eternal welfare of men. They held that all human tradition was to be rejected, and they therefore did reject all human tradition, and were determined to take the word of God, and the word of God only. Oh, my hearer, what does a poor mortal know about eternity? What do we ourselves know in reality about our own souls? Are there not mysteries in our souls? Is not eternity a mystery, an incomprehensible mystery?

We can hardly imagine a more daring piece of blasphemy than for man to step in and put his traditions into the place of the words of the all-wise God, of him who alone can thoroughly understand our necessities, help us in them, or supply our wants. But it was "for the testimony which they held." What was the testimony they held? We know what it was. It will be anticipating a few things we shall have to say hereafter; but I will just refer to what their testimony was. They overcame by the blood of the Lamb;—they held the testimony, therefore, that if they overcame sin, if they overcame Satan, if they overcame death, if they overcame everything that stood against them, it must be by the blood of the Lamb;—they obtained victory by his atoning blood. Secondly, while they overcame all accusations, slanders, and things laid to their charge, and condemnation, they overcame the whole by the blood of the Lamb. They overcame deception and delusion by the word of their testimony; they knew it was all of grace from first to last. And then just see how the eternal God was endeared to them; see how precious Christ was to them; "they loved not their lives unto the death." I need not enlarge upon this clause. Let us see where they were. "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain." Now, you have first to find out what the altar is, or else you cannot see or understand where they are. Do not let us forget, then, that we are here in the New Testament dispensation, where there is no material altar. How then could their souls be under the altar, when there is none? There is no literal altar of incense in the New Testament dispensation; there is no literal altar in the New Testament dispensation. Can we find out what the altar is? The answer is, the altar is the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they were under his care, under his protection, and in his presence, in the presence of God,—approved in Christ, accepted in Christ. These are assertions, let us come to the proof. You find no difficulty in believing that the sacrifices of old were a type of the sacrifice of Christ; and why should you find any difficulty in believing that the brazen altar, which is the only one I name, was a type of Christ? Doth not the thirteenth of Hebrews say, "We have an altar"? Now we have no literal altar, yet the apostle says, "We have an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle;" that is, the typical, ceremonial tabernacle; because ours is not a material, but an immaterial altar,—an altar not for ceremony, but for faith; and the sacrifice of our altar is described by the Savior himself,— "He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."

He is the altar, then, that bore the fire and came off uninjured; and he had the same strength in him when he said, "It is finished," that he had when he entered upon his atoning work. Christ did not die from natural exhaustion; he did not die because he could not endure anymore; for nothing took his life from him,—no, not even justice itself; he gave up his life to justice; he laid down his life. "No man," meaning no power, "taketh my life from me; I lay it down of myself;" and then he speaks of his legal right to do so,— "This commandment have I received of my Father." Ah, then, see the blessed state they were in;—here they were at that altar that had endured that which must have sunk them to hell; but that altar had come off uninjured, the sacrifice had met every demand, and here they were in the presence of God by Jesus Christ in his eternal strength; so that, being with Jesus Christ in his strength, there is no more weakness. They do not experience any of the weakness that you and I do; their poor, weak bodies are silent in the grave,

or rather many of them burnt to ashes; but their souls are in all the fullness of heavenly vigor, heavenly youth, and eternal strength.

But I must go a little further with this altar, because I feel a desire you should clearly understand what it means, —that it is not a material altar, but the antitypical altar, Christ Jesus. Now where is our acceptance with God? where is the acceptance of the prayers, the persons, and the services of the people of God? Why, the apostle Peter touches upon this very beautifully;—he says, "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices;"—where is the altar by which we can offer sacrifices? Christ Jesus;—"to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Thus then we see for what they were slain, and the care the Lord took of them. I myself like the idea, and I am sure you must too, that all the representations we have of heaven show the saints in close association with Christ. There is not, that I am aware of, all through this book, one representation of the saints in heaven without at the same time very much more closely associating them with Christ than the gospels of men associate them. There are chapels and churches where we hear a hundred sermons, and hear the Savior's name hardly mentioned twenty times in those hundred sermons. But here, in heaven, it is the Lamb, it is Christ all and in all. There is nothing in Christ but perfection, completeness of everything that is good; and there is nothing outside of Christ but sin, death, ruin, and condemnation. Let a man be what and where he may, if he is not in Christ he is not where the blessing is. "Blessed is the man," and he only, "that dies in the Lord." Therefore, so much is said about walking in the Lord, believing in the Lord, trusting in the Lord, and rejoicing in the Lord; it is all there.

But they seem to have carried with them a very strong sympathy for their brethren, and they asked how long it should be before the Lord would avenge their blood at the hands of the adversary; and we see that they were to rest for a little season. This is Rome pagan, not Rome papal. Some learned men say that popery is not named in this book; but when we come to the trumpets, if some of them do not sound very much like it, I am greatly mistaken. I may just observe here, then, that this "little season" evidently refers to Rome pagan. Rome pagan was to persecute a little longer, and then persecution was to cease; but by and by, after a few centuries, Rome papal was to recommence the murderous work. I may just drop one word here upon Rome pagan; and I shall have a similar word for Rome papal in a lecture or two's time. How came Rome pagan to persecute the saints? how came Rome pagan to put the saints to death? Where do you suppose they got their lesson from? Oh, listen, my hearer, —would you believe that heathen Rome had its murderous lesson of instruction to put the saints to death from the professed people of God? The Pharisees called God their Father, and called themselves the children of God; the Savior, as you know, gave them a very different nomination. And what did the Jews do? Crucified Christ. There, says Rome pagan, that's a proof that we ought to put down Christianity. Why, Jesus Christ was a Jew, and the Jews knew that he was wrong, his apostles wrong, his religion wrong, and so they forced Pilate and used the civil power to crucify Christ. So Rome pagan obtained its instruction to persecute the saints from the Jews. Nay, more than this, —the Jews, who professed to be distinguished from other people by the goodness and mercy of God in choosing them, and leaving others, —the Jews actually ran about from town to town, from city to city, from place to place, to persecute the Christians; and the apostle Paul himself was very frequently subjected to persecutions, not from any voluntary feeling on the part of the heathen, but the Jews instructed the heathen to do so. Some of us pay not much attention to Gallio, —we say he was very bad; but he was not so bad as some, for he cared for none of these things; and if the Jews had let the heathen alone, they would not have persecuted. So it is, professors, if they are not possessors, are, in enmity against the truth, twofold more the children of hell than those that make no profession at all! That is where Rome pagan obtained its instruction from to persecute the saints. And where do people now get their lesson from that call high-doctrine people "Antinomians"? Where do people get their lesson from that always speak as degradingly as possible of those men that stand out for the free-grace, vital, saving

truths of the everlasting gospel? We know where they get their lesson from—from persons that profess to love everybody, that profess to be friends to everybody. We thus see, then, why those who are here spoken of were slain; we see where they are, and that they had to rest until Rome pagan had done its work; then their brethren should come home, and they themselves should witness from the high heavens, —should look over the battlements of heaven, and see their enemies cut down one after another, almost without number, which was literally the case.

But it is said, "white robes were given unto every one of them;"—not offered, but given. This I need not perhaps say anything upon, because all of you will clearly understand what the white robes are. The white robes are positively said to be the righteousness of saints, and the righteousness of saints is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now John, when this fifth seal is opened, sees the suffering people of God, sees them slain, sees them taken to heaven, sees them under the protection of Christ, in Christ's sacrificial perfection and God's eternal strength; Christ being in the presence of God. I sometimes think, what a moment it will be to the believer when he departs from the body! Some of you sometimes think, When I die, I shall go into a strange, great world; I shall not know which way to look, or anything else. Why, the moment you enter there, Christ will be the first object that will strike your attention, —the Lamb in the midst of the throne. Your soul will be drawn into his blest embrace, escorted by angels to Abraham's bosom. You will not be at all at a loss; —you will say, Here is the Man, the God, that bled for me; here is the Lamb whose name has been to my soul as ointment poured forth times without number. You will not be at a loss. Hence, when Stephen was entering heaven, what was the great center of attraction to him? Christ on the right hand of God.

We will now notice the sixth seal. "And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" I will first tell you what the learned give us as the meaning, and they may be right so far as they go, but I do not feel myself one with them in their interpretation. Their interpretation stands thus,—that the heavens being darkened, and the moon becoming as blood, as here described, is expressive, in the first place, of the destruction of the Jewish nation by the Romans. Well, in Joel, and in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, very similar language is used to express that destruction. Bishop Newton thinks it is nothing else (that comes near the meaning, though I do not think it is the meaning, and yet it is included in it too,) but the gospel of Christ overcoming heathenism; and that by the sword— oh dear! there it is, you see, —of Constantine the Great, heathenism fell, and Christianity acquired an establishment. Well, by his sword certainly the temporal power of the heathen priests fell, and Christianity did obtain, I admit, a carnal standing and a carnal establishment, and became the way to worldly aggrandizement; it was the foundation of the great system we call Popery, existing to this day. Therefore I do not think that is the meaning. Now we must go back to the first seal. In the first seal you have the man Christ Jesus on the white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer. We know the kind of conquests he was to make, as described in the forty-fifth Psalm:—"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies; whereby the people fall under thee." Here, in this sixth seal, you have the conquests of Christ. Now mind, this sixth seal goes all through to the end of this sixth chapter, and to the

end of the seventh chapter. So that you here get a people in consternation, or soul trouble; you then get them servants of the Lord; you then get them sealed; you then get the same people, a number that no man can number, out of all nations, peoples, kindred's, and tongues. You here, then, have the beginning of the conquests of this wonderful person. Let us now go through it in detail. The first thing was an earthquake; not a literal earthquake, but a spiritual. And when the Lord met with Saul of Tarsus, what was the first thing that was wrought? Why, there was a spiritual earthquake, that swallowed up Saul's false religion, and left him without any religion; that swallowed up all his confidence, all his power. And some who have been thus convinced of their state, and all their false hopes swallowed up, have felt as though themselves were being swallowed up, and have cried to God, "Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me." Here is the earthquake. An earthquake here, therefore, means a spiritual revolution; and it might easily be proved that the greatest, the most important, the most wonderful event in any man's life is the regeneration of the soul. I believe none of us have ever entered into the vital, shall I call it the infinite and eternal, importance of the regeneration of the soul. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;"—"Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." We have nothing described here, therefore, but conversion. Time does not allow me to quote from the Old Testament descriptions nearly as sublime as the one in this chapter. We do not see conversions as John did;—we see them in individual cases; but he in vision saw the Gentile world turned upside down; he saw thousands and tens of thousands running hither and thither, and most tremendously alarmed. Now mark one thing;—the revolution here described led the people to God. Will unsanctified trouble lead a soul to God? No. When we get further on in this book we shall see some convulsions more tremendous than are here described; but they did not lead the people to God; — they repented not; but here they are led to God. "The sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs." What do the sun, moon, and stars here mean? Not the sun, moon, and stars literally. In Isaiah xiii. 10, you will see that the overthrow of Babylon is spoken of in similar language,—"The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." Are you going to persuade me that when Cyrus conquered Babylon, the sun in the firmament was darkened, that the moon was turned into blood, and that the stars fell from heaven? Why, to suppose that it means the literal stars!—look at the idea; those tremendous planets to fall from their orbits! Why, as respects magnitude, the globe we inhabit is a mere cricket ball to those tremendous planets that roll in immeasurable space, and in numbers incalculable. Talk of these tremendous planets falling! No, friends, it is highly figurative language. Now, get into your minds a clear idea of what is meant;—here it is,—"the sun to rule by day, the moon to rule by night." Therefore the sun, moon, and stars as here intended mean ruling powers; satanic ruling powers. You were ruled by a certain light while in a state of nature; but it was a satanic light,—Satan himself transformed as an angel of light. You had your moon, as it were, — your ruling power, and you had your stars, —your favorite lights, and you followed them, they were your ruling powers. But when regeneration comes in, when this earthquake takes place, then these powers that have hitherto ruled you, kept you away from God; these powers, that have hitherto hidden from you your sad condition; these powers, that have kept you in Satan's kingdom, can keep you no longer;—you become alarmed, afraid of God's wrath;—" Hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come." The sinner's heavens become darkened; what a wonderful change! We, it is true, are not accustomed, and perhaps properly too, to speak of this mighty change, with this sublime imagery, but it all answers exactly to experience.

Again, —"As a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." Unripe figs—unripe plans. Is there one of you that when you were in a state of nature could ripen all your plans? Did not this plan drop short, and did not that plan drop short? Did not you mean this, and that, and a great many things to do for you what they never did, and what they never will? They were all unripe figs. "Shaken of

a mighty wind." That was a mighty wind that breathed eternal life into the dry bones in the valley; that is a mighty wind that breathes eternal life into the dead soul; that is a mighty wind that convinces the sinner of what he is. There is the north wind. Then comes the south wind, and brings in the fragrance and glories of eternity. It is a mighty, an almighty wind. They heard on the Day of Pentecost the rushing as of a mighty wind; and what was this mighty wind but the Almighty Spirit of the living God? Here, then, is the earthquake, to swallow up all your false hopes; here are the ruling powers that once governed you brought to naught; and now you are brought under new light, —a new sun, a new moon, new stars, new heavens, and a new earth. All your plans were unripe, —they are gone; they were shaken with a mighty wind, and that mighty wind inspired and brought eternal life into your soul, and will deal with you as described in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel —will not leave you until you stand up with all the redeemed of the Lord, forming in the aggregate in number an exceeding great army.

"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together,"—just as the Jewish heavens did; and so your heavens, all your former heavens, depart as a scroll when it is rolled together, —they are all gone; you are a new creature in a new world, and all things are become new; you are brought into the new heavens and the new earth.

"And every mountain and island were moved out of their places." The mountains and islands here are expressive of confidences. David says, —" My mountain stood strong;" meaning, my confidence was firm; —but your mountains are all gone, your creature confidence is gone; but the mountains of eternity remain unshaken as God's eternal throne.

"And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains." In the next chapter you will find the expression, "all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues;" here called, "the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man." What does it mean? John saw the Gentile world, great and small, rich and poor, old and young; —he saw the Lord dealing with them, working this wonderful revolution, swallowing up all their false confidences, darkening their heavens, creating in them alarm and tremendous fear; some running one way, some another, to hide themselves "in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains,"—false refuges.

And then the chapter closes with these solemn words: — "For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?" —just what every sinner says. But in the next chapter we shall have to show that these same persons become servants of God. There is something so pleasing about it; as though the Lord should say, —"Have you had enough of fighting against me?" "Yes, Lord, — make me as one of thy hired servants." Then the Lord seals them, and after making them his servants, he makes them his sons, and exalts them to eternal glory, that glory which is so beautifully described in the latter part of the seventh chapter.

VI. CONSECRATION AND HALF-HOUR'S SILENCE.

Our lecture this evening will be chiefly upon the seventh chapter of the Book of Revelation. In our last lecture we dwelt chiefly upon what we called the revolutionary seal, as described in the close of the preceding chapter. We are still in the sixth seal; this same revolutionary seal goes on to the end of the seventh chapter, in entire accordance with the way in which we then set forth the first part of the

revelation of this seal. It is needless to recapitulate the points we then advanced; —we closed with seeing that there was a large number of souls that were effectually alarmed and awakened; and though they ran to wrong places for refuge, yet the Lord in his own time set them right. We shall find before we get far in our lecture this evening that the very same subject is contained in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel.

It is said in the beginning of this seventh chapter, "And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree." We must in the first place find out what is meant by these winds, and if we get a clear idea of what is meant by these winds, we shall then find out who the angels are, and what their work is. These winds evidently mean the glorious gospel of the blessed God; this we must not lose sight of. Hence we are still alluding now to the sixth of Zechariah, where the four chariots are called "the four spirits," or the four winds "of the heavens." Now what was that which the souls that were alarmed, as described in the preceding chapter, needed? They needed the gospel in its life-giving power. Let us go to the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel upon this question. What would be the language of the persons awakened up as described in the preceding chapter? Their language would be precisely that which you find in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel. When the Lord had awakened up, as it were, the dry bones, and there was a noise and a shaking, representing sinners in their, awakening, what was their account of themselves? They said, "Our bones are dried." Is not this one thing the sinner finds out, —that by the fall of man all his holiness, righteousness, and strength are dried up? There you are, a poor withered thing, withered by sin, withered by death, and if grace prevent not must be withered by the withering wrath of God. "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost." Our false hope is taken away. Why, it is one of the greatest gains a man can have to lose his false hope. False hope deludes its thousands and tens of thousands. Saul of Tarsus had a hope but it was a false hope; but when the Lord took him in hand, he lost that false hope, saw it was a false hope, and felt for the first time in his life that he was hopeless. Then these dry bones go on to say, "We are cut off for our parts." "We are out off for our parts," for aught we can do; we are cut off by sin from all hope and all help; and what can join us to God again? For our parts we are cut off. Can we do anything by which we can join ourselves to God? The beautiful answer comes, —"Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." This is the mediatorial truth, and when brought to believe in this, then we become by faith in Christ joined to the Lord; and he that is joined to the Lord is of one spirit with him.

Now this is the language of the dry bones. What is to be done in order to put them right? The Lord asked whether they could live. "O Lord God, thou knowest." And the Lord said, "Prophesy unto the wind;" and he prophesied as he was commanded. "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." These four winds, therefore, represent the gospel in its universality; not the gospel in the mere letter of it, but in its life and power. This is what the dry bones needed; and what do these alarmed sinners need? The same thing; —they need the glorious gospel of God to come upon them in the universality of its power; they need the eternal God to come in the universality of his power, and as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, to be round about his people. And what is said of these dry bones when the wind thus came, when the Holy Spirit thus came? "They stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." What do you find in the seventh chapter? A number that no man can number, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. We all take, I think, the palm as the symbol of victory. Therefore, in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel you have an exceeding great army, standing in an attitude of defiance; —they stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army, and said, Satan, where art thou now? Sin, where art thou now? Death, where art thou now? Hell, where art thou now? World, where art thou now? Tribulation, where art thou now? All conquered. "They stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." I come to the seventh of Revelation, and I find the same thing here: —"These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;"

with palms in their hands; here they stand victorious, and occupy an attitude of defiance, for they stand before the throne of God, God with them, the Lamb with them, they realizing the victory; and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. So in the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel you find the same army, led into the everlasting covenant, into the very things which are here set forth. Thus you see we keep up our old idea, —we make the Lord's own word the interpreter of his own word; and we find all the subjects contained in the Book of Revelation in the Old Testament.

Now here are four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds; what angels are these? they are bent upon mischief, and therefore they must be fallen angels. They are trying to hinder the wind from blowing, lest these poor creatures should get a little gospel breath, a little gospel liberty. What are these four angels? The four universal agents of Satan. You read in the twelfth chapter of this book of the dragon and his angels. And as these souls are awakened, and nothing but the breath of the everlasting gospel can bring them up into that liberty which is represented in the latter part of the thirty-seventh of Ezekiel, and in the latter part of this chapter, the object of the enemy is by his agents to hinder the gospel from coming to them. I will name two or three instances of this. First, there is Joshua standing before the angel, and there is Satan; and what is Satan's aim? To hinder the gospel from coming to Joshua. You will find in all this the truth of that scripture,—"Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Now what are in the first part of this chapter called "four angels" are in the latter part of the first chapter of Zechariah called "four horns," or powers; and so these are four evil angels employed by Satan to substitute something else in the place of the gospel, and to hinder the gospel. When Zechariah looked up and saw the four horns, he said, "What are these?" And the Lord said, "These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." Let us look at this historically for a moment, in order to get clearly at what is here meant by the four angels. "These are the horns," four horns, that is, adverse powers on every side of the people of God, and on every side of the Jewish nation, — "These are the horns which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem." You know how Sennacherib came in upon Jerusalem, or at least attempted to do so. Sennacherib's mission was to compass Israel, and carry Israel away captive. But if that Israel which the kings of Assyria compassed on all sides, and carried away, had been like these people—living souls,—ah, then Shalmaneser, Tiglath-pileser, and Sennacherib, could not have carried them away. But alas! alas! they were not real Israelites; and these horns scattered them to the ends of the earth, and they have never been gathered from that day to this. Now these four horns, these universal powers, set in on all sides, scattered Israel; and then the same king, because he had scattered Israel, thought he could easily scatter Judah and Jerusalem; but the time was not yet come. When Sennacherib came in the time of Hezekiah, there were the four angels hindering, as far as they could, any hope from coming to Hezekiah and the people. But could Sennacherib scatter them? No; we see how they looked to the Lord; we see how the blast of the Lord came upon Sennacherib; and though Jerusalem was compassed on every side, yet the little daughter of Zion, in the strength of the Lord, despised the enemy, laughed him to scorn, and gained the victory. Just so with Job;—see how Job was compassed on every side; but though he was smitten as he was, yet Job obtained the victory at the last. Just so here,—those who in the previous chapter are represented as being alarmed, and in the beginning of this chapter subjected to the attacks of Satan, yet they, as believers in Christ, gain the victory at the last. Satan's attempt has always been to stop the progress of the glorious gospel of Christ, to keep the sinner and the Savior apart, to keep the poor bewildered sinner and God's truth apart; to keep the poor lost creature, and the remedy which God has provided, apart. These four angels will not come before us again all through the book. There will be four more angels come before us, but not these four. This has special reference to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. The gospel had not progressed far before the enemy raised an enormous persecution against it. Take the instance of Stephen;—see how the Lord's people were then scattered abroad; nevertheless, they gained the victory.

"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea." We said just now they were angels that were bent upon mischief; they were Satan's angels. We are not to understand that they were angels literally; they are powers; and we may, without any violence, call them agents.

Now the Lord Jesus Christ appears, —"another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God." What a beautiful representation this is of the Savior! He is frequently represented in the Old Testament as coming from the east. "Who raised up the righteous man from the east?" Why is Jesus Christ said to come from the east? It might be rendered in this way, without any violence to the original, —"the angel that ascendeth from the sunrising." Jesus Christ did not come creeping in the dark; he came in the light; he came in the light of Old Testament prophecy, he came in the light of God's will, he came in the light of God's promises; and moreover, he came by his own light, —he himself was the light. Therefore, when Jesus Christ came into this world, it was the greatest light that ever did come. This is the angel, —an angel meaning a messenger; he is the angel, the messenger of the everlasting covenant. He ascends; —he sees these people in trouble, and he comes to the four angels; not that these four angels, or agents, do voluntarily obey the Savior; but when the Lord gives the word, it is like giving the word to the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." And you have something very analogous to this in the restraining power of the Lord over Satan in the case of Job. Satan was permitted there to go a long way; but "spare his life, touch not his life." There is something here very encouraging. Here is the enemy all round about you, to sink you to despair, and to tell you there is no way for your escape; that your sins are round about you, and that everything that is against you is round about you; you will be lost, and you had better give it up. But by and by a little light breaks into the mind. "We have the sure word of prophecy," that Christ should come to seek and to save that which was lost, "whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Therefore, when they were thus surrounded with these evil agents, these Satanic powers, and as it were sinking into despair, the angel of the covenant appears, and cries "with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea." How true that is!

What mischief has Satan done to this earth! ah, what mischief he does at sea too! how easily we could show that he hurries men on at sea to drink, and neglect the dangers around them! and thousands upon thousands have sunk to the bottom of the sea by Satanic influence. Oh, what an enemy he is to man! "To whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea." He has indeed hurt the earth; he has indeed hurt us; he has mortally hurt us, he has mortally poisoned us; —we are all of us poisoned in the fatal sense of the word by the poison of the old serpent, the devil. But what a mercy for us that the Lord God ruleth over all, saying, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." We observed in the last lecture that the persons alarmed, as described in the preceding chapter, became the willing servants of the Lord; here you see they are called the servants of the Lord, and the enemy is restrained until they are secured. This is a truth that runs all through the Bible; the enemy is restrained until the man that is sighing for mercy is marked, and sealed, and secured. Could the flood come till Noah and those with him were safe in the ark? Could the waters roll in till the Israelites were safe? Could the angel of death come round and begin to smite until every Israelite was safe? So in the ninth of Ezekiel, —"Set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst of Jerusalem;" and the command is given, "Come not near any man upon whom is the mark." Are we, then, sensible of our need of Christ? Are we believers in him, and lovers of his name, receivers of his blessed truth, and decided for him? If so, we are the objects of the special care of heaven; the Lord says, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." I am afraid most of us live—I am afraid I do—in a great measure unconscious of the momentary care which the blessed God exercises over our souls and bodies and circumstances, and over our welfare. May the Lord

increase in us a consciousness of this. He waters the work every moment. This is a matter not of feeling, but of faith. We cannot recognize the Holy Spirit's bedewing every moment; but there are times when the word of the Lord so descends as the rain and so distils as the dew that we do feel sweetly softened, and look to God, and feel that we are the objects of his care.

But let us look at this sealing:—"till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." We are not at a loss to know what the seal is; we have it given in the Old Testament in a tangible form. I can never get anything that better serves my mind as to the meaning than when on the mitre of the high priest there was inscribed, "Holiness unto the Lord;"—that is the seal; the man is marked as "holiness unto the Lord." Let us trace this out, for it is very important. First, in eternal election,— "Sanctified by God the Father." By election they are consecrated to God in God's secret purpose, in his decision, in his determination. When Peter saw them in an unsealed, unconverted state, before they had become the servants of the Lord, what did the Lord say?" Call not thou that common which I have cleansed." So that those creatures, representing what we are as sinners, already stood consecrated in God's choice of them. "Sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ;" or, as the apostle expresses it, "blessed with all spiritual blessings." That is one view of the seal—"Holiness to the Lord;"—you are his by his free choice of you, his ancient, gracious choice of you; "the election hath obtained it;"— had it not been an election of grace, they never could have obtained it. Secondly, "Jesus Christ, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate;" there is your legal sanctification; there you are "holiness to the Lord" by the blood of Christ. Jesus Christ there and then presented us all that his sacrifice could make us;—holy, without blemish and without spot, before God's eternal throne. Thirdly, sanctified by the Holy Ghost;— the Holy Ghost entering into the soul, and uniting us to Christ, we become personally and manifestly the property of the Lord. "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price." And then, fourthly, by the truth of God. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." Therefore it is that he restrained these enemies until election had got its objects, until mediation had secured its objects, until regeneration had secured its objects, until truth had secured its objects. It may well be written, "Happy is the people whose God is the Lord." See how all this accords with the ninth of Ezekiel; —there was the man clothed with linen; there is Christ in his priesthood and royalty, the two united, with the inkhorn by his side; he set the mark upon the men; it was not entrusted to the creature to do it, but the Lord himself did it; and at the end the man clothed with linen, with the inkhorn by his side, said, "I have done as thou hast commanded me."

Then you have in this chapter, in the next place, a very remarkable and very accurate fulfilment of prophecy. You have a number sealed of each tribe—twelve thousand of each tribe; the square of which is, as you know, a hundred and forty-four thousand. Then you have after that a multitude that no man can number. Does it not strike you, friends, that in this twofold representation—first, a definite number, and then a number that no man can number—we have a remarkable fulfilment of prophecy? In the fifty-fourth of Isaiah it is said, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, says the Lord;" which the apostle Paul explains to mean that there should be a larger number of Christians in the Gentile than in the Jewish world. Here, in the Jewish world, you see they are numbered; not that we are to take, of course, this number to mean that there were literally a hundred and forty-four thousand Jews saved, —just that number and no more; I cannot think for a moment that that is the meaning; I consider the meaning to be that there was a comparatively definite small number of Jews that became Christians in comparison of the vast numbers among the Gentiles. Here you have an exact and striking fulfilment of prophecy. But nevertheless we must look at these hundred and forty-four thousand as representing the whole election of grace. You know the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision are declared to be the whole house of Israel; not the house of Israel literally, but spiritually. So here we must take the

hundred and forty-four thousand to represent all the people of God; that just as the Lord dealt with these hundred and forty-four thousand, so he deals with all his people. Hence, when we come to the fourteenth chapter, we shall find the same hundred and forty-four thousand there; and we shall find there that they are unaccompanied with the "multitude that no man can number," for the simple reason that they stand as representatives of all the people of God.

"You observe, then, how strikingly one thing comes in after the other. Here is the revolutionary seal opened; and the first thing that seal reveals to us is the conquests of the Savior, —his conquests as described on the white horse. Then in comes the enemy, to try to keep these alarmed people and the gospel apart; —then the Savior comes to restrain the enemy, to seal these persons, and to bring them into the knowledge of the truth, so that they should enter into the victory so beautifully set forth in this chapter. I need not dwell upon the after parts of the chapter, for they are so plain that I think it will be unnecessary to make any remarks upon them.

I will therefore now just make a few remarks upon the beginning of the eighth chapter.

After these things John takes us back again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. For although these seals must, from the very nature of the case, be opened one after the other,—John could not look at them all at once, —yet, though they appear to be opened chronologically, they must be understood synchronically; that is, they are ranged in columns side by side; so that, in reality, the seventh seal is as early as the first;—they are all opened at the beginning of the gospel dispensation. After John has taken us thus far, and presented us with the conquests of the dear Redeemer, and the number that no man can number, standing on the vantage-ground of victory and defiance, never to hunger, never to thirst, never to sigh, nor to cry, nor to die anymore; but the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall lead them to fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes;—when John has shown us this beautiful spectacle, he says, going back again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation, "When he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour." This silence in heaven has a twofold meaning, — first, abstract; secondly, relative. Perhaps I had better just name the circumstance to which John here refers, and that will enable us to understand this half-hour's silence; for this half-hour's silence did take place;—it never took place before, and it will never take place again. Then the question is, What is it? I begin my answer by observing that, in the Old Testament dispensation, when the priest went in with the blood of the sacrifice, and to burn incense, he was inside about half an hour, and the people stood outside silently waiting; there was nothing apparently moving. Those were most solemn moments. Will God accept the sacrifice that has been made? Will the intercession of the priest clothe him with blessing? Will he come out from the solemn presence of God pronouncing the blessing, as described in the sixth of Numbers? Those were solemn times. This half-hour's silence was repeated, as you are aware, every year, at the time of the great atonement. This is the literal circumstance to which it refers. Now we want, in the beginning of the gospel dispensation, something analogous to this, something that is antitypical to this, something that evidently carries out the spirit and ultimate meaning of this; we want to see something of our High Priest having gone in, in all solemnity, and we want to see the people left outside, and waiting. We go to the first chapter of Acts,—the Savior ascends to heaven,—"a cloud received him out of their sight." That was a day that never occurred before; that was the first time that an incarnate God ascended above all heavens, and the last time, except when he takes the church home to glory. And the dear Savior was there forty days; that forty days was typified by the half-hour. Under the law it was a literal half-hour; but that which was a literal half-hour there becomes a mystic half-hour here. Jesus Christ ascended, then; and you read of the disciples and honorable women, that they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication; but there was no preaching. "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." This is the antitypical half hour's silence. The conversion of sinners is

not a creature work, but God's work; it cannot be done by might nor by power, "but by my Spirit." Therefore tarry in silence. And they continued in silence, and the Savior continued in silence; there was no voice from heaven, there was no message; all was silent; and perhaps the adversary hoped that all was over, and perhaps the disciples feared that all was over. There they were, quiet all this time—this half hour's silence. What a solemn time was this! And we may here advance several things; but if we do, it must be after the manner of men. For instance, if we are asked, Why was this time of silence? —Well, friends, we are creatures, and reasonable creatures, and the Lord is pleased to do things sometimes after a manner that suits our reasoning powers; and we may look at this half-hour's silence, and indulge or give way to a little imagination for a moment or two.

We might suppose the dear Savior entering heaven, and that all he had done on earth had to be taken into account during that silent time. Did he speak every word right? Did he perform every miracle right? Did he obey the law right? Did he do everything right when he was in this world? It is appointed unto men once to die, and after death the judgment; has his sacrifice embodied all the penalty? is all the sin taken away? is death swallowed up in victory? is the devil conquered? are the people saved? I am not telling you that anything of this kind was needed by the Lord; but may we not give way to reflections of this kind as thoughts after the manner of men? So here is silence for the space of half an hour; here is the typical half-hour; here is not the literal, but the mystic half-hour. Some of our zealous friends (and God forbid I should say a word to lessen any man's zeal) say, We must not stop, —we must go and convert men at once. But we must first see whether the Lord is with us. The disciples thought they could cast the devil out without the Lord being with them, but they could not do it. We must follow the Lord's order. Here, then, was the silence. Christ went to judgment, as it were, if I may so speak, — for "after death the judgment;" everything was arranged; presently all the testimonies on earth were confirmed in heaven. "I have betrayed the innocent blood;"—so you have Judas' testimony: —"This man hath done nothing amiss;"—"Have nothing to do with that just man;"— "Truly this was a righteous man;"—all the true testimonies that had been borne on earth were confirmed in heaven; and the voice comes down from heaven, to which we shall come in a few lectures' time, —"It is done,"— Christ accepted and approved.

Now how was the silence broken? It was God broke the silence. Those are happy seasons in our souls when God breaks the silence;—when everything seems silent, nothing moving, and he sends a minister, with some word to your precious souls, speaks to you with a divine power, removes what you want removed, brings you to where you want to be brought,—into sweet fellowship and peace with himself. He broke the silence. "When the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them;"—they were all on fire, every doubt and every fear was consumed. And the tongues of fire represent the burning love of God in their souls; and those tongues being divided as they were, to show that the work of these persons should be to take forth the precious from the vile. Thus the silence was broken. Then when I take the silence in heaven in the other sense, the relative, —by the word "heaven" we must understand not the heaven of glory, but the New Testament dispensation, — the heaven here below. The conversion of Saul of Tarsus is wonderfully instructive. Well, Saul, your mouth is opened wide enough. Ah, it is; I am going to swallow up these Antinomians; I am going to do away with Jesus Christ; I am going to overturn God's throne; I will have my own way; I have got letters from the high priest; I will do this, that, and the other. Why, dear me, you will make the whole world ring with your doings! Ah, I mean to be somebody; I am Saul of Tarsus; I can speak a hundred languages; I can frighten all the people in the world; I don't know what I won't do before I have done; so you had better mind what you are about, especially you high doctrine people that follow Jesus of Nazareth;—I will eat you without salt. "Saul, Saul." "Who art thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Down he dropped; put to

silence. Ah, Saul! who threw you down? The very person I was going to throw down,—Jesus Christ. Oh, he has conquered you, has he? Yes, he has. What is the matter with you? Why, I thought I was the most pious creature in the world, the holiest and most righteous; but now I see there is not a worse wretch out of hell than I have been, —a blasphemer, a bloodthirsty murderer. I may think myself well off I am not sent by his tremendous voice to the very lowest caverns of hell. And thus he was silent half an hour, the mystic half-hour, — three days. Well, Saul, how are you? Oh, I am blind. Cannot you see anything? No, I cannot; I have a little hope; I thought I saw in a vision a man coming unto me with a little comfort. By and bye the half-hour expires and Ananias comes, with the majesty and power of the Eternal Spirit: —" Brother Saul, the God of our fathers hath chosen thee."—Me! me! me! what, a wretch like me! "Yes, he has." What for? "That thou shouldst know his will. You thought you knew everything, didn't you, before he took you in hand?" Yes, I did, but he pretty soon showed me what a fool I was, and that I knew nothing. "And that thou shouldst see that Just One, and shouldst hear the voice of his mouth. Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins;" that is, testimonially; God does it essentially, you do it testimonially. And he arose and was baptized. Well now, God has opened my heart, and eyes, and mouth, I cannot be quiet any longer; and so he went on, and ceased not to teach and preach day by day, and afterwards said, "Neither count I my life dear unto me, that I may finish my course with joy, and the ministry I have received of the Lord."

Now in the experience of every Christian there must be at first this silence—"that every mouth may be stopped." You must be stopped from your legal boasting, from your free-will boasting, and from your other boastings as well, which I will not name, because I have not time to explain them. We are all of us naturally boasters of our own supposed goodness, righteousness, and worth; but the Lord stops our mouths, and makes us silent in the dust; and there we remain in silence until the Lord appears; for when God shuts a man's mouth, God alone can open it. "Open thou my mouth, and my lips shall show forth thy praise." Thus, then, in the abstract sense there was the mystic half-hour of silence; and there is the half-hour of silence in the experience of every Christian. In this sense, you see, the half-hour is repeated. Do not be surprised if the Lord has many more such half-hours for you. You may talk as nicely as possible to-day, and to-morrow you may be as silent as possible—quite dumb, cannot say a word. But when the Lord steps in again, and opens your mouths then your half-hour's silence in spiritual matters is over, and you can indeed praise the name of the Lord, who hath dealt bountifully with you.

Then John says, "And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets." I must not touch upon them to-night. Our lecture will begin next week by showing how these angels prepared themselves to sound, and then we shall have to enter into the meaning of what they sounded.

"And another angel came,"—here is the Savior again, — "and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne." Ah, my hearer, when Jesus Christ ascended, and there was that time of silence to which I have referred, then there was the incense, the fragrance of his name; there was no golden altar literally, —his mediatorial work was the golden altar; for the altar sanctified the gift, and gave value to the gift, and so Jesus Christ's work gave value to his intercession; and you will see, then, here, how the silence was broken. "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thundering's, and lightning's, and an earthquake." These voices, thundering's, lightning's, and the earthquake, we have explained in a former lecture, and therefore need not repeat the explanation here.

Thus, then, we have seen the glorious gospel of God breathing life into the souls of men; we have seen the adversary's attempts, and how completely he is defeated, though he takes a kind of universal position; and we have seen the people sealed, consecrated for ever to God; we have seen them stand on the vantage-ground of victory; we have seen the beautiful fulfilment of prophecy, the vast superiority of numbers among the Gentiles; we have seen what is meant by the silence, how the silence was broken, the intercession of Christ, and the blessings that follow thereupon.

VII. THE FOUR TRUMPETS.

Last Wednesday evening we closed our lecture with some remarks upon the golden altar. This evening we have, as the chief theme of our lecture, the four trumpets spoken of in the eighth chapter of the Book of Revelation. But before entering upon them I think it is worth our while to make another remark or two upon the golden altar; because there is something there that very much concerns us all. The chief object I have in view in these lectures upon this book is to show that the things come home to us, and that everything that is said pertains to us in one way or another. Now it is here said of the angel that "there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints." The angel, of course, here is the Lord Jesus Christ; and then the question will arise what the incense was that was given unto him. The incense conveys the idea of that which is exceedingly pleasant, sweet, and delightful; to denote that everything bitter, everything unpleasant, everything grievous is gone, and that there is nothing left but that which is pleasant. This expresses, in the first place, the excellency of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, —that he hath by that sacrifice put away everything that stood against us. So that this incense spiritually, as here spoken of, must mean the approbation of the most high God, the approbation which the Lord hath of Christ. And this will appear if you trace the matter out a little. It is said "there was given unto him much incense." Now God the Father approved of Christ very much, he approved of him infinitely, without exception, eternally; and in every way, therefore, is Jesus Christ pleasant to God. And the Savior, in this pleasing character before God, is beautifully represented in the Old Testament. What can be more beautiful upon Christ's intercession than that scripture in Solomon's Song, "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness"—there is Jesus Christ, drawing towards his journey's end—"like pillars of smoke,"—there is the smoke of the sacrifice by which sin is atoned for; and then the other pillar of smoke refers to his intercession,—"perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant?" to denote how exceedingly pleasant the Lord Jesus Christ was to God. Therefore I take the incense to be the approbation of the blessed God, together with the praise and honor given to Christ; and there was revealed to Christ much divine approbation. You will see that this will stand the test if we come to close quarters. Now he was to offer this incense "with the prayers of all saints." You will see, friends, that without this divine approbation of Christ none of the prayers of the saints could be accepted; indeed, there would be no saints without this—they are saints by God's approbation of Christ, and by being sanctified by him and approved in Christ. Now this incense was to go up to God in return by fire; and this fire by which the incense was to ascend to God is expressive of love in the heart. And just as God manifested his great approbation of Christ, so it set Christ's soul on fire with love to God; and the breathings and longings of the soul contain much living fire where the love of God is in the heart. Now it is said that he was to offer this much incense,—the entire approbation of the Most High,—with the prayers of all saints, and this was to ascend from the golden altar,—from his own wonderful achievement. And there is some light thrown upon this in the sacrifice of Abel. Unto Abel and his sacrifice God had

respect, as a type of that entire approbation he has of the Lord Jesus Christ. Then it is said that the smoke of this incense ascended up before God out of the angel's hand. We have seen in the former part of this book the "golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints;" and these prayers of the saints are nothing else but evidences of the Lord's approbation of them, of the Lord's acceptance of them. If we have this incense of prayer in our souls, it is a proof that we are accepted of God. Hear what the Savior says upon it, — "When ye pray, say, Our Father." And Christ takes our prayers in hand, and includes them in his. So that we may here stop for one moment, and say, Wonder, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth, that our prayers become his prayers, and his intercession becomes ours. You will see here that he includes ours in his own. And you have never prayed for anything, and you cannot pray for anything, which is not included in Christ's intercession. Take the seventeenth of John; if you look at what the Savior prays for there, you will find there is not anything you can pray for that is not included in his request. So that our desires after God and after these eternal things become one with Christ's intercession; and therefore Christ seems to say, Father, their desires are my desires; their prayers are my prayers; the odors that come from the golden vials of their new nature are mine; therefore if thou hearest me, thou hearest them; and if thou hearest them thou hearest me. See, then, how beautiful this intercession appears when you look at the oneness of Christ and the people. I do hope that we can somewhat enter into the meaning of the scripture when it speaks of praying in Christ's name. "Ask in my name." You see your desires are thrown into his hands, and he hands in your desires with his own desires. He drops our desire into his desire. He does not go and present our prayers apart from any desire of his own; because he desires that our prayers should be answered, and he intercedes that they may be answered; and the prayers which the Holy Spirit invites are according to the will of God. Ah, my hearer, there is something so encouraging in the thought that the Savior presents your petition to the throne of grace as his petition, your desire as his desire. Is it any wonder that so much is said in the Scriptures about prevailing with God in prayer? "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man,"—the man justified by faith, Christ makes that prayer his prayer; Christ can never be denied; — "Thou always hearest me." The Christian may have desires and prayers mixed with a thousand drawbacks, and sometimes with rebellions; for I know what it is to pray, as it were, rebelliously; but the dear Redeemer's fragrance takes all this away, and presents our desires in his purity, and makes our petitions his own. This is the appointment of God our Father; this is the arrangement of our covenant God. I make these remarks in order to encourage some of you that may be discouraged upon the question of the Lord answering your prayers; to encourage you to seek with an assurance that you cannot seek in vain, if you are seeking by faith in Christ; that you cannot pray in vain. Whatever you need, let it be mercy, or grace, or wisdom, or direction,—let it be whatever it may in matters providential,—come in Jesus' name, and he will make your desires, as far as is consistent with the will of God, his desires, and his desires are sure to prevail. David saw this when he saw that God granted Christ the desire of his heart.

After John has thus set before us the half-hour's silence, which we noticed in our last lecture, and the intercession of Christ, he says, "The angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth; and there were voices, and thundering's, and lightning's, and an earthquake." Though we have explained this before, it will do no harm to have a word upon it now. The golden censer was the instrument that he used; and every minister that is sent of God is a golden censer; he is consecrated to God, and Christ holds him in his hand. Hence when ministers are called stars, they are said to be held in his right hand. Every minister sent of God is a golden censer that Christ holds in his hand, to scatter the living coals—that is, the living, unquenchable truths of the everlasting gospel—among men. And on the day of Pentecost, when this was done, see what voices there were; oh, how many voices cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And see what thundering's; —the solemn truths of God rolled over them like the thunders of heaven, and they felt that those great truths were the voice of the Almighty; and they could say, "Who thundereth like him?" And then the lightning's; —expressive of the piercing, penetrating

power of the gospel of God. You, the hearers, when you hear a sermon, never feel satisfied unless that sermon electrify you right through, and burn up your doubts and fears, and you come away all the better for being pretty near to the galvanic battery, as it were. People say, "Oh, such a man is a very sensational preacher." Why, he is not worth a straw if he is not.

If he himself really feel it, he will be the means of making other people feel it; if he possess this lightning in himself it will leap forth from his soul, pierce the souls of others through and through, burn up their chaff, hay, wood, and stubble. Why, says the man, I came to the house of God with a great many bundles of trouble, like so many trusses of straw, and they are all gone; I feel as though I could fly like the living creatures in Ezekiel's vision. This was realized on the day of Pentecost, and is realized now in a humbler measure. And then there was a great earthquake. This must not be taken literally, but spiritually; and this is repeated again and again in this book; for what I said at the first you will find to be true,—that this book is very repetitional. We shall have, for instance, Rome pagan come before us presently; then we shall have Rome papal; and then we shall have Rome pagan and Rome papal come before us four or five times more before we get to the end of the book. The earthquake, therefore, must be understood spiritually, expressive of that wonderful revolution that is brought about in the soul by regeneration, when all its former hopes and confidences are swallowed up, and the man becomes a new creature.

But we have to notice especially this evening the trumpets. But before entering into that, I had better be a little careful here. There are in all seven trumpets, in allusion of course to the seven trumpets of Jericho; which we shall have to deal with more closely afterwards. Now scripturally what is the business of the trumpets? It is one of those methods by which the Lord is pleased to speak of his truth being sounded out. It is said here of the seven angels, or ministers, that "they prepared themselves to sound." Now how were the disciples prepared to sound, to become angels, to become the great trumpeters to blow the trumpet of the gospel to earth's remotest bounds? —the antitypical jubilee trumpet. They were prepared by knowing what they themselves were as sinners. But perhaps I shall make it clearer, though it will seem a little repetitional, if I bring once more Saul of Tarsus. How was he prepared to sound the trumpet of the gospel? Neither the disciples nor Saul of Tarsus prepared themselves to preach the everlasting gospel by any human tuition or human qualification whatever; they stood apart from it all. When men undertake to make ministers for God, such ministers may do for carnal people, but the Lord says, "They shall not profit my people." Saul prepared himself by the grace of God; it was the Lord that prepared him; but then we are said sometimes to do that that we are enabled to do by the grace of God. So Saul of Tarsus humbled himself down under a sight and sense of what he was; therefore, when he came to sound out the notes of the trumpet, he would sound out truthful notes, distinct and truthful notes concerning our sinnership; and when he came to sound out regeneration, the apostle Paul, understanding it himself, would sound out truthful notes concerning that regeneration; and when he came to sound out the atonement and mediation of Christ, he would sound out truthful notes. And to sum it up in few words, when the apostle came to sound out that exceeding grace of God by which he was saved, he would sound out truthful notes concerning that grace; he would not deny its antiquity, but glorify God that the people were blessed with all spiritual blessings before the world was. Thus they prepared themselves to sound out these eternal truths in proportion to their being made acquainted with them by the Lord himself. And now let me have a word to you. We have spoken of the ministers; let us come to you. You read in this same book that the bride had made herself ready; and again, "Prepare to meet thy God." Now how do you prepare yourself to sing that song that none can sing but them that are redeemed from among men? Is it not by a conviction, on the one hand, of your lost and ruined condition; and a clear apprehension, on the other hand, that it is by grace that you are saved from first to last? So that whether you are ill or well, at home or abroad, old or young, male or female, learned or unlearned, living or dying, you are at all times prepared to crown the dear Redeemer Lord of all; you are at all times prepared to acknowledge from your own

experience that all is of grace from first to last. Hence the apostle, when touching upon this, says, "If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle?" that is, the trumpet must give forth certain sounds, which those who have to act by the trumpet must understand. Hence you find in the tenth of Numbers there were two silver trumpets, and certain notes were to be sounded for different occasions, so that the people judged by the notes that were sounded what was meant; —they could easily understand whether it meant that they were to go forward; whether it meant that the priests only were to be called, whether it meant that the assembly at large were to gather together; whether it meant war, or whatever it meant; — the trumpets gave a certain sound. And just so now, — you read of some that are "vain janglers, not knowing what they say, nor understanding whereof they affirm;" but those whom the Lord sends, they use plainness of speech, words easy to be understood; and you cannot, unless you do so willfully, misunderstand them. They will tell you what it is to be a convinced sinner, they will tell you what it is to be a saved sinner; and they will trace and sound out with great clearness the solemn transactions of eternal mercy 'by which we are saved. This is what I understand by the trumpets, and these angels preparing themselves thus to sound; and seven trumpets, to denote the completeness of the ministry of the word of God, both in judgment and in mercy.

Now let us look at the first trumpet of these seven. "The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth; and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up." We said before that we are now at the beginning of the gospel dispensation; —and the trees here will mean, as we can easily prove, the rulers, magistrates, and great men that had taken a very large part in giving sentence against the saints of God. Let me remind you, friends, that we have passed the martyrological seal, — the fifth; —under that seal were a vast number who had been slain. Now we come to the persons who slew them, and we come to the judgment of God upon those who slew them. So that the trees here will mean the rulers and the great men;—they were cut down by wholesale; and "all green grass" will mean all the common people, the rabble, that supported their rulers in putting to death so many thousands of the saints. The first trumpet sounded forth these judgments that were to come upon the early persecutors of the saints of the living God. But you must clearly understand that while the grass here spoken of in this trumpet represents the people at large, yet the grass, when we come to the fifth trumpet, will mean not the ungodly, but the people of God. Now these persecutions, which the people of God underwent, were of course overruled and foreseen. You have read of Gog and Magog in the thirty-eighth of Ezekiel; they are the very same persons that are here spoken of. This may not seem, perhaps, so interesting to us; but still I might show that Ezekiel foresaw all this. And I will just ask the question, What thousands of men and women, aye, and children too, were put to death by Rome pagan? and not only by them, but by other nations as well; though I shall confine myself chiefly to that empire, because it had more to do with the persecution of the saints than any other empire whatever then existing; and, as you are aware, that empire at that time included our own favored isle. You will see Ezekiel looked forward to this very thing, and saw all about it. "There followed hail and fire mingled with blood." We are not to understand the hail or the fire literally. The blood has, it is true, a great degree of literality, because so many thousands were, by the incursions of the barbarians, destroyed; for the Lord did in that age similarly to what he did to the Midianites,—they killed each other; and so it was in the case of these barbarians. Now I will just read you Ezekiel's account of it, hundreds of years before it came to pass. If you look at the twenty-second verse of the thirty-eighth of Ezekiel, you will find this very judgment to come upon the enemy is predicted. "And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone." Of course the great hailstones mean the great judgments that came upon Rome pagan;—an overflowing rain, fire, and brimstone. I shall not refer to history more than I can help; but we must make some reference to it, to show how all this was fulfilled. Gibbon, in his History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,

calculates that a moiety, that is, half of the then population of the world, was destroyed by their killing each other. What a dreadful scene of things! Why did those things come? In answer to the solemn prayers of the martyrs under the fifth seal:—"How long, O Lord, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" and the answer was that they were to rest a little season. The reservoirs are filling; the tempest will soon break in; it will soon be over with Nero; it will soon be over with those emperors, those people. And the martyrs in glory watched the pouring out of these tremendous judgments upon the enemies of God. Oh may we all then see what an awful thing it is to live and die an enemy to Christ, an enemy to his truth and his people.

"And the second angel sounded, and, as it were, a great mountain, burning with fire, was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." Jeremiah foresaw this, and so did Amos; Amos especially will teach us what is meant by a third part of the sea becoming blood, and a third part of the ships being destroyed. But we will first look at the mountain. This burning mountain rolling into the sea is one of the usages of Scripture speech to describe a nation that is burning with indignation against another nation, and that nation in its combined force goes against the other; and does all the mischief that God permits. In Jeremiah li. 25, Babylon is called a mountain. "Behold, I am against thee, O destroying mountain, says the Lord, which destroyest all the earth; and I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks, and will make thee a burnt mountain." Now the difference between the mountain here and what Babylon was to become is this; or, in other words, the difference between a burning mountain and a burnt mountain is this, —that Babylon, when it had vitality in it, burned with indignation against other nations, and, as a burning mountain, rolled in upon one nation after another, and, as you are aware, destroyed many nations. Now, in its turn, it is to become a burnt mountain; its fire, that is to say, its vitality, is to be taken away; —other nations rolled in upon it, and so Babylon was consumed by the judgments of God. Thus you see it is one of the usages of Scripture speech.

But let us come to the next clause of the description— "and the third part of the sea became blood;"— you see it is all restrained to the third part. If you go to Amos vii 4, you will get the explanation of this third part. "The Lord God called to contend by fire." This is a burning mountain; —do you see the analogy between the two forms of speech?" The Lord God called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep." Here it falls into the sea; there it devoured the great deep. And the prophet seems to contradict it, but he does not, because that fire did in intention devour the great deep; —the great deep there, of course, represents the nation, the empire, or, if you like, the world, —according to the department to which the simile belongs. "It devoured the great deep,"— a mighty empire, or a great nation, compared to the sea; — and yet it did not; —the prophet says, "and did eat up a part;" mark that. What does this refer to? Rome pagan still. After the judgments I have just now spoken of, in roll other nations in a combined form, and yet they are restrained, destroying only a part. How is that? You will find the reason in the dear Savior's own words, when speaking of the destruction of the Jewish nation, when the Roman power should roll in like a burning mountain upon that nation; —the dear Savior says, "Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened." And how was it here that the Roman empire could not be entirely destroyed, —that is, not the people; why was the burning mountain thus restrained? Because a great many of the Lord's people were there, that the Lord did not intend should be destroyed. "The third part of the sea became blood; and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed." Here you have the judgments of God, and his restraining power: —" Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther." These judgments were on behalf of the people of God, and when those judgments would outstep that that would be for the advantage of the people of God, then the judgments were

restrained. Here then is a cause to tremble and to rejoice; to tremble at the thought of being enemies to God on the one hand, and to rejoice in the thought that the enemy is thus restrained on the other.

We now come to the third trumpet. "And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; and the name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." First remember that in the Book of Revelation there are only two leading stars that are spoken of as fallen stars: there are many stars spoken of in this book as falling, but there are only two leading stars spoken of as fallen stars. The striking and self-evident reasons for there being two leading stars fallen, and only two, will come before us very clearly in the next chapter, when we come to the fifth and sixth trumpets. This star, then, that thus fell, what was it? Go to the second chapter of Second Epistle of Thessalonians, and there you will read of the man of sin, there you will read of the apostasy. So that this star is nothing else but a body of apostatizing Christianity; this star is a Christian star in profession, but it falls down from Christ's mediation, and puts something else into the place thereof; it falls down from the lofty settlements of eternity; it is rolled down from the rocks, apostatizes, forms itself into a body. Did such a thing ever occur? Was there ever a body of men thus represented by this star that were apostates from the truth of God, and especially from the spirit of that truth, and did they embody another spirit, a spirit which was from beneath? Was there ever such an ecclesiastical power? Did such a thing ever occur? Let us read on again, and see if we can ascertain the truth of this: "The name of the star is called Wormwood; and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter." In the preceding verse this star is said to fall "upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters." I need not remind you that rivers here represent the social comforts, rights, and advantages of men. As the sea represents an immense body of people at large, rivers represent their social quietude, advantages, consolations, and comforts. This is what is represented by the rivers and the fountains of waters. Did an ecclesiastical power ever arise that interfered with social rights? Is there such a thing in existence, was there such a thing in existence, as the Confessional? Was there ever a power in existence that subjected the wives, the daughters, the husbands, the homes of thousands and tens of thousands to its own will and tyranny? John foresaw this, and he tells us here that "the name of the star is called Wormwood."

It may seem a very strong expression, but I make no hesitation in saying that in all the sanguinary wars ever carried on by savage, by semi-civilized, or by entirely civilized nations, there has never been such cruelty exercised as has been shown by this ecclesiastical power. It has inflicted the most fearful tortures, it has perpetrated the most savage cruelties, and has made life more bitter than all the wars that were ever engaged in. Oh the cruelty of priestly tyranny, of ecclesiastical oppression! You cannot read some of the accounts without your hair standing on end. Is it any wonder, therefore, that this star should be called Wormwood? It fell upon the rivers, —the social comforts and rights of the people. And oh! what cruelties they were subjected to! they did indeed die because the waters were bitter. And it is here said of this star that it burned "as it were a lamp,"—burning with tyranny, burning with the determination to reign over all.

Bless the Lord, that day is gone, and gone forever; never will that ecclesiastical power be in the ascendancy again; the eyes of the nation are beginning to be opened, and never again will that infernal power be able to crush the social rights of the people, or inflict the cruelties which it has done. This is the fallen star that made everything bitter wherever it came; and it would do the same now if it possibly could. I stand amazed myself that any one should be at a loss to understand the meaning. A fallen star means an apostate; one that professed to be one with the Star of Bethlehem, professed to be one with Jesus, but falls into the

spirit of Satan, as the apostle shows. But this star is restrained, you see, to the third part; bless the Lord for that. They were restrained, even in the zenith of their power.

The valleys of Piedmont and other parts of the world became refuges for the dear children of God; thousands and thousands escaped these bitter waters, and their solemn prayers went up to God, until he has gone on overturning, overturning, and will overturn, till he shall come more extensively into view whose right it is to reign, —Christ Jesus the Lord.

Thus we see on the one hand the awfulness of being an enemy to Christ; on the other, the blessedness of being a friend to him; and we see how wonderfully the grace of God supported his people in those dreadful ages. And I hope, without insulting any one—Pope or priest, or any man whatever—that before we get to the end of these lectures we shall feel increased indignation against that error that usurps the place of Christ, comes into our houses, will not allow a man to be an individual, nor a husband to be an individual, nor any person to be an individual; we must be just what they are pleased to mold us into. As a man said the other day in Ireland—and I liked his remark very much,—"Here are two hundred and fifty thousand of us, and they shall walk over our dead bodies before they shall tread down our souls." So say I; God grant that we may feel the same. I think they have done enough; they are drunken with the blood of the saints.

But we will go on to the fourth trumpet. "The fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." We are still on the premises of this fallen star, this apostate church. Is it possible the time should come when this beautiful religion, established by Jesus Christ, should thus be perverted?" The third part of the sun was smitten,"— a large part of Christendom. The sun here means the Christian religion; not the sun literally, nor the moon or stars literally; all this must be taken mystically and figuratively. "A third part of the sun was smitten;" a third part, a large part of the Christian world in the dark. How is that? Because they have put a great many mediators, a great many errors, a great many ceremonies between themselves and God; and so a third part of Christendom is smitten with darkness. And men, when they saw this darkness, rushed into it, glad to get away from the light of the gospel, and to walk in the darkness of priestcraft; glad to get away from the sovereignty, authority, counsel, and perfection of the Most High, and live in the dark shades of human invention.

Here is the third part of the sun of Christianity smitten by this ecclesiastical power. What are you come for? I am come to preach election. My authority puts that down. What are you come for? I am come to show that salvation is all of grace, independent of man; and that justification is by faith, without the works of the law. Ecclesiastical authority smites that down. Thus the third part of the sun, the Christian religion, became smitten, and became dark. "And the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars;" all substantially the same idea. The moon is a light-bearer, and therefore expressive of the gospel; and so a third part of the gospel. "And the third part of the stars." Do not you be any longer one of those dangerous characters, those high-doctrine characters—come down to us; we will make a parson of you, we will make a priest of you; we will give you five big loaves and two great fishes—you shall have plenty. And so these men readily run over to these systems. If we make a priest of you, and you advocate our cause, we will make the people pay you well, we will tell them they will be damned to eternity if they do not pay you well; we will be crafty enough to say it, and they will be fools enough to believe it, and you will be ready enough to receive it. Thus the third part of the sun, and moon, and stars were smitten; and they would have hid the sun of truth from the world altogether, but, bless the Lord, they could not do that; the sun always must shine somewhere; the moon of the gospel always must shine somewhere; and there must be some stars that still go twinkling on, that will not submit to their system. "And the day shone not for a

third part of it, and the night likewise." "He appointed the sun to rule the day,"—that is Christ; " and the moon to rule the night,"—that is the gospel. Why, it used to be daylight as far as I could see; but now it is dark over there; those fields are always dark; it used to be light there, but it is dark now. Why is that? Because they have put something else into the place of the sun they have smitten the sun; they have smitten the moon of the gospel, and put something else into its place; it used to be the great things that God did, now it is the great things the people do; the people have taken God's place, and the truth is gone. "The day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise." Here is the Christian religion defaced, part of it darkened; but bless God, not all of it.

"And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!" Some would-be prophets have told us these trumpets were yet to sound, whereas they have been sounding ever since the beginning of the gospel dispensation. But they are said to be woe trumpets. Not to the people of God. The trumpets of Jericho were not woe trumpets to Rahab, and they were not woe trumpets to the Israelites; they were woe trumpets only to the Jerichoites, only to the enemies. Those same trumpets that were woe trumpets to the adversaries were trumpets of rejoicing to the children of God. The woe is "to the inhabitants of the earth," that have nowhere to dwell but on the earth; if they are religious, their religion is like themselves—it is worthless. But the people of God, the children of God, live in the rock, where no evil can come: "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing, let them shout from the tops of the mountains." The trumpets that are woe trumpets to the others are the sounds of a great and final victory to them.

The Lord increase in us a knowledge of these things, for his name's sake. Amen, and Amen.

VIII. THE TWO APOSTATE CHURCHES.

The theme of part, at least, of our lecture this evening is the ninth chapter of the Book of Revelation, the fifth and sixth trumpets there spoken of; but I do not suppose we shall get further than the fifth; because, as the angels prepared themselves to sound, we must, before we enter upon this mysterious chapter, try to prepare ourselves to understand what it contains. Also, we must remember that John had to state the things that he had seen, the things that were, and the things that were in the future; and the fifth trumpet, or the first of the two spoken of in this ninth chapter, evidently refers to things that were, in a great measure, past in the day in which John lived; and I shall venture to take that which is sounded out by these two trumpets to be expressive, first of the Jewish, and secondly of the Christian apostate churches.

First, let me observe, it appears that the contents or circumstances of these fifth and sixth trumpets are taken from the fifth chapter of Zechariah. You read in the fifth of Zechariah of an ephah; that is, as you are aware, a Jewish measure; and that this ephah was full of all sorts of delusions, called "wickedness;" and answers to the golden cup we shall meet with by and by in the Book of Revelation, — that golden cup full of abominations; that is to say that all false doctrines are intoxicating to the human mind.

Now the Lord said to the prophet that this ephah, which is wickedness, "is their resemblance through all the earth." Let us be as clear as possible here. In the first place it appears that the people that were connected with that ephah were to be scattered all over the world. "This is their resemblance through all

the earth." Now take the twenty-third of Matthew, where you have the Savior's eight woes pronounced upon the various traditions of the Jews; and then take the fact that the Jews have been scattered, and are scattered still, throughout the world. "This is their resemblance;" that is, their doctrines are their resemblance. If we are worshippers of error, then that error describes us, and we are like that error; and as that error comes from perdition, it leads to perdition; hence the worshippers or followers of error are spoken of as sons of perdition. "This is their resemblance through all the earth." Take the words of David upon this, —that idol makers, and they that trust in idols, are like unto them; there must be a resemblance. The soul is molded to whatever it worships. If I am a Roman Catholic, my mind is molded to Catholicism; that describes me, and I am a representation of that. And if I am a worshipper or follower of Judaism, then my mind is molded to that; that describes me, and I am a representation of that Judaism. But if my soul be molded for God, and I receive Jesus Christ by faith as my life, my sanctification, my justification, and my salvation, then my mind is molded into oneness with Christ, with God, and I stand as a representative of Christ; for every real Christian is a representative of Christ. This is so self-evident that I need not dwell upon it.

Now there was a woman sitting in this ephah; the woman took her seat, her throne, upon this ephah. The Jewish church took its throne, took its position, upon human authority, human tradition. The authority of the church was everything in the Savior's day. So that you will observe that the Jewish church did just the reverse of what the true Christian church did. What the true Christian church did, and does, and will do, is represented in these words: "Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion:" and of course that strength is Christ; "put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem,"—garments of salvation, —"the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean."

Thou hast escaped everything by this oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. But the Jewish church, alas! put off their strength; they put the beautiful garments off, or away, instead of putting them on; and they went into a position where there was no sanctification whatever. Here, then, is the woman taking her position upon this ephah. Now let us apply this to Christendom as well. Is there not at this very day a church that takes her stand upon human tradition? that is her throne, that is the base upon which she rests. Here is the ephah, then; a measure containing these delusions.

Now we find a talent of lead thrown into this ephah. Here you get the destruction of the Jewish nation. Then presently there are two women that come out of this ephah. Let us get a clear understanding of this; we shall see, perhaps, more of the importance of it presently. What two women were these? First, the Jewish apostate church; secondly, the Christian apostate church. And do not these two churches still exist? But perhaps you will say, If that ephah represent Jewish tradition, how could both the apostate churches, the Jewish and the Christian, come from the same body of error? For this reason, —that salvation was of the Jews; Christianity was of the Jews; our religion originated with the Jews; that is, the Lord so ordered it that it should commence by the Jews; therefore, as to our religion we have descended from the Jews; and if we have apostatized, then, although the traditions may be different, they are the same in substance, for they are all intended to get rid of God's truth. Now it is said that these women, these two apostate churches, "had wings like the wings of a stork." Let us try and understand this.

You know that the stork is a bird of emigration. The stork says, "If winter is coming this way, I will go that way; if winter is coming that way, I will go this way." And how did the Pharisees of old do? See how they turned and twisted about in order to avoid anything like tribulation for their religion. They made long prayers, but what was their object? "Why, to get widows' houses. You would have thought their object was to worship God and benefit men; but the Savior, who penetrated through it, saw what their object was, —that it was to gain in the world. And this very conduct had commenced among professors in the

apostles' day. For the Jewish law being then in that part of the world fashionable and respectable, it was not considered respectable to be a Christian unless you united Judaism with Christianity; you thereby took away in the eyes of the world the reproach of Christianity; you thereby softened it down, and thereby made it nice, and soft, and easy. Therefore, the apostle says, "As many as desire to make a fair show in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised, only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ." You will observe, then, that the stork represents the time-serving professor that will be Vicar of Bray. Whether Edward the Sixth is reigning, or Mary, or Elizabeth, —through it all I will be Vicar of Bray. These are the storks, the birds of passage. Whereas those that are taught of God, they go straightforward in all weathers; they do not turn or twist to suit the times. Can you understand this? Both these churches are alike. This general council met to-day at Rome, — what are they going to do? Are they going to take the New Testament, and shall the Pope proclaim from his chair that what is not found in the New Testament they will repudiate; that what is not there they will not reckon it safe to trust in? Instead of this they are going to rake up all their old musty laws, and see what they can make of them, and see whether they can bring themselves into a shape and form that shall enable them to stay the downward course which they themselves evidently feel they are going; they are going downhill as fast as they can go; the Pope is losing his power, the priests are losing their power, and they think the less they have to do with the Bible the better, the more they have to do with this body of error the better. Such is the fearful delusion they are under.

Now it is said of these two women that "they lifted up the ephah between the earth and the heaven." Does not Judaism hold up itself between earth and heaven as the way to heaven? Does not Catholicism hold up the body of its delusion as the way to heaven? Thus though Judaism and Catholicism individually are two, yet they agree to reject God's truth, and to have a way to heaven of their own devising. These two women, then, lift up the ephah, these human systems, as the way to heaven. But a voice comes to the convinced sinner, the sensible sinner, —in contrast to these false mediums, these false mediators, a voice comes, "I am the way." It is by me that sin is ended; it is by me that wrath is ended; it is by me that death is ended; it is by me that mercy and truth are met together; it is by me that poor sinners are saved; it is by me that grace reigns. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." We that know this, oh, how contemptible are these bodies of error in our estimation when contrasted with the dear mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ! By and by, then, come these two apostate churches, —the Jewish and the Christian; and they bear the ephah up; they all agree to reject the truth.

"Then said I to the angel that talked with me, Whither do these bear the ephah? And he said unto me, To build it an house in the land of Shinar; and it shall be established, and set there upon her own base." "To build it an house in the land of Shinar." If you go to the eleventh of Genesis, you will find that the tower of Babel was built in the land of Shinar. There is the type. And what are the religions of these apostasies but as pyramids, towers, and piles of delusion;—huge lies, piled up one upon the other; and they think their tower shall reach heaven. But we must not take the land of Shinar mystically. "To build it an house." Who are the houses? Why, I do not know the exact number, but I believe there are about six millions of Jews; and the Roman Catholic church consists of nearly, or rather more than, two hundred millions. These are the houses. God builds up his church as the house, the habitation in which he is to reside: and the Catholics are the house in which the body of error resides. And if almighty mercy should convince these unhappy millions of the nature of the house they are in, they would all do as John Berridge did when he said, —

"I built up a house of several wares, and thought it would stand,

But, alas! alas! I had built on the sand;

By and by my house came down with a terrible shock,
I ran out naked, and crept to a rock."

If we could but show them what sandy foundations they are upon! if we could but show them the nature of the house they are in! what would the transition be if the people were convinced that it was all error! The priests might go on building and transmuting the elements as long as they liked, the people would take no notice of them. What would priestly absolution be? Why, nothing at all. If the eyes of the people were opened, they would say, "No, let me have absolution from God; let the God that made me pronounce my sins forgiven, bring home the word with power, then shall peace flow into my soul; then, and not till then, can I believe my sins to be forgiven. And what would purgatory be but for the people that uphold it? They are the house in which this body of error resides; and let us pray that the day may come when they may be convinced of the error by which they are held captive.

But we must come back again to the storks, —we must not lose sight of them: I was going away from them rather too soon. You must not blame me for that, if I did pass away from the storks rather too soon, for they are disagreeable things to live with. You are all aware—you are naturalists enough for that, I suppose—that storks live upon serpents, and frogs, and all sorts of nasty insects; and so the man that is deluded, he feeds upon serpentine doctrines, frog doctrines, and everything that is nasty. Now it is said of these two women that "the wind was in their wings; for they had wings like the wings of a stork." What is the wind? The apostle explains it. "Be not carried about,"—there is the bird of passage, you see; when the winter is coming, off he goes to where it is not winter; —"Be not carried about with every wind of doctrine." So the false doctrine is the wind by which the devil wafts them along. Their doctrines are the atmosphere that they breathe, spiritually breathe, the atmosphere in which they live. And you cannot say it is anything unkind on my part, or anything assumptive, when I tell you that Satan is the prince of that atmosphere. Have you not sometimes felt a little puzzled at the meaning of that scripture which speaks of the devil as "the prince of the power of the air"? Of course there are men, and learned men, who tell us that the devil lives in the atmosphere, and he is the prince, and I do not know what. I never could see him there yet, and I never could feel there was much divinity in that sort of idea. But when I look at doctrine being called "wind," "air," or "atmosphere," then I see the infinite difference between the two atmospheres; —the atmosphere of gospel truth, and the atmosphere of Satanic falsehood. Christ lives in the one, the Holy Spirit manages the one; Satan is the king of the other, the god of the other; —the prince of the power of the air; the spirit who, by those waves of wind, worketh in the children of disobedience. Bless the Lord for delivering us from delusion.

Now here is an ephah, denoting a body of error; here is a talent of lead, denoting the destruction of the Jewish nation; then comes the apostasy of these two churches, —the Jewish church and the Christian church; then comes this body of error held up between earth and heaven as the way to heaven. And have we not in our own highly favored land bodies of error held up, to the exclusion of God's grace, as the way to heaven? And now mark the language that follows; it is the very thing the Catholics most toast of, the very thing the Jews boast of;—not only shall the house be built, but "it shall be established." Why, says the Catholic, see how long my religion has been established! Why, says the Jew, see how long my religion has been established! Well, the Lord says, "It shall be established," they shall succeed; they are joined to idols, let them alone; then you come to the New Testament, and you get these solemn words, — "God shall send them strong delusion, and they shall believe a lie." Now they were to set this ephah in the land of Shinar, taking the land of Shinar mystically to mean the world; —we are now dealing with mystic Babylon; —"and it shall be set there upon her own base." Is not Rabbinical authority to this day the base upon which the Jewish church rests? Is not papal authority to this day the base upon which the Catholic church rests? Do they not now boast that Peter was the rock, and that the Pope is Peter's successor? and

that therefore the Pope is the rock upon which the church is built? Look at the exact fulfilment of God's blessed word. Here the Lord foresees this body of error; here the Lord foresees the destruction of the Jewish nation; here the Lord sees the two apostate churches; here he foresees their character, that they would be birds of migration, shaping their course to their own advantage; as to the souls of men and the glory of God, those are things that do not weigh with them; then the false doctrine in their wings to carry them along; and then to build it a house, and they have built it a large house; and that it shall be established, and it has been established and is established. Why, some people think if you overthrow the Pope's temporal power you will overthrow Popery. No such thing. Believe me when I tell you that there is only one thing that can overthrow Popery. It is not by human might, therefore let us not recommend human might; it is not by human power, therefore let us not recommend human power; but "by my Spirit, says the Lord;" and if Popery be not consumed out of the minds of men and women by the spirit of the Savior's mouth, and the brightness of his coming, believe me, friends, there is no other remedy under the canopy of heaven. Cutting a man's head off will not alter him, I was going to say, if it were possible the man could live after that, in matters that pertain to the soul. The mind of man must be dealt with as a mind; you must appeal to his conscience, his reason, his understanding; you must appeal to the vital powers of his soul; and when you are favored to do that, and the Lord is pleased to accompany the word with power, and open the sinner's eyes, why, a fool in five minutes may become a wise man. The thief on the cross was a fool,—they both were fools, or else they would not both have cast reproach upon the Savior;—but when the Lord opened the eyes of one, in a few minutes he became a wise man. It was not what he suffered on the cross that did it, because if that could have done anything towards it, it would have shut the mouth of the other as well;—it was the down coming of the eternal Spirit of God that opened his understanding, and gave him to see who it was that was by his side. So, then, I again ask the question, Is not Rabbinical authority the base upon which the Jewish church rests? is not papal authority the base upon which the Catholic church rests? Ah, poor Catholic; what a sandy foundation! We love your soul, we hate your religion; we would not hurt a hair of your head, but would do you all the good we could. If Protestantism had such ascendancy in this country in civil power as to be able to command every Catholic to leave the country, I would be the first to lift up my voice against any such wrong, any such violence. Let us look at them with an eye of pity; let us pray for them; and when we speak try to make them feel that we are not seeking to reproach the Pope or the cardinals, the priests or the people, but we are seeking to show that there is only one way to heaven, and that is by the regenerating grace of God, by the mediation of Christ, by the deep and eternal counsels of the Lord; and that man has no right to interfere, that man can in reality take no part in the eternal salvation of his never-dying soul; it is of God from first to last. Let this be our spirit, and this our course. It is all very easy to give lectures upon the confessional and the conventual system, and to represent convents as dens of iniquity; you will always find men eloquent when they begin to slander and reproach; but did you ever hear that it did any good? No, my hearer, the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. If we do any good it must be by speaking the truth in love; but then that does not hinder our determined decision. So much then for the two apostate churches, the Jewish and the Christian; —there cannot by any possibility be more than two, because there are only two dispensations.

I now go on to the fifth trumpet. We have seen in the previous chapter the fallen star, which I took to be the ruling power of Christendom, that fell by apostasy. Then in this ninth chapter you get a second fallen star, which I take to be the Jewish star, for the reasons I will go on to state. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth; and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit." Now fix this idea in your mind, if you can, —that when the sun, and moon, and stars are spoken of figuratively, they mean ruling powers; and so you must understand here that it is the Jewish ruling power, as described by Hosea when he says, "Judah yet ruleth with God, and is faithful with the saints." But by and by they fell from that lofty position, and began to rule without God, began to rule contrary to God; so that when God's

Son came, see the Savior's rule and see theirs. What a tremendous fall was this! Their ancestors ruled with God—that is, those of them that were spiritual; they received God in his immutable covenant, in the eternal priesthood of Christ; they received God in his yea and amen promises, and thus not without but with God they ruled. Hear what the apostle says upon this: —"We then as workers together with God;" not workers without him. Some have thought that is rather a free-will sort of text; no, friends, it is not. "We as workers together with him." When the Lord commanded Noah to build an ark, Noah would say, Well, Lord, if thou art with me, I can go on and work; but without thee I shall be sure to be stopped. And every Christian minister says, Well, Lord, there is the promise thou hast given to thy ministers, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and therefore with thy Spirit, with thy Son, and with thy presence, I shall work along well. And so the Christian says, If thou wilt be with me, and wilt give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I may return to my Father's house in peace, then I shall get on. But if you fall from this, exclude his rule, exclude his truth, and set up a rule of your own, that is what is here meant by this star that fell from heaven unto the earth.

"And to him was given the key of the bottomless pit;" some of the learned- render it, "the key of the pit of the abyss;" but it does not much matter which you take; the meaning in substance will be the same. Now, where shall I go for a scripture? Here is a fallen church, that has the key of Satan's territories, to bring something out of those territories. What does the Savior say upon this key of the pit?" Now is your hour and the power of darkness." Whence did Judas get his power to betray the Savior? Whence did the Jews get their power to crucify the Savior? Ah, Satan entered into Judas, and the Savior said, "Now is your hour, and the power of darkness." It may well be called the key of the bottomless pit, for it was Satan's device, and he is in all this, he is at the head of it, and is mentioned presently, at the end of this trumpet.

"And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." Here is a smoke arising from this pit; what is this smoke? I answer, without any hesitation, and even without the fear in this instance of being wrong, the smoke of the pit is Pharisaism; and we shall have a pretty good proof of that presently. Isaiah lxxv. 5, —"Which say, Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou. These are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day." Can you then be at a loss to understand what the smoke is? It is Pharisaism. Why, say you, if there is so much evil as this in Pharisaism, I would not be a Pharisee for all the world. I do not suppose David meant this exactly when he said he was like a bottle in the smoke; he may have partly meant that too. Well, say you, that would have made the bottle very black. And depend upon it, if you get among the Pharisees they will make you pretty black too; they will say, "Come not near to me, for I am holier than thou;" you are one of the high-doctrine people. What, are you a bottle in the smoke, David? Yes; all sorts of reproach heaped upon me. Never mind, David, if you are not a bottle of smoke. It does not matter about your being a bottle in the smoke, if you have something good in you. Oh yes, I am all right inside, though outside, by the reproaches they cast upon me, they make me rather black. Such is the smoke of Pharisaism. So every false system is in some shape or other the smoke of the bottomless pit. Look at the Roman Catholics, they hold human merit; look at the Jews, they hold human merit, and drive their doctrines of hell along four in hand, as it were, glorying in them.

Now let us see what it did: —it did something very terrible. You observed in the eighth chapter, when we spoke of the Christian ruling power fallen, the apostate Christian church, there was only a third part of the sun smitten, — they could not hide the light altogether; only a third part of the moon and stars, and a third part of the day darkened. But here, mark the solemn language: —"And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." What is the sun? Their ancient and true religion. But from Dan to Beersheba, now that they are crucifying Christ, all darkness. Jeremiah said: "I beheld the heavens, and they had no light," because the smoke of Pharisaism has crucified the Savior, banished the gospel

from the land, and Christians were forewarned to leave that doomed land, in which the whole of the ruling power, the whole of true religion, was darkened. This in another place is expressed thus: that "the sun shall be darkened," —that is, their true religion, that used to rule, is now darkened, and the prince of darkness has taken its place; "the moon shall be darkened," —that is, the ruling power shall be subjected to destruction; "and the stars shall fall from heaven," meaning the rulers shall all fall, and the scene become desolate; and you know there were times when some of the Roman emperors commanded every Jew to leave Judea. The matter is as simple as can be. And "the air;" —what is the air? We have already shown that the gospel is the atmosphere in which the Christian lives, —the living, pure gospel; —lifted up by the presence of God; that is the atmosphere. But the whole of this gospel was now eclipsed; it was all darkened from first to last in Judea. Therefore, said Jeremiah, "I beheld the heavens, and they had no light; I beheld, and lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled;" —not a Christian left. Ah, my hearers, suppose that this smoke of Pharisaism, that rises in so many places in our own land, should so cover it as to banish every Christian, and banish the gospel altogether; how soon would England be nothing but an aceldema, a field of blood. Should we enjoy then socially, politically, commercially, morally, and religiously, what we now do? No; it would be a hell. Some people think there is no harm in Pharisaism. Oh, he is a very nice man, sir. So is the devil in appearance; —why, he is transformed into an angel of light; and the more a man is on good terms with himself, the more I suspect him; and the more he is everlastingly prating about good works, the more I suspect him. Why, if you had a servant who was always saying, Master, I assure you I am very honest, — always telling you about his honesty, you would begin to be suspicious directly; you would say, There is something wrong somewhere, or else he would not talk like this. And so, when the doings of the creature are set into the place of the doings of the Most High, it is a bad sign.

"And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth; and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power;" —referring to the Romans. The Romans caught the Jewish spirit. The Jewish spirit was a spirit of persecution; the Romans caught that spirit, and adopted it, followed the example set them by the Jews; and then Rome papal caught the spirit of Rome pagan, and carried on the persecution; and then some of our Protestant ancestors caught the spirit of Rome papal, and each party, as you know, not three hundred years ago, persecuted the other all they could, not understanding what religion really was. So you see how easily this spirit is caught Solomon says, "With an angry man thou shalt not go;" and if I find a man angry with God's truth, I should not like to have him for my very close companion, lest I should catch the same spirit, and get angry with the truth also. So that here is the Jewish church fallen into oneness with the Roman nation. I should not have mentioned this were it not so clear, and you know they employed the civil power of Rome to crucify Christ; you know that Pilate was not a Jewish, but a Roman governor; and you know it was by Roman, and not by Jewish law that Christ was put to death; you know that the mode of capital punishment with the Jews was either the sword or else the stoning to death, while to neither of these was the Savior subjected; but he was put to death according to the order of the Roman law.

And as the Jews had shown no mercy to the Savior, to Stephen, to the apostles, and to others of the people of God, the Lord took care that these locusts and scorpions should show no mercy to them. It is an awful thing if we have it in our power to hurt a child of God, and do so; God treasures it up. Hear what the Great Judge will say at the last day, whether you take it on the good or on the evil side: —"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." We must not take the grass of the earth here literally, nor the green things literally, nor the trees literally. In the eighth

chapter you will find a third part of the trees and all green grass were burnt up. And in the sixth chapter we noticed the martyrological seal, under which a great many were killed. But under this trumpet, which refers to the destruction of Jerusalem, they are only permitted to hurt "those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads." What does that mean? Why, while John saw that the enemy did kill a large number, as shown in the eighth chapter, he now sees that number that could not be killed. Even in war "every bullet has its billet,"—has its mission. When an army goes into battle, God has settled beforehand who shall fall and who shall survive; and those that are to survive cannot be killed, and those that are to fall cannot survive. We must believe that our God is the governor in all these matters. So here John sees a people that these hostile powers should not be able to kill. The Romans caught the spirit of persecution of the Jews, and then very naturally turned round and dealt with the Jews in the same spirit of persecution which they had caught of them, yet the Jews are not to be all killed. John here names those who could not be killed, but be tormented five mystical months, up to the destruction of their nation.

By the grass here, then, we must understand the people of God; and by the green things, a phrase denoting herbs, we must also understand the people of God; and so also the trees. Here you have the three classes: the grass, the little ones; then the herb, the green thing;—there is the one that has got on a little further; and then the tree, the sturdy old cedar, that is deeply rooted, spreads its majestic tranches, and looks down upon us little ones, and says, What poor little bits of things you are; here stands the lofty cedar. Now they were not to hurt these trees, nor these herbs, nor this grass. Then, say you, none of them were killed. Yes, they were. Well, how can that be?—not hurt them, and yet kill them? What! do you hold such a religion as that, that men may kill you without hurting you? Yes, I do. They were commanded to hurt them not; they were restrained. You cannot hurt the least believer as he stands in Christ; the least believer's life is hid with Christ in God. "We are killed all the day long," says the apostle. Doesn't it hurt you? Not the slightest. Yea, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." It was the martyrs that conquered, not the devil; it was those that died for the truth's sake that conquered, not Satan. Who conquered at Calvary's Cross? Was it Satan and his agents, that slew the Savior? or was it the Lamb that was slain?

"He conquered when he fell;
'Tis finished,' said his dying breath,
And shook the gates of hell."

Amen, and Amen.

IX. THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

Our lecture this evening, friends, will be founded chiefly upon the ninth chapter of the Book of Revelation. We commenced the fifth trumpet last Wednesday evening, but did not reach so far as the sixth. I then observed that the two trumpets here sounded out the character of the two apostate churches, the Jewish and the Christian; and we shall have pretty good proofs of that as we pass along. I will not recapitulate the points to which I then referred. We have a few more items to notice in connection with the fifth trumpet, and then we will come to the sixth.

First then, under this fifth trumpet we have, as we have observed, the Jewish church, as a fallen star; but then the Jewish church was united with the Roman empire; and, as you know, the Roman empire recoiled upon the Jewish nation, and destroyed it. And this trumpet appears to refer in its primary application, whatever other forms it may take by way of accommodation, to the period from the death of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem, which is only forty years.

I said at the beginning there were some parts of this book that must be understood chronologically, and this is one of those parts. The first item I glance at is that this power was to torment men five months. These five months must of course be understood mystically, the same as the dates in other parts of this book,—to denote a period which was not known at that time even to the Savior himself; for although it was only forty years from the Savior's time to the destruction of Jerusalem, yet he as man did not yet comprehend the precise day in which that destruction should be completed; therefore he says, "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only." These five months, therefore, referring, as I believe they do, to that very period, must be understood mystically. You observe it is a very short period—five months—and so it was a short period from the time of the Savior's death to the destruction of the Jewish nation.

And we have here again the doctrine which we have so many times brought before us in this book, and we also have this doctrine in practice and in fact brought before us a great many times in our lives, —namely, the restriction of the enemy, —that he can go so far, but no farther. The Savior says, when referring to this time, "Except those days should be shortened, no flesh could be saved;" there he evidently alludes to Jewish flesh. So that notwithstanding the dreadful destruction among the Jews, yet it was restricted to a certain time.

Here is a doctrine in which we have indeed reason to rejoice. All our troubles are limited. And I think there is hardly one of you that has ever known any great and extreme trouble, but that when it has come to such an extreme as to bring out those rebellions that are natural to us, and has sufficiently disciplined, humbled, and broken us down as far as the Lord sees fit we should be broken down, then he steps in and turns our captivity. So then, the enemy being thus restrained to five months, brings before us the restraining power of the blessed God over our troubles, —limiting the troubles of his people. This period of five months is repeated twice under this trumpet. So there are no limits to the blessings he has bestowed, or to the consolations to be enjoyed; but there are limits to the troubles of the people of God. Indeed, in the early part of this book we have this same beautiful doctrine laid down: "Ye shall have tribulation ten days; be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

The next item I notice under this trumpet is the misery of that time. The locusts and the scorpions were to torment men; that is to say, the enemies were to be as these insects and reptiles. "And in those days men shall seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them." I am sure you must all see with what force this applies to the sufferings of the Jews under the Romans, when their destruction drew nigh. They did seek death, they longed for death. They had been merciless towards the Son of God, the apostles of God, the truth of God, and the people of God, by means of the Roman power; and now the Romans turn round upon them, and minister judgment without any mercy whatever. Look at the agony, look at the suffering! well might the Savior say, "Woe unto them that are with child, and them that give suck in those days;" he did not refer there to eternal woe, but to the terrible sufferings to which they should be subjected. So great were their sufferings from famine that even maternal affection was overcome, and women ate their own offspring. What must have been the preceding suffering to overcome maternal affection, and bring them to such a pass! I cannot forbear making one remark more here, and that is this, —of all terrible things the most terrible is to be filled with bitterness

against God's Christ, against God's gospel, against God's truth. This was the character of the Jews: and as they were filled with bitterness to the uttermost, therefore the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost. And yet this is nothing more than what we all are by nature. It is a great work to bring us out of this gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity into reconciliation to God, into peace with God, so that we have a way of escape from all our sufferings.

Here, then, there set in judgment upon judgment; death fled from them until they were subjected to it by those famines and pestilences which the Savior had predicted. I may just make the remark here that the people of God have sometimes and do sometimes partake of what may be called an impatience of this life, when trouble presses on every side. It was so with Elijah, when, after he had succeeded with God as he had, yet under the threats of Jezebel he had to fly for his life, and he felt as though he wished he was dead! and when he lay down under the juniper tree, he appears to have done so with a good deal of carelessness. "I am not better than my fathers;" as though he should say, If a wild beast come and tear me to pieces, all the better; the sooner I am out of such a wretched world as this the better. But the Lord interposed, and did not leave him long in that state, but revived him, raised him up, revealed himself afresh to him, and re-invigorated him.

But these people under this trumpet would none of the Lord's counsel, they despised all his reproof; therefore, he says, "I will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh." If I may speak of it as a kind of space, it is a long way from a state of unregeneracy to a state of regeneracy! What a wonderful distance there is between the two characters, —the one that hates the truth of God and the other that loves it! And so, when troubles pressed upon Job, he said, "Oh that it would please God to destroy me!" he was weary of life. And I have had times in my own soul's experience, connected with outward circumstances, when I have wished I could breathe my last. So with Job, —Oh that it would please God to take me out of it altogether, and the sooner it is over the better. But then this does not last long. No; Job looks up and says, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Ah, Job! that will put you right; that will reconcile you. Then he was quiet, and he says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change shall come," because my Redeemer liveth.

I need not remind you of Jonah and many others. See, then, the difference. Here are the wicked driven away in utter despair, —no God to look to. The righteous are tried, but they are tried only in measure: "He will not suffer you to be tried above that ye are able to bear, but will with the tribulation make a way of escape." If we look, then, at this statute of limitation, is there not something encouraging to us? And then, again, if we look at those that sought death and found it not, they were not believers in Christ: sin and Satan would not allow them to believe in Christ; and God did not give them grace to believe in Christ. Are we any better than they by nature? In no wise. If, therefore, we are brought to belief in Jesus Christ, unto God be all the glory. He it is who turns our captivity, fills our mouths with laughter and our tongues with singing, and causeth us to rejoice and bless the happy day when our eyes were fixed upon the dear Mediator of the everlasting covenant, and we became believers in a covenant God.

The third item I just glance at here is this. I have before said that both these powers in this chapter under these two trumpets are the two apostate churches, the Jewish and the Christian; and it is said here of their appearance, "They had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions." Let us get at the meaning of this. I reckon this to be, in a measure, a key to this part of the subject. What is mystically meant by their hair being as the hair of women? Let us remember that last Wednesday evening we took the fifth chapter of Zechariah, where the two apostate churches are called women. And here is something feminine, —"They had hair as the hair of women." And when Christ would denote the constant youthfulness, incorruptibility, and immortality of the church, among other things, when she is spoken of

as a woman, he speaks of her ample locks of hair. He says, "Thou art all fair," and he seems anxious, I was going to say, to fix our attention upon that lovely truth. Some people say we dwell too much upon it: we cannot dwell too much upon it. Fourth chapter of Solomon's Song: "Thou art fair, my love: behold, thou art fair; thou hast dove's eyes within thy locks; thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Mount Gilead." This is a form of speech, then, to denote the amplitude of her locks—the amplitude of her hair. There is no growing old, there is no mortality, there is no falling off; here are her flowing locks; she is immortal, always youthful. And what a wonderful thing this is; when we are raised up at the last great day, we shall be raised up in perfect youth, and that perfect youthfulness will continue to all eternity, never show the slightest sign whatever of decay.

Now the false church of course imitates the true church as well as she can: I would not say anything light upon a matter so serious, or else we all well know there is a great deal of difference between the natural hair and false hair. You can understand that, can you not? And the false church puts on a sort of something, —some false curls got up, —and the old lady makes herself look as young as she can; but, after all, those who have eyes to see, and discriminating power, see the wrinkles; they see the eyes are dim; they see it is an old lady, and not a young one. She may try to dress young, but she is old still. So here the false church tries to adorn herself, and make herself look as handsome as she can, and would pass for a very fascinating, charming young lady; but she is the old—I won't say what—still, notwithstanding all. This is what I understand, then, by their "having hair as the hair of women," to denote the feminine character of this power, —that it is the false church. But "their teeth were as the teeth of lions,"—no question whatever about that; but these lions' teeth of the apostate Jewish church are long ago broken, and broken forever.

Now it is said, "They had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron." You will recollect that the fourth empire in Daniel's vision is compared to iron; so here this is to lead our attention to the Roman empire at this period, when the Jewish church was not yet destroyed, but just about to be destroyed, and was in oneness with it. And then we find at the end of this trumpet, or what this trumpet says, that "they had a king over them,"— the great enemy of souls. We have both his Hebrew and his Greek name given here, but both words signify "a destroyer." And oh! how did Satan delight to marshal the Jews and Romans against Christ, to crucify him. How did Satan delight to marshal the Jews and Gentiles against the martyrs, and put them to death; and how did Satan delight after that to inspire the Gentiles to destroy the Jews themselves! So Herod and Pilate were made friends by condemning the Savior; and then the Romans, who had served the Jews in crucifying Christ, now turn round against the Jews themselves.

I do not suppose I have made these things as clear as I could wish; but lest I should be tedious, I will go on now to the sixth trumpet.

The sixth trumpet commences with a voice, and I shall want you to take particular notice of this, because it is a key to all the sixth trumpet says: "I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God." Now this golden altar represents Christ as our intercessor, and the voice coming from the four horns denotes that Christ is the universal intercessor; four horns denote universal power, east, west, north, and south. Here, then, is Jesus Christ in the universality of his intercession. There was never but one priest admitted on the day of atonement into the holy of holies to plead the people's cause; and there never was but one Priest admitted into heaven or acknowledged on earth to plead the people's cause. Here, then, is Christ in the universality of his intercession; the four horns of the altar, as there were four horns to the sacrificial altar, to denote the universal power of his sacrifice, for his sacrifice was of universal power, and it was by that the mission was given to go and preach the gospel to all nations; and so his intercession takes the sweep of the whole church of the living God, —universal power.

Then come four angels "which are bound in the great river Euphrates,"—not heavenly angels or agents, but satanic, as we have seen in the preceding part of the book. The voice said "to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates." We must find out presently what the river is, and how the river bound these agents, —how these agents got loose, —and we shall see what they did when they got loose. I may just remind you of the general opinion of the learned. Bishop Newton, among the rest, in his well-written and instructive work upon the Book of Revelation (of course I do not go with him in his sentiments, but the book is nevertheless instructive), thinks that these four angels were four sultanies or kingdoms that were founded on the banks of the river Euphrates about the 11th, 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries, and that they were bound or kept back from action by the crusades which took place during those centuries; and that, when these crusades ended, then these sultanies were at liberty to arise and carry on their military exploits westward. This appears feasible and looks well, but it does not satisfy my mind, for some very weighty reasons. In the first place, the Euphrates here must not be understood literally, but mystically. We find not in this book history Babylon, but mystery Babylon. Egypt in this book must be spiritually and figuratively understood. Sodom in this book must not be literally, but mystically, understood. And so the great river Euphrates here must not be understood as the literal Euphrates at all; it must be understood mystically and figuratively. Now as the literal river Euphrates represented Babylon, so this river represents mystic Babylon; and I think I shall be able to show you as clearly as you would wish when and how it was that these four angels were bound in the great river Euphrates. But before so doing let me again remind you of the four horns of the golden altar—universal power." Do you not see that here are four agents taking the place of these four horns of the golden altar? Do you not see that while Christ is the universal Intercessor, a sinner presumptuously rises to take the place of that intercession, to take that universal power, to stand in the Savior's place, to stand in Christ's stead, to be Christ's vicar? I know of no power in any ancient empire, I know of no power that has ever risen in the world, that has claimed such universality as Popery. What is the universal dominion that Popery has claimed? Ask Popery what its claim is; its answer is, God has given all the bodies and all the souls of men into my hands; I claim authority over them all; I claim authority over all their property. Hence in times past the Pope used to give a kingdom away here and there; it is true he used to say, It is for you if you can get it—he had need to say that. But have you ever heard of a power in this world that has claimed such universality as Popery? So that our souls and bodies are not our own—they belong to the Pope; our wives are not our own—they belong to the Pope; our husbands are not our own—they belong to the Pope; our property is not our own—it belongs to the Pope. The fact is, we cannot say it is all his except what little the Queen has; for she is his, and all that she hath; everything is his. Now I do readily grant that all the bodies of men belong to God, and that all the souls of men are his creatures; and that all the property of the earth is the Lord's; but do you not see that this power comes into that position, and takes God's place? John foresaw it, and here it is declared as clearly as anything can well be. Look at the arrogant assumption of an Italian priest, assuming such an awful, blasphemous position as this. Here, then, are four angels, or agents; as the four horns of the altar represent the universal power of Christ, here are four angels, or agents, to represent the universal assumption of this ecclesiastical power. Now these agents could not get free; there was something that bound them; they were bound "in the great river Euphrates." Mark, it is a great river, What is the river mystically? The river mystically means the people at large. Seventeenth chapter: "the waters where the woman sitteth are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Consequently, the river Euphrates mystically means the people; that is God's own explanation. Now these agents were bound—could not get loose, could not get free, But by and by the time came when they were unloosed, unbound, and got free; and that power has reigned, and ridden roughshod, as you know, over all the civilized and some of the savage nations of the earth, When did these four angels begin to look out for this? When Constantine, not by the gospel, but by law, put down Paganism and established Christianity; and then Christianity directly became one of the

best means of getting a good place in the world. He took the supposed church under his care, and near to him the bishops began to acquire political or civil power, very great influence, and up rose a terrible contention among the different bishops—the bishops of Carthage, Antioch, Constantinople, and Rome, and other cities, —which should be the head bishop; and most of the bishops at that time were called popes. By and by the Emperor Phocas—one of the most vile wretches, I think, that ever polluted the earth, though Gregory the First anointed him with precious unction, and sent the devil to heaven, —he was sent by the Pope, mind; I don't suppose he got there; but this emperor commanded that none but the Bishop of Rome should be called Pope. And so by degrees they began to get on, and by and by, as you are aware, they got on so far as to persuade the people that the Pope was necessarily above kings, above kingdoms, and above everything; and these kings being persuaded of this they employed the military power to bring the people into submission; by and by the people submitted, and so the people unbound these powers. Thus they aimed at, and acquired, as far as the Lord intended they should, universal dominion. You will thus see, then, that the four horns of the golden altar represent the universality of the power of Christ's intercession; that these enemies represent the universal dominion of this ecclesiastical system that should rise; we see how they were bound by the people, for the great river here means the people, and that the people hindered them. But it is a remarkable thing, as we shall see before we get to the end of the book, that as the people loosed these agents, the people will ere long overturn that which in ancient times the people constituted and established. And thus these four agents represent the universal power of this adversary; and they gained this power by very slow degrees; but still they got on, and on, and on, and you know the mischief they ultimately did. But I promised not to dwell very long upon these things.

Now it is here said of these angels that they "were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year." It is really wonderful, —I have almost debarred myself from naming history, —but it is really wonderful to think of the way in which they got their power; they got on, as it were, for an hour, then seemed to stop again; then for a day, and then seemed to stop again; and then for a month, and then for a year, before they got a firm standing. They got it by little and little. Come, let us have an hour—and so they did; then a kind of stop was put upon it; then they had another try, and enjoyed their liberty a little longer; then came another stop; and so they went on by degrees, till by and by they acquired such standing as to reign for 800 or 900 years. The matter appears to me perfectly clear. Do you not see how easily we might run a contrast between the true universal power—namely, Christ's, —and the sham universal power of damnable Popery? Just mark one thing—the adversary well knew that the mission of the gospel was unto all nations; the adversary well knew that Jesus Christ would send his messengers with a great sound of a trumpet, and gather together his elect from the four winds. Now, says the adversary, I must have something to counterfeit this, and by counterfeiting it I can counteract it. And has not Popery been a counterfeit? Has not Popery been that counteracting power?

And now we will go on to show that the means by which they did so much mischief are just expressive of what they were. I will just read a verse or two here upon the means that they used. It is said their army was very great; and I may here just say that there never has been a power on earth that has employed so many armies in the field as Popery has. No emperor has ever had so many at command as Popery had in the dark ages—it had nations at command. No wonder, therefore, John should speak of the army as being very great. If you and I had lived in that day, how we should have prized the power of God; how we should have prized that great declaration, "As thy day is, thy strength shall be." Those were dreadful times to the people of God! How they were driven hither and thither, just as they were in some of the worst of times in the Old Testament age, when you read of their wandering about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, afflicted, tormented, but still not accepting deliverance, — the Lord granted them strength according to their day.

You will observe the instrumentality; —not only civil powers, but something else. "And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone; and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths." Most of the learned say John here anticipates the invention of gunpowder, and then they tell us when gunpowder was first used, when the first cannon was fired, and I don't know what all. That-may do for them, but for me it has not enough to do with the Church of God. If you ask what I understand by the fire, and smoke, and brimstone, the answer is very simple, and plain, and clear. What did this ecclesiastical power do in the dark ages? Why, threatened with all the threatening's of the Bible, and their own manufactured threatening's, they issued out fiery threatening's, threatening those that did not obey them with hell, brimstone, and fire. Therefore, the brimstone, the smoke, and the fire here mean the thunders of the Vatican, the thunders of that ecclesiastical power. Why, say you, that was not fire, that was not smoke, that was not brimstone. Well, the people thought it was real. Why, there was a time when, if the Italian priest called the Pope laid a kingdom under his curse, under his ban, so fiery were his bulls, so fiery were his threatening's, that every church was shut up, every shop, and all the kingdom in mourning and silence. The people thought that these threatening's of the Pope were the fire and brimstone of hell; they really thought they were the threatening's of the most High God. But then, say you, it says that by these things were men killed, —by the fire, the smoke, and the brimstone, —what do you make of that? Here is the command given to a king, —to Henry the Fifth, Emperor of Germany, and many other kings, —I will avoid history as much as I can, —that emperor is commanded by the Pope, and threatened if he does not obey, to use his military power to bring such and such people, such and such tribes, into subjection to this ecclesiastical power; and he carries out this command of the Pope. Herein lies their force, their power; so that by the threatening's of the Pope being carried out by the civil power, the third part of men was killed. Oh what a difference between the state of things now and the state of things then. Bless God! we can laugh at the thunders of the Vatican now, but they could not laugh at them then; we can laugh at their sham smoke now, their sham fire and brimstone; we can treat it all with contempt; and we can rejoice that their day is gone, that they will never recover that power which they have lost.

Here then is the universal power claimed, and here are the means by which they carry it out. And it is our mercy that there are moral forces, —and that is one good trait of our day, that these moral and spiritual forces are beginning now nicely to be understood, namely, that in order to bring people right you must allow them to judge for themselves. When a man is enlightened, and knows what is right, he will then follow the right. The doctrine of the right of every man to judge for himself is a doctrine now well established, widely spread, and I trust will go marching on, and that to the destruction of this ecclesiastical power.

I need not here enlarge upon their power being in their mouth, and " in their tails," you all understand that. The mouthpiece, of course, is the priest, and their tails are their followers, that execute their orders. I am not saying this out of any unkind feeling to the Roman Catholics, but rather in a kindly feeling, and praying the Lord may enlighten their minds, to give them to see the mighty difference between the true universal power of Christ, and the sham universal power of their religion. One of the martyrs of old, suffering under the fire, and smoke, and brimstone, —knowing, of course, that it was all sham, —was commanded to pray to the Pope, and he said, " Our Pope, which art at Rome, accused be thy name; thy will be hindered in earth, as it is in heaven; give us again the money that we have given unto thee for thine indulgences, and lead us not into delusion; for thy kingdom is hell, brimstone, and sulphur, for ever and ever, Amen." That was his prayer to the Pope; he thought, I suppose, his kingdom must be brimstone, because so much came from it. It is really pleasant to read of the heroic replies which our brethren that

have gone before us gave in the face of fires, in the face of dungeons, and racks, and tortures: knowing in the midst of it all that Jesus had spoiled principalities and powers, and triumphed over them; and would enable his servants to do the same.

Now this chapter closes with showing that this religion never brought soul to God. Popery says it brings everyone to God that comes within their church, for they are all within the pale of salvation. But then they have an accommodating way, —they have two ways to God. Some of you have heard, I daresay, of how the priest met the poor old woman: —

"There was an old woman, of fourscore and eight, —
She went to the priest to tell her her fate;
She gave him a crown, and bade him instruct her,
"What she should do when to heaven's gates death should conduct her.

"The priest took her money, and told her St. Peter
With the keys at his girdle would certainly meet her;
Prepared to open, according to sentence,
If she were provided with faith and repentance.

"Oh! quoth the dame, is there no other way?
For of faith and repentance I've little to say;
Oh yes, said the priest, leave the church your estate,
It's all one to Peter, he'll open the gate."
That's the way they accommodate matters.

Now see the close of this chapter. "And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone and of wood; which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornications, nor of their thefts." "That they should not worship devils;" that is, demons; that is, mediatory gods; they did not repent of that; that is the very thing they glory in. Before this ecclesiastical council is over at Rome, they will kiss poor old Jupiter's foot off pretty well, they are making a hole in it now. "They repented not;" plenty of penance, but no repentance.

Here then I believe that these two trumpets, the fifth and sixth, represent first the Jewish church in oneness with the Roman empire, with its consequences; secondly, that here is an ecclesiastical power that usurps the universal power of Christ and of God, and that this is just descriptive of what that ecclesiastical power is.

X. THE END OF JEWISH NATIONAL TIME.

We come this evening to the tenth chapter of the book, and its contents may be summed up under these four parts; first, the angel of the Lord, with a description of whom the chapter commences; secondly, the change of times; thirdly, the completion of the mystery of God; and fourthly, the seven thunders. I think these four will sum up the subjects of the lecture.

First, the angel of the Lord. None of us can be at a loss to know who is meant by this angel that came down from heaven, which of course must be understood mystically; and also we must understand that this chapter takes us back again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. And I cannot forego the pleasure of just tracing out here a few things that are said of the dear Savior as the angel of the Lord; the many characters he bears connected with that of the angel of the Lord.

First, a redeeming angel. What an extensive view Jacob had of Christ under this character. Jacob commences, in his blessing upon the sons of Joseph, by saying, "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which led me all my life long unto this day, the angel which redeemed me from all evil." Here Jacob saw that the God of Abraham and of Isaac and the Angel were one and the same; for he does not say, "God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day, and the Angel;" but "the Angel;" there is a divine person. And Jacob saw the redemption that should be achieved by this angel was "from all evil." Redemption, as you are aware, is spoken of as a price, and sin is spoken of as a debt; and Jesus Christ hath reached every debt, paid the whole; and his redemption sets the prisoner free.

Secondly, he is represented as an interceding angel. First chapter of Zechariah, where the angel intercedes for Jerusalem and Judah; and the Lord answered him "with good words and comfortable words," and said, "I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies." See what an advantage it is to have faith in Christ. Here we have his redemption, here we have his intercession; and here we have the promise, or declaration, or testimony brought by that intercession, —"I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies." When the Lord hideth his face from us, he always returns to us with mercies. When there seems to be a little wrath, and we seem scattered, he nevertheless gathers us again with great mercies. Then the Lord Jesus Christ is not only the redeeming and the interceding angel, but he is also the pattern to which we are to be conformed, as you see in the twelfth of Zechariah. "In that day shall the Lord defend the inhabitants;" that is, the spiritual inhabitants, "of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them shall be as David," that is, of course, as Christ Jesus, because his sacrifice has constituted them relatively perfect, and his righteousness has constituted them relatively righteous; "and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them." Here is the Savior as the pattern to which they are to be conformed.

And then, fourthly, the covenant angel, as in the third of Malachi. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, says the Lord of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Well, the shepherds shall, and the wise men of the East shall, and Simeon shall, and the disciples shall; and if we answer in character to them, we also shall stand. Now here, in the beginning of this chapter, he is spoken of as a "mighty angel," which I take to mean a mighty messenger. And are there not two things intended by his being called a mighty messenger? Can any message by any possibility reach us that is so weighty as the message of Christ Jesus?" He that believeth shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." It is a weighty message; they are weighty matters. How light is everything else when put into the scale by the side of the weighty testimonies, the weighty messages, of this mighty Angel! And then another reason why he is called the mighty Messenger is because his word shall not return void. Was there one case to which he spoke during his life on earth that was not managed, and did not give way? Was there one disease? Mighty as the disease was that held the poor creature fast, it gave way when the Savior's word came in. And while the tomb had a firm hold of Lazarus, yet when the Savior's word came it brought Lazarus out. And so from that day to this, oh, how many immortal souls has the message of this mighty Messenger brought out of darkness into light! The Savior himself means the same thing when he says, "The time shall come and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that

hear shall live." Ah, then, lovely Angel! weighty message! but on its mercy side as lovely as it is weighty; for if on the one hand it outweighs everything in judgment, on the other hand it outweighs everything in mercy. For when you are favoured to put, shall I say, your blessed Redeemer into one scale, and all your sins and troubles into the other, he infinitely outweighs the whole And so, by faith in him, we may be weighed in the balance, and we shall not be found wanting, because he is, if I may say so without irreverence, in the scale with us. We are indeed lighter than vanity; but he is that just weight that is the Lord's delight. As says the poet, —

"Man, I fain would know thy weight;
If weight, I spare; if light, I slay.'
Man leaped the scale: it mounted. 'On my word,'
Said Justice, 'lighter than nothing, where's my sword?'
Virtue was there, and her small weight would try;
The scale uplift, still kicked the beam on high;
Mercy, the whitest dove that ever flew,
From Calvary fetched a twig of crimson hue.
Aloft it sent the scale on the other side;
Man smiled, and Justice said, 'I'm satisfied.'"

Then it is said of this angel that he was "clothed with a cloud;" and this cloud I should take to be the prophets and apostles especially. Hence in the seventh of Daniel, when he is spoken of as coming into the world, he is said to come with the clouds of heaven. Now he did not come in the clouds of heaven literally, but mystically. And the prophets were not clouds without rain; for their doctrine dropped as the rain, and distilled as the dew. I take the cloud, then, to refer to these witnesses; though circumstantially, as you will see, it is taken from the fourteenth of Exodus, where the same divine Person appeared in a cloud; that cloud was total darkness to the Egyptians, but it gave light to the Israelites. Just so it is; —the natural man knows not what there is in the testimonies of the prophets. There was a time when you and I did not know what there was included in the cloud of eternal truth; we did not know that there was such a Jesus Christ there; we did not know that there was such an Interposer there; but when the Lord enlightened us, he brought us round to the bright side of truth; he brought us away from the law side, if I may so speak, round to the gospel side, where Jesus Christ is, brought us into the light of his mediation, and Christ's mediation throws a light upon everything; there is nothing you can think of that you need for your welfare upon which the mediation of Christ does not throw a light. So this cloud was darkness to the one, but was saving light to the other; for it saved them from the Egyptians, led them on, and gave them the victory at the last. Hear what the apostle says upon this: —"Unto the one we are a savour of death unto death; unto the other a savour of life unto life." Oh, it is a great thing to be brought round to the light side of God's truth, and to see that God is there, that Christ is there. And while I shall ever, as long as I live, sympathize with the people of God in their downward experiences, troubles, bondage, and discouragements, yet nothing else but the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ can be a remedy for the same. "Clothed with a cloud." I think, then, it refers to the prophets in the testimonies they bear; and which are dark to the one, but light to the other. And so it is to this day. When we look abroad, we see the Bible all over Christendom, but do we see all over Christendom a corresponding light? No; we find people have not light enough to see what and where they are as sinners; they have not light enough to see Christ, nor to see the truth. How great the mercy, then, of understanding something of this wonderful Person, Christ Jesus!

Then he is said to have a rainbow upon his head. You are aware this is taken from the ninth of Genesis, where the rainbow is the token of the covenant, the assurance that living creatures were not again to be destroyed by any general judgment; and this pledge or token of the covenant is a type of Christ. He is the

rainbow, he is the pledge, he is the assurance that no spiritually living creature shall ever be destroyed. The covenant was to be with every living creature. Just so now,—the soul quickened into spiritual life, and made acquainted with Jesus Christ, sees that he hath rolled the flood away, he hath rolled the curse away; and he himself is the token, the pledge, the assurance, that just so sure as Jesus Christ came into this world, just so sure shall those that believe in him be brought into his world; that just so sure as he died in this world shall they that believe in him live in the upper, the better, and the next world; just so sure as he suffered in this world, all that believe in him shall triumph and glory in the world that is to come.

"And his face was as it were the sun." Upon this I need not say a word; as you are aware, it simply means his presence, the brilliancy of his presence. "And his feet as pillars of fire," to denote that he always steps surely. He had a dark path to walk; darkness was under his feet; but he always knew where he was; he took the light with him; he himself was light; therefore, when he came into the darkness of our sins it was in his own light that he saw where he was stepping; it was in his own light that he saw where he stood. When he came to Calvary's cross, came to the penalty of sin, it was in his own light that he could see; and he thus becomes our light. Then we have this Angel also in his universal dominion. "He set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth." Now we are not to understand this literally. I do not know anything more easy than to turn the Scriptures into foolishness, as it were, and ridicule them. It is enough to make one shudder to think of it, that we have even now men that call themselves Christian ministers, and one part of the Bible, they say, is not true, another part is ridiculous, another part is foolish. Oh, what a mercy to be kept in the fear of the Lord! Therefore, when the Christian comes to this scripture where the Savior is represented as setting his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth, the Christian says, Why, the world is made up of water and of land; and the Savior taking that position indicates his universal dominion; —he has acquired universal dominion, and this is become the ground of our confidence. So that if the enemy come against you from east, west, north, or south—it does not matter which way it is, —there Jesus Christ hath dominion.

Secondly, I notice the change of times. "The angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever"—by the living God as the Creator—"who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer." This cannot mean the end of mundane time; because in this same chapter the Lord says to John, "Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings." You see here is something to be done after this end of time; and yet the angel "swore that there should be time no longer." The learned have turned and twisted this about, and say it should read, "time shall not be yet." Well, it is just possible with a little learned ingenuity you may so make it read; but I myself feel disposed to abide by the good old-fashioned translation here, and take it as it stands—"that there should be time no longer." Now as it cannot mean the end of mundane time, as it cannot mean the end of the world, it must have a meaning. I go first, and chiefly too, to the second of Daniel, and there I get an explanation of this end of time. When the Lord revealed to Daniel the image of the four metals, and the living stone that should smite that image, and should itself be a substitute for all things, Daniel hath these words; he says of the Lord that "he changeth the times and the seasons; he removeth kings, and setteth up kings," and so of the rest. "He changeth the times and the seasons." The times and seasons which the Lord changeth are simply these; —he changed away Jewish time for Christian time; he changed their seasons, the three great annual feasts, for the one eternal feast predicted in the twenty-fifth of Isaiah; that bread that endureth to everlasting life; that sacrificial flesh that giveth everlasting life; those immortal fruits that give eternal life. Here, then, Jewish time shall be no longer. He removeth literal things, and setteth up spiritual things. This is the time that the Old Testament saints looked forward to. The Lord changed the time; Jewish time is gone forever. It is a remarkable thing that the angel takes this solemn oath that time should be no longer by the great

Creator. It seems really as though he had in a sense done with the creation, as though he was about to pass to something higher and greater than the creation. He hath changed the time; and that time which Christ hath brought in can never end; his time is for ever and ever. The Scriptures do sometimes distinguish between the time and the eternal reign of Christ, and the distinction is worthy of observation; but at the same time, the time of Christ lasts forever. Jewish time will never return; here is a solemn oath interposed. I have quoted the words of Daniel upon this, that "he changeth the times;" and every one knows that that living stone described in the second of Daniel is the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence in that same chapter it is said, "In the days of these kings"—of the fourth empire—"shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." So that Jewish time will never return.

I will not say anything harsh here, but I am sorry that so many learned men have written such delusions for the Jews, pretending there is a time when they will return to their land; whereas the seventh of Ezekiel positively declares that they never shall return; their time is gone, and gone forever; and it approaches to cruelty, I was going to say, to hold out now any hope but Jesus Christ for the Jews. Jesus Christ hath abolished that time, that dispensation, and everything belonging to it. Therefore he said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Do not preach the land of Canaan; do not preach a supposed temple to be restored; do not preach a Levitical priesthood to be restored; do not preach a nationality to be restored; for if you do that you will delude them. Their house is left unto them desolate, and there is not one word said about its restoration; but "go and preach the gospel to every creature." This appears to me to be the meaning of the end of time—that time should be no longer; now should commence that time which should never end; for what is eternity, after all, to the Christian but the endless continuation of time? As Watts nicely sings of God, —

"Eternity's his dwelling-place,
And ever is his time."

Read and think for yourselves, and you will see that the end of time here cannot by possibility mean the end of mundane time, but the end of Jewish time. Hence in the last chapter of Daniel this same angel I shall presently have to refer to "held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half." As the seventy weeks are in the ninth of Daniel divided into certain parts, because certain things were to be accomplished in each department, therefore those several divisions of the seventy weeks in that chapter are in this last chapter called "time, times, and an half;" that is when it was to be, when this change of time was to take place. Now the time is come; Christ comes, and declares that time, that is, Jewish time, shall be no longer. And there is a great deal included in this; —this book is just like other parts of the Bible; it will accommodate itself to other truths, not only to this one truth, that time should be no longer. Now just accommodate that one truth to something else, and see how beautifully it applies. Look at your old Adam time, and then look at your last Adam time; —Christ comes in, puts an end to your old Adam time, so that that time shall be no more. That, I grant, will not be actually fulfilled until the last great day, when you rise from the dead. You die in the earthy, rise in the heavenly; die in weakness, rise in power; die in mortality and corruption, rise in immortality and incorruption; die in dishonor, and will rise in eternal glory. First, then, here is the substituting of Christ for the typical dispensation; secondly, here is the substituting of the last Adam, Christ Jesus, for the first Adam; and thus in both these senses, though this latter is, I grant, an accommodating way of using the words, time shall be no more. Jewish shadowy time is ended; and substantial time, the time of substance, the time of the true riches, the time of the true Messiah, the time of the things that cannot be moved, has come. "We therefore, receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved," the apostle might well say, "let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

And there is something very wrong about us somewhere if these blessed truths will not make us serve the Lord our God. What is there worth living for in comparison of these eternal things? I am not going to make light of human life, or the providences of God, because it would be unnatural; and I do not wish to be unnatural; but I mean comparatively, what is there worth living for compared with these eternal things?

But thirdly, here is the completion of the mystery of God. "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." There are three different readings of the latter part of this verse, which I will just give. We have one here, —"As he hath declared to his servants the prophets." Another reading is, "As he hath declared the joyful message to his servants the prophets;" and the third is the same in substance, "As he hath declared the good news unto his servants the prophets." Now what are we to understand by this seventh angel, this seventh messenger? Is not seven here, as in other parts of this book, a number of completeness? And when this seventh angel should sound, the mystery of God should be finished. And the original word shows that those learned men are perfectly right in rendering it "As he hath declared the joyful message, or the joyful tidings, unto his servants the prophets." Would any of you undertake to find out in what prophet, or what part of the prophets, the Lord hath declared this finishing of the mystery? Some years ago I had read I do not know how many works, —everyone I could get hold of indeed, — upon the Book of Revelation, and I could not get satisfaction from any of them. I thought, What a strange thing this is! Well, one Saturday night I thought, I seem pretty right for tomorrow; so I took my tea, and got myself into a good, comfortable, reading position, and I thought, Now, here is on for all through the Revelation this evening, and see what I can find; if I cannot get the meaning from men I will try and dig it out of the book itself. On I went, and came to the tenth chapter, —"In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished; as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." I said to myself, Where has he declared this? Why, here I have been to this learned man and that, and never once thought of going to the prophets. Well, I must say, I broke my resolution: —I did not get through the book that night. Off I started to the prophets directly, to see if I could find any one prophet to whom God had declared this. "The mystery of God shall be finished," I thought, there is no greater mystery, next to the Trinity itself and the incarnation of Christ, than the death of Christ. What an infinite mystery! I thought, — Well then, this finishing of the mystery of God must refer to the death of Christ. I went to the fortieth of Isaiah, and I found these words, —"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, says your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins," —grace here, and glory hereafter. Ah, I thought, there is the mystery; —there is one prophet. "The mystery of God should be finished." Well, I thought, that will do for me; the warfare is accomplished; all I want is to receive and enjoy it; the iniquity is pardoned, not to be pardoned, but it is done, and all I want is to receive the word of reconciliation, and enjoy it; and "she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins," grace here and glory hereafter; all I want is to receive Jesus Christ, and in receiving him I thereby receive all the grace I need for time, and all the glory I shall enjoy to eternity. And I thought, John says "the prophets;" and so I went to another prophet, —to the thirteenth of Hosea: —" I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death; O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; repentance shall be hid from mine eyes." Ah, I said, here is the mystery finished, "as he hath declared unto his servants the prophets." And I found all the prophets were friends to me. Moses said, "His work is perfect;" and I might go through them all, for they all bear testimony of that. But then I thought, I should like to find some scripture that seemed to bear particularly upon it; and when I came to the last chapter of Daniel, there I saw a river, and I saw one standing on the river, governing and managing it; and I thought, What am I to understand by this river, and one that is above the river, managing it, as it were? So off I went to the last chapter of Revelation; there is the river proceeding out of the throne of God, from under the throne of God; —there is God directing the gospel.

And I saw two witnesses at this river in the last chapter of Daniel; the one stood on the one side, the other on the other side; and one of the two witnesses said, "How long shall it be to the end of these wonders?" but the other witness did not ask anything. So I thought within myself, —the inquiring witness is the Old Testament prophet, that searched and inquired diligently "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ that was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." But the other did not ask how long, because the other witness represents the New Testament witness. So John the Baptist did not say "How long?" he used the present tense, — "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world." The apostles did not use inquiry; they used the testimony of what Christ had done. The one stood on the other side of the death of Christ, and inquired how long it should be; the other stood on this side of the death of Christ, and he knew the matter was accomplished. Then came the answer, —"time, times, and an half." which we have noticed; and he says, "When he shall have accomplished to scatter the power of the holy people, all these things shall be finished." You know how the disciples were scattered, and that while they were in that scattered state the dear Redeemer died, and in dying said, "It is finished." Daniel puts the scattering of the disciples and the finishing of the mystery together; they stand prophetically together; were they practically together? We come to the New Testament; there are the disciples scattered, there the mystery is finished, —

"Tis finished, said his dying breath,
And shook the gates of hell."

Now, I say, some of the learned render it, "as he hath declared the joyful message." Where does the joyful message of the gospel concentrate? Why, in the perfection of Christ's work. Where did the good news of the gospel concentrate? In the completeness of Christ's work. I say it with reverence that he might as well have done nothing if he had not done everything; he might as well have atoned for no sin at all if he had not atoned for all our sins; he might as well have rendered no obedience to the law if he had not gone to the end of the law, and brought in a complete and eternal righteousness. Here then this mystery of eternal redemption was finished; and the seventh angel, Christ, sounded out the completeness of it; and it was the business of the apostles to go to earth's remotest bounds, and sound out the perfection of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this finishing of the mystery of God was Daniel's rest, and it was Daniel's lot. "Go thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest." Where did Daniel rest? Why, in what he had seen in the ninth chapter, that this wonderful person should finish transgression, make an end of sin, bring in everlasting righteousness. That was Daniel's rest, and that is our rest; "for he that hath entered into his rest," that is, Christ, "hath ceased from his works, as God did from his." God ceased from his works by finishing them; Christ ceased from his works by completing them; and this is the rest. Therefore we labour, by faith in Christ's perfection, to enter into rest. "And thou shalt stand in thy lot at the end of the days." It is finished. What kind of lot is that? This, —"ye are complete in him." Give me that lot, I shall want no other. "Ye are complete in him who is the head of all principalities and powers." "Go thy way till the end be." What is the end? Christ Jesus, the end of sin, of the law, and of death; "for thou shalt rest," by the end that is brought about by the Savior; "and stand in thy lot at the end of the days;"—here is the end again, you see. I do not know how many times in the Book of Daniel the word "end" is applied to the death of Christ; —there you will realize the full meaning of the whole of it; everything centers there.

Now it is said in the previous part of the chapter that Jesus Christ "cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices." The first question is, what do these seven thunders represent? And then the next question is, why was not John to write the contents of these seven thunders? We must answer these two questions, and then close. What are these seven thunders? Can we find anything in the Old Testament that will give us a little light upon the matter? We could find

several scriptures in the Old Testament, but I will dwell chiefly upon one presently. I take these seven thunders to be expressive of the completeness of the judgments of God, —judgments to his enemies, and a complete vindication of the cause of his people. As it is written, he keepeth the feet of his saints, but the adversaries of the Lord shall be broken in pieces. Out of heaven shall he thunder upon them; and again, the Lord thundered a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them, and they were smitten before Israel. Let us see if we can get clearly at the seven thunders, and the reason why they were not at this time to be written. I think we shall find the contents of the seven thunders a little further on in this book (in the seven vials). But then you will say, how is it they were not to be written? That is, I apprehend, they were not to be written then. Hence to Daniel, when he recorded these things, and did not understand the time when they should take place, the Lord said, "Go thy way, for the words are closed up and sealed unto the time of the end;" that is, they are not yet to come into operation; there is something more to do first. I think, then, that we shall find the contents of these seven thunders further on in the book. Now in the eighteenth of Joshua you find that there was considerable progress made towards possessing the whole of the promised land, but there were some parts not yet conquered, not yet taken possession of; and the men that were sent had to describe this remaining portion into seven parts. What would be the sound of God's testimony to the Canaanites in these seven parts yet to be conquered? Why, each sound would be as thunder; it would be to them like rolling thunder. The number seven denotes completeness; and so when the Israelites had conquered these seven parts, when these seven thunders, as it were, had uttered their voices against the Canaanites, then the possession was complete. Then Joshua says, All that the Lord promised has come to pass; not one good thing hath failed. Thus then I think that the seven thunders refer to the judgments which the Lord will minister to his adversaries, to complete the victory of his people, and to complete their welfare; as we see in the subjugation of the Canaanites and the complete victory of the Israelites. But there is another application which the seven thunders have, and that is, the Jews themselves by their apostasies subjected themselves to the same judgments that the Canaanites had in ancient times undergone, though not in the same form, it is true. I am not sure that these seven thunders are not an allusion to the complete destruction of the Jewish nation, but that I will not insist upon. And then if we go on further, we shall find under the seven vials that the judgments of God upon his adversaries are complete; and when his judgments upon his enemies are complete, then will the victory of his people be complete also. The judgments of God are matters that I never can dwell upon with pleasure; —who can? Then it is said that the contents of these seven thunders were not to be written then; —because they were not yet come into operation. And so the judgments of God are still in reserve, —they are still waiting for all that live and die in trespasses and in sins. What an infinite mercy, then, to be acquainted with this redeeming angel, to be acquainted with this mystic, at the same time saving change of time; to be acquainted with this completion of the mystery of God, and to see where the judgments are, and to see where those judgments cannot come. The plagues of Egypt were, as it were, thunders to the adversary, but they were release to the people of God.

I must trespass on your time for one minute just to say that the little book in the angel's hand appears to me to mean the New Testament; and that this little book was open, because Jesus Christ had opened everything, and made everything plain; and John was to eat this little book; it was to be sweet in his mouth, bitter in his belly; and every Christian understands the meaning of this. It is very sweet to taste God's truth in pardoning mercy, in the various forms in which it comes; but there must be some after bitter experience; and in the early ages of Christianity there were indeed, as you are aware, bitter persecutions to undergo. But still this little book was to go prevailing on, to show the fulfilment of ancient prophecy. The book is in the hands of the angel, and the book is best there, and we are all best there, — in the hands of Christ. The book is in his hands, it will be to us an open book, and the thought is encouraging that the glorious gospel of God shall still go on, for who can hinder him?

XI. TEMPLE, ALTAR, PEOPLE, AND WITNESSES.

We come this evening to the eleventh chapter of the book of Revelation; and what is there said—as far as we shall get to, about the thirteenth verse, the end of the sixth trumpet, —we shall apply it all to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. We shall see that all that is said of the temple, the altar, and the people, and all that is said of the two witnesses, was then and there fulfilled; and that there has been from that day to this a repetition in kind, though not in degree, of the same things; so that the same things which were fulfilled then, have gone on fulfilling ever since.

Now the Lord commanded John to "rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." Before we enter upon this, let us clearly understand what is meant by measuring the temple. We must not, of course, take the temple here literally. Here is an allusion to the literal temple, and that will be our guide to the meaning; but in this book we must understand the temple mystically and spiritually. Therefore, the temple here means, mystically or figuratively, the Lord Jesus Christ; and to measure it is to put it to the test of God's word, and see whether we ourselves are believers in the Christ of God, whether our faith be in the Christ of God, the true temple; or in a false Christ, a false temple. Therefore, the measuring of the temple will mean testing it by the word of God, and seeing whether we ourselves are worshippers in that temple that answers to God's word. Then we are to measure the altar, —the same thing, —to put it to the test of God's word, and see whether we ourselves come from time to time unto that altar which is the altar of God. There are characteristics we will presently enter into that distinguish each. "And them that worship therein;" meaning the same thing; put them to the test of God's word; put ourselves to the test of God's word, and see whether we answer to the divine measurement, being true worshippers therein. Then here is the outer court, that was not to be measured; "for it is given unto the Gentiles; and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months."

First then, the measurement of this temple; that is, testing it by the word of the Lord. What is the temple characterized by? I will notice some of its characteristics, that we ourselves may see whether we are brought into the knowledge of the true Christ of God. I take the hint in the last verse of this chapter, though the temple there, I think, means the church of God; here the temple is a type both of Jesus Christ and of the church of God. It is said in the last verse of this chapter that "the temple of God was opened in heaven," that is, the heavenly dispensation; "and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." This is the first thing I shall test the matter by. Where do we find the ark of God's testament? in other words, Where do we find the everlasting covenant? Is it in Jesus Christ? Is Jesus Christ associated with the antitypical covenant, or is he not? Is he the mediator of a covenant ordered in all things and sure, or is he not? And if we are not therefore brought to that Jesus Christ, who hath with him the ark of the everlasting covenant, the new covenant, then we have not the Christ of God. I will not meddle with outward or other systems, because it here says, "Leave out the outer court, and measure it not."

Let us try and get the true temple, and then the conclusion is that whatever does not accord with the characteristics of the true temple is not the true temple. And what shall I do? I could occupy all your time, but I shall occupy only a few minutes, upon this one thought,—that our loved, adored, and wonderful Savior stands forth, as clearly as we could wish him to stand forth, as the mediator of the better covenant, established upon better promises, and that the blessed God hath sworn, and will not repent, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek;" and in another place the Lord, by this covenant, associates

Christ and the people inseparably; and he associates his truth inseparably with Christ, with God, and with the people. The words of the last verse of the fifty-ninth of Isaiah stand thus: —"As for me, this is my covenant with them, says the Lord; My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, says the Lord, from henceforth and forever."

"Measure the temple;" test it by the word of God. Was the temple the meeting place? Christ is the meeting place. Was there the ark of the covenant in the temple? Christ is the mediator of the better covenant, established upon better promises; wherein the Lord says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Ah, is this the temple, is this the Mediator, is this the Savior? Is this the temple David referred to when he said, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." We know but little now, and if it be beautiful in our eyes in what little we now know, when we see it distantly, through a glass darkly, what must it be to behold him face to face! And David might well have a sweet confidence that "in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion; in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me; he shall set me up upon a rock. And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about me: therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy; I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord." Another characteristic of the temple is the mercy-seat. Was there a mercy-seat there or was there not? There was. And what doth the Lord say unto Moses? "There I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy-seat, from between the two cherubim's which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." See how this mercy-seat on the covenant, on the ark, beautifully accords with that scripture in the fifty-fifth of Isaiah, "Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." We live in a day when it is a great thing to be able to distinguish between mere morality and spirituality, when it is a great thing to be able to distinguish between the duties of the creature and the blessings of the Most High, when it is a great thing to be able to distinguish between the religion of the flesh and the religion of the Spirit. Anybody can get at the religion of the flesh, but none but those that are born of God can enter into these mysteries. It is covenant mercy, and if it be covenant mercy, it is like the covenant;—as the Lord says, "The sure mercies of David." Have we then measured the temple? We profess to be worshippers of God by Christ Jesus; have we put to the test, as it were, that Christ that we profess to have access to God by? And doth he not sweetly answer to the ark of the everlasting covenant, and to the mercy seat? —"Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

Another thing the temple was distinguished by was the presence of the Lord. And are we not brought to that Jesus Christ where there is the presence of the Lord, "to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling us unto himself"? Let us stop there for a moment. Where do we enjoy the presence of God? —By faith in Christ. Where do we have his approbation? —By faith in Christ. Where is our acceptance? —By faith in Christ. Do our sins alarm us? Do the infidelities of our hearts, and various evils, sometimes bow us down? Why, the Lord says, I shall not blame you for them; you believe in me, in my dear Son, I shall not impute your faults to you; I shall not blame you. "Reconciling us to himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us," having imputed them to his dear Son. And, here it is we have access to God; here it is we have his presence; here it is he is forever on our side. Then I need not remind you that the temple was characterized by the priest, —the high priest and the sacrifice by which he entered into the holy of holies. But I will say no more upon this point; these three will suffice. Are we brought to that Jesus Christ who hath this new covenant? Are we brought to that Jesus Christ where "mercy o'er the guilty reigns"? Are we brought to that Jesus Christ where God dwells? for all the fullness of the Godhead bodily dwells in him. Then whatsoever doth not accord with that covenant belongs to the outer court; whatsoever doth not accord with that mercy-

seat belongs to the outer court; whatsoever doth not accord with what the Lord says in Christ as to his entire approbation of the people, belongs to the outer court, for which the world may contend, and they are quite welcome to it all. Give me my covenant God, —I want no more.

But secondly, the altar. We are to put the altar to the test; we are to test that; that is to say, we are to test it by the word of God. There are three things that the altar of God was remarkable for. David says, "Oh, send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle. Then will I go unto the altar of God, —unto God my exceeding joy;" so that God would be his exceeding joy by that altar. Taking it for granted that the brazen altar here chiefly is intended, there were three things that characterized the brazen altar, —strength, universality, and form. First, strength. We have already in these lectures touched upon this, so I need not enlarge upon it now; but still there is something so pleasing in the thought that the brazen altar endured the fire and came off uninjured. Such was the strength of Christ, not only as to his power, but such was the strength of his holiness, such was the strength of his integrity, and such was the strength of his love, that he came off uninjured at the last. I am sure you would regret if you have never seen or felt the whole of the beauty of those words, —namely, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Is he the Holy One now he is in the grave? Has he come off uninjured? —has he endured the fire, endured the wrath, endured the curse, and come off uninjured at the last? Mysterious Person! He rises, reappears, —still the Holy One, —sinless still, — ascends to glory, and reigns forever as the holy child Jesus. Then mark something else. As he himself, by his strength, came off uninjured, —and when you come out of the furnace, —you are not out of it yet, you know; you will not be out of it as long as you are in this world, —there is the furnace of sin within you, and there will be the furnace of tribulation. The Lord hath his fire in Zion and his furnace in Jerusalem; but by-and-by, when we come off at the last, we shall come off uninjured. As we are held in the embrace of everlasting love, that love brings its objects off uninjured, —the dear Redeemer will bring us off uninjured, —the Holy Spirit will bring us off uninjured, —and can this be summed up better than in the beautiful words, "not a hair of, your head shall perish"? Such is our God.

Here, then, is one of the characteristics of the altar, —a strong altar: —"Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of Hosts is his name; he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon." We want nothing else to be our strength. "I can," says one, "do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." The next characteristic of the altar was that of universality. It had four horns, and those horns are the symbols of power. There was a horn at each corner. Does not that point out that there was a universality in the altar to the Israelites? The altar belonged to all the Israelites and to all the heathen that left their gods and came to the God of the Hebrews, as in the case of Ruth, Naaman, and others. But hath it not an ulterior meaning? Would not the time come when the spiritual significance of this universality of the altar should be carried out? "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

It is said of Joseph, and the words will apply to our spiritual Joseph, "His glory is like the firstling of his bullocks,"—sacrificial glory, —"and his horns are like the horns of unicorns; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." It simply means that he will teach them their necessities, and by means of their necessities he will make them willing to come to God, willing to be saved by grace. "He shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." Here is the universality of the gospel to all nations. "They are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh." You know why Manasseh is called thousands, and Ephraim ten thousands. Historically the matter is very simple, but it has a spiritual meaning. Why does Moses go from the greater number to the smaller? It is very easily understood. Moses knew that after the tens of thousands had been gathered in, there wouldn't be so many to be gathered in. There are not so many to be gathered in now as there were many years ago.

Every one that is gathered in makes the number less to be gathered in. Therefore, Moses goes from the larger number to the smaller, denoting that the saints of God are being gathered in and gathered in, till by and by the top stone, the last poor wanderer, shall be made to feel where he is and what he is; shall arise and go to his Father's house, find his way to Zion.

The third characteristic of the altar was its form. Let us trace it out. It was square. By the fall of man we are out of square with God; everything out of square, everything wrong. Solomon has two or three very remarkable scriptures upon this. "That which is crooked cannot be made straight;" that is, not by man. You read of the woman that was crooked eighteen years, and could in no wise lift up herself. But God can make things straight. And Solomon says, "That which is wanting cannot be numbered." What was that, say you, that could not be numbered in Solomon's day? Why there was a mystic number of poor sinners that were wanting, and John saw them gathered in. Now, Solomon, just look, here is a number that no man can number. Ah, says Solomon, I told you nine hundred years ago that that which was wanting could not be numbered; and these were wanted, and we hope there is a number yet remaining that no man can number; but they are wanted, and if God want them, he will have them fast enough, depend upon it. If he want an ass, he will send the disciples to loose him, and say, "The Lord hath need of him," and he will have what he wants; he never was and never will be disappointed.

Then there is another sense in which that which is wanting cannot be numbered, namely, the mercies and blessings wanted, needed to make up our eternal-salvation. The mercies of the Lord are as the stars in the sky, or the sands by the sea shore, —multitudinous mercies, innumerable; they are wanting, God will bring them forward, and by-and-by we shall lack nothing.

The altar, then, was square. We take the idea of square-ness to mean right, —that everything is right. So the sacrifice of Christ hath made everything right between you and your Judge, between you and your maker. It is not regeneration that does it, it is not repentance that does it; it is not faith that does it, it is not the work of the Holy Spirit that does it, —no; Jesus Christ hath made everything square, everything right, and the work of the Holy Spirit is to show us our need, and bring us to receive that righteousness which the Savior hath wrought and established, to receive that atonement which he hath made. The altar was square, then, to denote that his sacrifice has made everything right: by him mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace embrace each other. You find in the thirtieth of Exodus, when the altar of incense was built, it was square. Doth the Savior enter heaven and plead a righteousness that makes everything right? Yes; that which he wrought at the sacrificial altar is taken to the intercessory altar.

"Founded on right thy prayer avails,
The Father smiles on thee;
And now thou in thy kingdom art,
Dear Lord, remember me."

But thirdly, the high priest's breastplate was square. Doth the Savior represent us, not in what we are as sinners, not in what we are in ourselves, but in what we are by his sacrifice? There were precious stones in the breastplate, that breastplate was square, and the high priest was to bear the children of Israel perpetually on his heart. That breastplate was called the breastplate of judgment. So the people of God are to be judged by what they are in Christ, and the dear Eedeemer bears every one of his people on his heart. It is heart work indeed. He lived with all his heart, took up our cause with all his heart, died with all his heart. Truly, truly, —

"They on his sacred bosom lay,

Loved with an everlasting love."

So then the sacrificial altar makes things right, and lays a right foundation for the intercession; and then there is the presentation. One more thought here, —to indicate that nothing can ever go wrong, it is said that "the city lieth four-square," that is, everything is right in the city. In the first creation God made man upright, but man sought out many inventions. Sin overturned us there. But this city, this everlasting Zion, lieth four square; there is no breaking in, no going out, no complaining in our streets. "Happy is the people that is in such a case; yea, happy is the people whose God is the Lord."

But we must look at the people for a moment; —" and them that worship therein." There is some particular characteristic that distinguishes the people of the Lord, the only ones that are true worshippers of God, and if you do not possess that, you belong to the outer court, and not to this temple. What is the characteristic? I will take the one named by the apostle, —"faithful;"—"they that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." Abraham received the sworn promise, the covenant, yea and amen promise of the living God; he knew that promise should be confirmed by the death of the future Melchizedek, as the testator of this new covenant, thus to confirm the promises made to the fathers. Wherein laid Abraham's faithfulness? In two things; —first, in receiving the promise with all his heart, and thus becoming the friend of God; and secondly, in abiding by it. And do we not all understand the spiritual meaning of that, — cannot we spiritualize it very easily? When the King of Sodom came with his free-will offers, Abraham said, "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take even from a thread to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abraham rich." Christian, all your salvation comes from God; do not profess to manufacture any of it yourself. Do not profess to receive a thread or a shoe-latchet from the creature; fall in with the apostle when he says, "All these things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ." Therefore, if you have with all your heart received the truth, your great characteristic will be to abide faithfully, undeviatingly, and firmly by it; and the Lord will meet you at the last and say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

The outer court, then, was to be left out. What is the outer court? The outer court means that religion that is outside of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, outside of real soul trouble, outside of real enlightenment in spiritual things, outside of the covenant, never brought into the covenant, never brought really and truly into the spirit of Christ's substitution. To get at that secret we must feel and see how sin hath shut us out, how we are prisoners to sin, to death, to the law, and to the wrath of God, and that nothing but the substitutional work of Christ can set the prisoner free. "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein there is no water." How is it professors make so light of this? Because they are only professors, belonging to the outer court. Let them go and hear a minister preach a sermon against the common sins of the people, and they will say, — Nice man, holy man, zealous man, wonderful man! All the world will listen to that. But let a minister preach things that are spiritual, which none but the spiritual man can enter into, then all the world will do two things; —the one is, they will run away from him, and the other is, they will reproach him. So "many of his disciples left him, and walked no more with him." He does not preach up good works enough for us; —talking about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, and having eternal life thereby; —talking about being born again; and he does not find a single fault with his disciples, but tells them about being one with the Father, and one with him; and that they will go to heaven, and he will take care of them, and all that sort of thing. Why, he is a friend of publicans and harlots, a wine-bibber, and he hath a devil; so they persecuted, and at last crucified him. But they made a mistake, do you not think so? I do. It was not the morality, but the spirituality of

Christ that gave the offence to the world. The carnal mind is enmity, not against a mere moral gospel, but the carnal mind is enmity against spiritual things; because the devil well knows that he has never lost a sinner until that sinner is born of the Spirit; and then that man becomes a spiritual man, enters into spiritual things, and therein lies the offence of the Cross; because all the blessings that come by the Cross are spiritual blessings. "Blessing you with all spiritual blessings." If, then, you are outside of soul trouble, outside of God's truth, you are an outer-court worshipper, and you will be lost if you die where you are. Do not measure the outer court; leave it out; take no notice of it. "And the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Is it not just so? Do they not call to this day the lofty settlements of heaven Antinomianism? And if they tread the truth down, they tread us down, for we are one with the truth; if they speak contemptuously of the truth, they speak contemptuously of us, for we are one with the truth. And so they have continued, from that day to this, to tread underfoot the holy city. But their days are numbered. The holy city there will mean the people, the citizens, the truth, and so on; but the days of these adversaries are numbered, —forty and two months. And as their days are numbered, so are the tribulations of the people of the Lord.

I now pass on to the two witnesses. "I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." What are these two witnesses? They will bear a threefold application. The Old and the New Testament, I apprehend, are meant. The Old Testament was a witness for God; the New Testament is a witness for God. Secondly, it will mean the ministers of the gospel. The Old Testament ministers were witnesses for God, and New Testament ministers are witnesses for God. Thirdly, it will mean the Old Testament church, and the New Testament church. The Old Testament church was a witness for God, and the New Testament church is a witness for God. And these witnesses are said to be olive trees; and so the Old Testament yields us the oil of God's grace. Have you not got a little comfort from the Old Testament sometimes? Yes. Well that is the olive tree, bringing you a little golden oil to brighten your lamp up. So the New Testament yields the oil of God's grace, and gives you a little golden oil at times to brighten up your lamp. And the Old Testament ministers minister instrumentally the oil of God's grace to the people; and the New Testament ministers do the same. So the people of God are called olive trees; for what David says of himself is true of them all,— "I am like a green olive tree in the house of my God." Then they are called candlesticks. A candlestick is a light-bearer, and the Old Testament is a light-bearer; so the New Testament is a light-bearer; the Old Testament ministers were light-bearers, and the New Testament ministers are light-bearers; Old Testament believers were light-bearers, and New Testament believers are light-bearers, and Christ is the light that they bear; truth is the light that they bear; their testimony of the way in which God has saved them is the light that they bear. These are the two witnesses, then. "I will give power unto my two witnesses." When you hear a minister preach out of the Old Testament, and the word comes with power, there is the Lord giving power to that witness; and so of the New Testament. There is not always the manifestation of power; but the Lord has said there shall be power, and so there is at times. The Old Testament ministers could preach at times with great power, and New Testament ministers preach sometimes with power; and you that are Christians sometimes can hear with power, pray with power, and cast your cares upon God with power; he strengthens you with might in the inner man. And see how the Lord defends these two witnesses. "If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed." Now you must not take the fire literally here, but spiritually. "Fire proceedeth out of their mouth." They bear testimony against their enemies. Let me bring some fire from the Scriptures to illustrate this. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord; but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." "Let all thine enemies perish;" that is, living and dying enemies; but if the Lord is pleased to turn you into friends, then you will not be included in the first clause, — "Let thine enemies perish;" when you cease to be enemies, then you become friends; and all that are friends were once enemies; for "if when we were enemies we

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life." Another scripture upon this subject—sixty eighth Psalm, —" Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered; let them also that hate him flee before him." That is the testimony they bear; "but let the righteous"—that are brought into the truth—" be glad." In that sixty eighth Psalm there is the positive, the comparative, and I was going to say the superlative. "Let the righteous be glad"—there is the positive; "let them rejoice before God"—there is the comparative, at least, we will take it so; "yea, let them exceedingly rejoice"—there is the superlative. First they are glad; then they rejoice before God; and by-and-by the Lord has done everything so exceedingly well that they exceedingly rejoice; their rejoicing in God exceeds everything else—joy unspeakable and full of glory.

We must go on a little further with these two witnesses, and then close. It is said, "they have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." How must this be understood? They have power to shut heaven testimonially. Suppose we just here refer to the literal realization of that. One of these witnesses prayed to God that there might be no rain, and there was no rain for three years and six months. Then he offered sacrifice, God accepted that sacrifice, and on the ground of that sacrifice, as the hearts of the people were turned back again, God sent abundance of rain. But let us take it as it is found here. "They have power to shut heaven." Against whom? Against the unbeliever, against the enemy. How do they shut heaven? Testimonially. They are a savour of death unto death to the one, and a savour of life unto life to the other. It does not mean that they have command or power over spiritual blessings, but it means that they testimonially shut heaven against the enemy, against the unbeliever; that they are, as the apostle says, a savour of death unto death to them that do not believe, that do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that do not receive the truth in the love thereof. "And they have power over waters to turn them to blood." That must be understood in the same way. Take the waters to mean all the blessings of life. There is not a blessing the natural man possesses that shall not be turned to blood, that shall not be a curse to him. As the rivers which the Egyptians worshipped and delighted in were turned to blood, and they could not drink thereof, so every blessing of the natural man shall be turned to blood, in the mystic and figurative sense there intended. Shall I give an instance? See how not only rills, and springs, and brooks, but, as it were, rivers of pleasure rolled round the rich man, faring sumptuously every day. But there was the testimony that the enemies must perish; presently all his blessings are turned into a curse, and he lifts up his eyes in hell. Where are those blessings now? Relatively, as far as he is concerned, they are turned into blood. But the blessings of God's everlasting love can never be changed; they never lose their freshness, never lose their power, they will be the same forever. "And to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." Why, I have smitten the earth with plagues thousands of times testimonially; I do so more or less in every sermon I preach.

"And when they shall have finished their testimony," completed their testimony, —this does not mean when they have completed their final testimony, because you find them rising from the dead again after they are slain; therefore, if they completed their testimony before they were slain, and then commenced their testimony again after they were risen, their completing their testimony here cannot mean their final testimony. They were slain when they had finished a testimony. "When they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." The dear Savior sent his disciples to preach while he was living, before his death; and they preached, and finished their testimony; that is, they finished all the testimony they had to bear before his death. Then the Savior was crucified, and these disciples were slain, not physically, not literally, but ecclesiastically. The wild beast arising from the abyss; that is, a wild, satanic power crucified the Savior, and slew the disciples ecclesiastically. You must understand the death here mystically, as also you must understand the resurrection mystically. But they could not be thus ecclesiastically killed till they

had finished the testimony they had to bear before the Savior died. And so with us, —we may be tried in a great variety of ways, but we cannot be put to silence until the Lord has no more work for us to do. The Lord has his plan, and he keeps that plan very often to himself in his dealings with us. I have often thought of what Napoleon said to a sort of scout that got his living by going from the Austrian to the French camp and back bearing information to the Austrian general. This man said to Napoleon the First, "What army you have got?" "Well," said Napoleon, "I don't mind your telling the Austrian general the number of my soldiers, but I will take care you don't know my plan." So the Lord often keeps his plan in the dark. Little did Haman think what a plan God had got in the background to bring forward to overturn him and establish Mordecai. Little did the Jews when they crucified Christ think what a plan God had got in the background, —that the very thing they were doing would only forward what they themselves were determined to put an end to. And when Moses was hid, and Pharaoh's daughter's sympathies were moved towards him, little did she think what a divine plan there was in the background, that should by-and-by come to light, —the Egyptians overturned, Israel delivered, God glorified. Amen, and Amen.

XII. THE TWO WITNESSES AND THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

We have this evening to notice the death and resurrection of the two witnesses, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Book of Revelation, together with just the beginning of the seventh trumpet, as here sounded and expressed.

It is said of these witnesses that, "when they shall have finished their testimony" — we showed last Wednesday evening that they finished that part of their testimony before Christ was crucified — "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them." This must of course be understood spiritually; and it means the world in its spirit of alienation from God, —its spirit of fierce and ferocious enmity against God. The fulfilment of this was realized in the crucifixion of the Savior. That spirit of enmity against God is here called "the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit," because all the enmity we have against God we get from Satan; all enmity that men show against God comes from the nether world. They thus made war and crucified the Lord Jesus Christ, they slew him, literally; and in so doing they did in a sense slay his disciples also. They did not slay the disciples literally, but they did slay them ecclesiastically; that is to say, it was made unlawful that they should preach in the name of Jesus Christ; it was made unlawful that they should preach this religion; therefore, they were thus ecclesiastically dead. I am sure you can see the difference here intended. Hence their dead bodies, —called dead bodies, were not put in graves. This was fulfilled in the apostolic age. Christ was crucified, and the disciples were ecclesiastically slain, and they remained in that ecclesiastical death until the day of Pentecost. That I apprehend to be the sense in which they were slain, and no one can deny that this was fulfilled at that time. But I will go through the whole, and then show how every part will apply to after ages. We must not suppose, because everything was then fulfilled, that there was an end of the things; there has been a repetition of the same things ever since. The Lord never left himself without witnesses, and never will.

Now it is said that when these witnesses are slain, "they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another." This wants no explanation. What a delight it was to the Sadducees and Pharisees, Herodians and Essenes, and all the professors of that day, to think they had crucified Christ, and passed the sentence of ecclesiastical death upon his disciples. How did they rejoice

to think that they had got rid of these prophets that tormented them; for there was a power that attended the Savior's ministry, and there was a power that attended the ministry of the disciples before the Savior's death; for they came and said, "Even devils are subject unto us through thy name." Therefore, the progress of this religion tormented them; so that when these witnesses were slain, in the sense we have stated, their enemies rejoiced. I need not remind you that the same thing has taken place a great many times since in the history of the church, —not the same in form, but the same in substance.

"And their dead bodies,"—ecclesiastically dead, —"shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified." Just stop here for a moment; we ought to lay hold of anything that helps us to understand this book. You all know that Jesus Christ was not crucified in Sodom; that the Lord Jesus Christ was not crucified in Egypt; but that he was crucified at Jerusalem. And yet it here says, "Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified," showing that Jerusalem is here called by a Gentile name, because Jerusalem had sunk into oneness with Satan. As the Savior said to the Jews, and a terrible saying it was, but not more terrible than true, "Ye are of your father the devil." Jerusalem, then, is here meant by the terms Sodom and Egypt, showing that these heathen nations represented all future enemies of the Lord.

And it is said that the people and kindreds and tongues and nations "shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves;" that is, they would not suffer them to be killed literally. There were, no doubt, plenty among them that proposed the literal death of these disciples; but no, —these disciples, these witnesses, had to be preserved, because they had still a great work to do, and some part of that work will come before us presently. Therefore, though they are slain ecclesiastically they cannot be slain literally and this is indicated by their bodies not being put into graves, because they were not literally dead; and there were some that would object to kill them, —they, perhaps, would reason and say, —Well, now, you have crucified their leader, let these poor men alone. Here comes another doctrine. I have said that while they crucified Christ, yet there they were limited, and they could not put to death, literally, these disciples. Here we have this delightful doctrine, that the Lord is never at a loss for a means to preserve our lives. Whatever the enemy may do, or whatever you may have to encounter, having faith in God, being blessed with confidence in him, he hath a good will towards you, and it matters not what the enemy designs, the Lord is never at a loss for a way to deliver his people. The Lord wanted to make use of Joseph, and therefore his life by his wicked brethren could not be destroyed; it was apparently very near, —but no, his life could not be destroyed. The Lord wanted him to save much people alive. And when Moses' parents knew not how to conceal him any longer, the Lord was not at a loss for a way of deliverance; he put it into the heart of Pharaoh's daughter to sympathize with Moses and to take him and to take care of him. The Lord is never at a loss under any circumstances. He knew how to put it into the heart of Ahasuerus to send out another decree, and overturn the decree of condemnation, deliver the Jews, and give them light and gladness; the Lord was not at all at a loss to know how to work deliverance. And the Lord knew how to put it into the heart of Evil-merodach, a heathen king, to raise up out of prison Jehoiakim, king of Judah; he had been there for thirty-seven years, yet his life was preserved. The Lord knew how to raise up a Cyrus to save his people; he knew how to send ravens to feed his people; and his command is, "Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab, be thou a covert unto them." The disciples' mouths were sealed until the day of Pentecost. Here they were ecclesiastically dead, but they could not be buried; that is to say, they were not killed literally. Now, "after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them." Perhaps the three days may allude to the Savior being in the grave three days and three nights; and perhaps the half day, —I will not say that it does, but it is just possible that the half day may refer to the same thing as the half hour's silence that we have already noticed in these lectures.

"After three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet." How true is this! The disciples were, as it were, off their feet; as though the Savior should say,—Now, you cannot stand before the enemy; you cannot stand against the enemy; you cannot gain any victories over the enemy; therefore remain where you are till I set you upon your feet. "Tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." Presently the Spirit of life enters into these disciples, and you read that Peter, with the eleven, stood up. They were now set upon their feet. Here is something new. The day of Pentecost comes, the Holy Spirit descends as the Spirit of life, and the disciples never had in their souls so much divine life before, nor so much divine light, nor so much grace, nor so much power, nor so much of the Spirit of God, nor so much of the Christ of God, nor so much of God. "And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither." So on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descending was indeed a voice from heaven.

I cannot explain fully the beauty of those words, "Come up hither!" What a rise was that! They were ecclesiastically dead, and perhaps very dead in their own souls, tarrying day after day, uniting in solemn prayer, feeling what poor creatures they were. But now this voice brings them up, "Come up hither!" Now, by a fresh revelation unto them of the work of Christ, they rose above sin, and saw it was all trodden under foot, and that they by faith in Jesus Christ should tread it under foot; they saw that Satan was trodden under foot, that death was trodden under foot, that tribulation was as it were trodden under foot. "Come up hither!" And if ever men did rise in their souls from a low state, —if ever men did rise up into the heights of eternity, these witnesses did on that never-to-be-forgotten day.

And it is said, "They ascended up to heaven in a cloud." This may mean, in the first place, a cloud of glory; and secondly, it may mean the prophets, because these witnesses ascending here must be taken not literally but spiritually. They ascended up into the eternal settlements of the most-high God; and the prophets of old were the cloud of witnesses in which they ascended. Hence you find Peter took his Pentecostal sermon from the Old Testament. Thus "they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them." They ascended to heaven, not literally, as I have said, but spiritually. I will not now stop to enter into the wonders of that day as to this resurrection. Now, if we are Christians, we know something of this resurrection, something of such revivals. Are there not times when we ourselves are cast down, and get very low? David says, "I was brought low, and he helped me." After a time, when we have been in this low state as long as the Lord sees it is good for us, the Spirit of life enters the soul again, raises us up, and makes us wonder how we could doubt and fear. We had lost sight then, when cast down, in a great measure, of the Lord Jesus Christ; but now, raised up and revived again, we can once more rejoice in him who is our strength and portion, and our eternal salvation. These, then, are the witnesses; and their enemies, it is said, beheld them. On the day of Pentecost the people could not make out whatever it meant; some said one thing, and some another. But then you must understand that when it is said, "their enemies beheld them," it does not mean that the people beheld them with understanding. They beheld them—they beheld something, but they knew not what it was. Thousands saw the Savior, but they did not see him understandingly. There was a great multitude at the time that Zacchaeus climbed up the sycamore tree; but the multitude at large did not see the Savior as Zacchaeus saw him. Zacchaeus saw him as a Savior, Zacchaeus secretly longed for him as a Savior, and this the Savior knew, and therefore dealt with Zacchaeus according to those desires which he had put into his heart. Therefore when it is said, "Their enemies beheld them," they saw the circumstance, but did not understand it. Ahimaaz of old, when he came to David, said, "I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was." But the disciples understood it, and Peter, when he stood upon his feet, explained the whole of it. That indeed was a wonderful day, and that day in kind has been repeated a great many times. There would not be a Christian church upon the face of the earth having in it any life or prosperity if this same resurrection had not been experienced many times since, and must be experienced again and again. But the natural tendency of our nature is to

deaden our souls; the natural tendency of the world is to deaden our souls; the natural tendency of adversities, unless the Lord is pleased to overrule them for our good, is to deaden our souls. Everything wars against the soul, and we die, and die, and die, till we are ready to say with the poet, —

"Hardly, sure, can they be worse,
Who never heard his name."

But bless the Lord, he watcheth over us, and will not leave us, but will revive us again.

Now, it is said that when these witnesses ascended, and came into his power, that there was "a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell." We must understand all this spiritually. If you could understand it literally, —that the tenth part of Jerusalem fell, —what spiritual advantage would you recognize in that? We know the whole of the city fell at the appointed time, and not one stone was left upon another; but we must take it spiritually. The tenth part of the city, therefore, will mean that a large number of the people fell, and we will go on and see what kind of fall it was. It says, "In the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand." The marginal reading, there is no doubt the more correct of the two, that "in the earthquake there were slain seven thousand names of men."

Here then is a definite number no doubt intended to represent an indefinite; though nearly this number is spoken of in connection with the preaching at the Pentecostal season, —first three thousand, and then five thousand, — eight thousand. But we ought to take this definite number to represent an indefinite. This earthquake must also be taken spiritually; and it means a revolution, a convulsion; —that revolution that takes place in the conversion of a soul to God. And what a wonderful revolution that is! It may well be called an earthquake. It swallows up all the man's supposed goodness, righteousness, and confidences, and he wonders what is the matter. There he is, left as a collection of ruins. The religion that saves the soul, there is a vitality in the beginning of it; it is not merely an external reformation, but an internal revolution. The man is brought into such a position that no one can really understand it but he that is brought into the same soul trouble. So on the day of Pentecost what a mighty spiritual earthquake, what a revolution, was brought about when Satan was dethroned from the souls of so many, and such numbers brought to know the Lord. And then there were slain by this revolution "seven thousand men;" as I said just now, the margin renders it, more consistently with the original, "seven thousand names of men." The names were slain. This is beautiful beyond our powers to apprehend, comprehend, or enter into. What does the name mean? It means your name as a sinner, as an enemy; it means your name in all you are in the first Adam; it means your name in all you are in yourself, in all you are in guilt, as a child of wrath before God. But this your sinner-ship name is slain, and so it is written, "Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken, neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah, for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." Here than the old sinner-ship name is slain, it is gone, and gone forever; and they have a new name, and if you ask what the new name is, the word of God is clear upon it, —that "the whole family in heaven and in earth are named after Jesus Christ." So that you will have to die in your new name, you will have to rise in your new name, and will shine forth to all eternity in your new name. What a great scripture is that, when taken in the proper and gospel sense of the word, where the Lord said to Aaron, "Thou shalt put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them." I think then you see the beauty of this part, —that there were slain by the testimony of these witnesses the names of seven thousand. What a mercy for my name to be slain as a sinner, in order that I might have a new name, walk in the new and living way, and know something of new creature-ship, of the new song, the new covenant; old things are thus passed away, and all things become new.

"Thou shalt no more be called Jacob:" Jacob means a cheat, and all of us are by nature dishonest to our own souls; we all rob God of his glory, and we all are in that respect in possession of a bad name, and not anything we could ever do could give us a good name; but Jesus hath slain our sinner-ship name; but who shall slay our new name—who shall touch that? I need not enlarge upon this, the Scriptures are very clear upon it; and I wish it were your lot and my lot to live more in the contemplation of this. I am afraid that some of you are like me in that respect,—instead of living with the Lord in what Christ has done, living with him in the new covenant, I am always seeing if I can find something good about myself; and if I cannot do so, then comes the thought, How can you expect the Lord to bless you? See what a hardhearted, ungrateful, forgetful, downward-tending, poor creature you are;—how can you expect the Lord to bless you? All this is Pharisaism, all this is pride, all this is delusion; and our reasoning is as good, or bad, as the leper's would have been, if he had said, If I had a leprous hand, or a leprous foot, and had some spots about me, I might perhaps expect mercy; but I am a leper altogether, and how can I expect him to cleanse me? Whereas that is the very man that the Savior delights to cleanse, because the worse the case the greater his mercy and the greater his grace. The seven thousand, then, were thus slain. "And the remnant was affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." And do you not see on the day of Pentecost and the days that followed, that the Christians not only walked in the fear of God and the comfort of the Holy Ghost, but they had favor with the people? "The remnant were affrighted." Why, said they, there is something wonderful in this; we must not fight against this. And Ananias and Sapphira being struck dead by the judgment of God, had a tendency to do this. All these things are written, then, to encourage us and increase our faith in the Lord.

I do not forget that I have said that these witnesses represent the Old and New Testament; secondly, the ministers of the Old Testament and the ministers of the New Testament; thirdly, that they also represent the Old Testament church and the New Testament church. Well but, you will say, the witnesses were slain; how can that mean the Old Testament? For this reason, that whatever you do to the one book you do to the other. You cannot despise the New Testament without despising the Old; and you cannot despise the Old Testament without despising the New. They are both one; and if you slay, as it were, the New Testament, or take it to be a thing of naught, as the Jews do, you thereby slay the Old Testament; and so, as the Jews slay the New Testament, the Old Testament to them is dead; they do not see our Jesus Christ in it, they do not see our salvation in it; so that while they thus slay the New Testament, the Old Testament to them is dead, and yet they will not suffer it to be destroyed, they still hold fast the Old Testament. So, then, he that despises the one despises the other. As to ungodly but learned men undertaking to tell us what is true and what is not true in the Bible, happy the man that can take the whole Bible, and bless God for such a book; and do not let us be enemies to either, but let us bless God for the Old Testament and for the New; and whatever is done against the one is done against the other. Just so with ministers. If a New Testament minister is slain, then an Old Testament minister is virtually slain; because if the Old Testament minister had been there with the New Testament minister, he would have been slain as well;—so they are slain in will. Just so with the church. When the New Testament church is slain, —and it has been slain a great many times, —it has been put down, as you are aware, a great many times. If we go back to the dark ages, see how the church of God has been ecclesiastically slain, as well as almost innumerable men and women cruelly and vilely put to death. Nevertheless, though this has been the case, though they have been thus put to death many, many times, still they survive, still they live, and still they must live. Therefore, in putting the New Testament to death you put the Old Testament to death, and you thus virtually put Christ to death; for when a man who has made a profession goes away from that profession, and despises the Savior, he is represented as crucifying the Son of God afresh. The Savior did not say to Saul of Tarsus, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou my disciples?" but "why persecutest thou me?" So that what was done to them was done to him. Thus, then, you will see that it all accords; that if you slay one you do virtually slay the whole; if you slay one Christian you slay them all, because that is a proof

that if you had them in your power you would slay the whole. Let us bless God for that eternal oneness subsisting between himself and his people, and that oneness that runs through all the family; for all shall be brought into the unity of the same faith.

Then it is said, "The second woe is past; and behold, the third woe cometh quickly. Now you will say, If this trumpet be of the gospel kind that you say it is, why is it called a woe trumpet? Why, friends, because it was testimonially a woe trumpet to the adversary; that is the reason. Let me make it clear. Did not one say, "Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel, or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found to fight even against God." You may hear them reason and say, —Well, if this Jesus Christ after all be the Son of God, and if these disciples are right, and if all this is of God, then woe unto us that have crucified the Son of God, woe unto us that are persecutors of the people of God, woe unto us for what we have done! If these disciples are right, then, as sure as we exist, all that this Jesus of Nazareth has declared in the twenty-fourth of Matthew, the thirteenth of Mark, and the twenty-first of Luke, —all that he has said concerning the destruction of our city and of our nation, will come to pass. Therefore, it was a woe trumpet because it was a solemn witness against them. Hence it is said, " This gospel shall be preached in all the world for a witness." You observe, then, it was a woe trumpet to the enemy, but a joyful trumpet to the friends; just the same as I have said in these lectures, that the same trumpets which sounded joyfully to the Israelites were woe trumpets to the Canaanites. The gospel is a savor of life unto life to the one, and of death unto death to the other.

Then it goes on to say, "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." Now the seventh trumpet only means the gospel. Every one of the trumpets means the gospel, only the gospel has its range; and the seventh trumpet means that part of the gospel that refers to its completeness, as explained to us in the tenth chapter: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished;" and we know the mystery of God was finished on the cross. So here, therefore, the seventh trumpet refers to that part of the gospel that indicates its completeness. Now let us see if we can get at what is meant by what is here said: "There were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ." For myself, I should be delighted to fall in with what men have said about this trumpet,—that it means the time will come when the whole world will be converted, when the whole population of the globe will be under the saving power of the grace of God. I should like to be able to say Amen to it! But it is not safe to take any one isolated scripture. If we should continue these lectures up to the end, when we come to the twentieth chapter, the chapter most rested upon for that doctrine of universal conversion, that chapter itself cuts up the notion root and branch.

Let us see, then, in what sense the kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ. Let us look at the reference here. Is there not a reference here to the seventh trumpet sounding around the walls of Jericho? When they sounded the seventh trumpet, the walls fell down, and they might consider then that the victory was complete, that all the Canaanites had become subservient now to God. Indeed, some of our modern scholars read the words thus, —" I heard a voice saying, The sovereignty of this world is become the sovereignty of our God and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." The Lord gave the land of Canaan to Joshua to gain possession of it; and the Lord thus acquired, by the instrumentality of Joshua, the sovereignty of the land of Canaan, so that all the land of Canaan became God's land, and all the people became his subjectively, but not savingly. So the Lord Jesus Christ was appointed heir of all things, and he has established that heirship by his mediatorial work, so that he has universal dominion. And there must be some reason why the Savior did not, until after his resurrection,

give the universal mission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." But now, when the completeness of the Savior's work is sounded out, now the kingdoms of this world fall into the hands of Christ, everything falls into his hands. "Thou hast given him all power in heaven and in earth." Universal conversion, as I have said, how should I delight in it! I should be delighted if I could prove such a doctrine. And when it is said, "The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord," if I could prove from the Scriptures that that means the earth we inhabit, and that it does not mean the new earth or the promised land, how should I be delighted! But it is not so. I can find no proof that the word earth there means anything but the church of the blessed God, or the new earth; for what in one clause is called the earth is in the adjacent clause called a mountain: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain;" for this holy mountain, the true church of the blessed God, shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and so the covenant runs that "they all," the objects of God's love, "shall know him, from the least to the greatest." I believe, then, that the meaning here is that all nations fell into the hands of the Savior by what he had wrought; he became the universal governor; and therefore the kingdoms of this world became the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ; so that there is no king that reigns except by the sufferance of the Most High; there is no ruler, whether ecclesiastical or of any other kind, that rules but by the sufferance of the most High. Oh, my hearer, what confidence may we have thus in Jesus Christ, when we look at him as having his hand in the neck of all our enemies; that whatever we need he has at immediate command. If we need the help of the greatest enemy, he can turn that enemy into a friend to help us; and if we need anything from earth, he has that earth at command; if we need anything from heaven, he has all power in heaven. All I get from this then is the universal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if you should think this is rather a cooling doctrine, —that it has a tendency to cool our zeal in the conversion of sinners— then I do not exactly see that, because it is said we are to "preach the gospel to every creature." Some people say, Ah, you preach only to God's elect. Yes, we do; we preach to everyone. We tell the natural man that unless he is born of the Spirit of God he will be lost; we tell the natural man that there is no escape from the wrath to come for any sinner anywhere, but by faith in the obedient life, death, resurrection, and eternal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. We tell the natural man that should it be his happy lot to see what he is as a sinner, and to seek God, there is every possible encouragement; and that none, we know, but God's elect, will ever be made sensible of their state so as to seek him. We are to preach the Gospel to every creature, and the Lord will in his own time find out his own. If I held any doctrine that had a tendency to make me careless about the souls of men, if I held any doctrine that had a tendency to make me careless about the progress of the gospel in the ingathering of my fellow creatures, I should be sure that- I was in some way or another deluded. Surely our God must have been concerned for our souls when he sent such a Savior; surely the dear Savior must have been concerned when he lived and died such a death; surely he must have been concerned when he ascended to his eternal throne, and made it his whole concern to plead our cause; poured out his Spirit, governed the nations upon earth, and realized the fulfilment of the Father's promise, "I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

This is what I take to be the meaning, then, —that the kingdoms of this world became subjectively the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ, but not savingly; for none are his savingly but those that are brought to believe in him. We cannot be saved any more without the work of the Holy Spirit than we can without the work of Christ. "Ye must be born again." I have read some books upon this question of universal conversion in which the writers say that the present dispensation is not adapted to universal conversion, and therefore no doubt a dispensation by and by will be established more adapted to universal conversion. Well, friends, I only say that the conversion of a sinner now depends entirely upon God, and he who converts one can convert another. Can anything be more adapted? Whose work is it? Why, the Spirit of the Lord quickens the soul; Christ hath redeemed the soul, God the Father draws the soul. It is impossible to have a dispensation more adapted to man than the new covenant, than the dispensation

we now have. Why, the Holy Spirit is almighty and eternal; Jesus Christ is almighty, —the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; God the Father is almighty, unalterable, immutable; and therefore if God does not do the work, let the dispensation be what it may, it will never be done. It is therefore clear that the kingdoms of this world did become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ subjectively; and that thousands, as John shows, out of different nations, peoples, kindreds, and tongues, became the Lord's savingly; but as to universal conversion, I cannot find the doctrine in the Bible.

Then it is said, "And the four and twenty elders," as representing the church of God," which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty,"—mark, they rejoice in God in his omnipotence, and then in his eternity, and then in his reigning power, —" which art, and was, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." And so it is, friends, our very rejoicing that God reigns in this salvation order; such is his reign, that everything must be subservient to the purposes of his love; that everything must be subservient to the promises of his word. There is no way left by which the promises can fail, therefore we may well rejoice that the Lord God omnipotent thus reigns to all eternity. Here must be our confidence. Then it goes on, "And the nations were angry." Where did the apostles go without giving offence? Where was the gospel preached, when it was preached with power, without giving offence? And the reason we give so little offence now is because there is so little power. The reason I have not more enemies, the reason I am not' more spoken against, is because of the little power that attends the Word. If I could preach with ten times more power, why Satan would be frightened. It was the power that attended the Word which alarmed the adversary and gave the offence. So "the nations were angry," those that hated the truth; but those that knew the truth, and were brought to receive it, they were not angry; they were never so pleased in all their lives as to hear the joyful tidings of God's eternal mercy. "And thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged;" not the time of the dead that they should be raised, for we are still in the beginning of the gospel dispensation, but "the time of the dead that they should be judged." Time does not allow me to enter into this; I may just give a hint as to the meaning. The dead here evidently means precisely the same as in the last verse, and seems taken from that of the prophecies by Isaiah. The dead here refers to the Jewish nation, and the time was now approaching when that nation was to be judged with the judgments that were predicted. Hence the Savior calls them, just as Isaiah does, a carcass. "Where the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together." So the time came when they were judged with the judgments that were predicted to take place, the same as future and ultimate judgments will fall upon all those that are not found one with the Lord Jesus Christ. "And that thou shouldest give rewards unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and to them that fear thy name, small and great." And then it is summed up with describing the judgment, "and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth." So the Jews originally destroyed Canaan as the Lord's land by bringing idols into it; then, after they were cured of that, they destroyed the Lord's laud by bringing in human tradition to take the place of his truth; and as they destroyed his land, destroyed his order of things, he therefore, in solemn, righteous retribution, destroyed them. But what is meant by the time coming to give reward to his servants the prophets, the saints, and them that fear his name? There are two rewards in the Bible, and only one of those seems there referred to, namely, present reward. We must remember that there is a present reward for the Lord's people, as well as an ultimate reward, and the present reward there was this, when the nation of the Jews was destroyed, the reward that the prophets—that is, ministers, saints, and them that feared God—had was that they escaped. The present reward of Noah was to escape the flood; the present reward of Lot was to escape the destruction of the cities of the plain; the present reward of the Israelites was to escape the fate of the Egyptians; and the present reward of David was to escape the sword of Saul. Therefore the time came when the Lord should give his saints their present reward. Not only is there, then, an ultimate and everlasting reward, according to the worth and worthiness of Jesus Christ, but in how many ways doth the Lord also reward his people by the way? Huntington could

not have written such a book as he has if he had not been thus favored. See how many present rewards the Lord granted to him. And where is there a Christian that has not shared in the same? Have we not seen some of our fellow creatures driven some one way and some another? What thousands do we see come to an untimely end by their profligacy! whereas the people of God, see how they are preserved, see how they are delivered, see how they are kept sober, humble, in the fear of the Lord; see how the Lord watches over them, so that he that touches them touches the apple of his eye. So, then, there is a present as well as an ultimate reward for the righteous. As one old divine said, when Satan tempted him with the thought, You will never enjoy God after this life. Then, he said, I will enjoy all I can of him in this life.

Thus, then you will see that all these things were fulfilled in the apostolic age, and that they have been repeated ever since. If there were witnesses then, so there are witnesses now; if they were slain, so have we our dead times now; if they were revived, so we have our times of reviving now; and if there was an earthquake or revolution brought about indicative of the conversion of sinners and the names of men—their sinner-ship names—slain, and they brought into a state indicated by the new name, so it is now; and if the seventh trumpet sounded out the sovereign dominion of the Savior, so it is now; and if the saints rejoiced that the Lord God omnipotent reigned, so it is now; and if there was a present as well as an ultimate reward then, so there is now. It thus confirms what we set out with, that the subjects of this book are ranged, as it were, in columns side by side, spread out before us, realized their fulfilment in that age, have been repeating ever since, and will continue to do so through time.

XIII. FIRST PART OF TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Our lecture this evening will be upon the twelfth of Revelation. The main points will be,—the mystic woman and her child; the dragon and his doings; and his final defeat. Of course the chapter must be understood spiritually. If you took it literally, you would very soon perceive the absurdity of so doing. We cannot take the woman there spoken of as "clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars," literally; we cannot take the child thus brought forth literally, but mystically and spiritually; we cannot take the rod of iron by which he is to govern literally, but figuratively. We cannot take the serpent to be a literal serpent, casting literal water out of his mouth, but we must take the serpent figuratively; that is to say, here are natural things used to set forth spiritual and eternal things. And I am happy in entering upon my lecture this evening, because it brings me into the very vitalities and realities of the gospel, which concern us all.

First, you read of "a great wonder in heaven," better rendered in the margin "a great sign in heaven." The church is a sign, signifying the Lord's love, and all that which he is interested in. And Satan is also called a great wonder or sign, as he is a sign of just the reverse.

But we notice first the light. Now what is meant by the woman being clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars? The first thing intended is a perfection of light, a completeness of light; and light is, in the first place, expressive of knowledge. So God our father, in loving and choosing us, did so in a perfection of eternal light; and the Savior in obeying the law for us, in laying down his life for us, in achieving for us what he hath achieved, has done so in a perfection of light; and the Holy Spirit doth his work in a perfection of light; and it is the work of God to bring us unto that perfection of light that is in Christ. And this perfection of light means a perfection of everything that is

good. I will not suffer myself to be led away in this first part, or else it is a part that all the people of God delight very much in, namely, that perfection of good which they have in Christ. Only think of it! United to God by the perfection of Christ! It is a matter very immaterial when you die, or where you die; united to that perfection, the soul by the regenerating power of God is always fitted for eternal glory. The next thing intended in this light is freedom from sin. Sin is compared to a cloud or clouds. Hence in the forty-fourth of Isaiah, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." The Lord Jesus Christ in this matter of blotting out sin is spoken of as a morning without clouds. "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God;" and Christ did rule in a perfection of justice, and he ruled in a perfection of godly fear, — "He shall be as the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds." So Jesus Christ is. Thus every sin, internal and external, past, present, to come, — every sin is blotted out. "I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins." Thus you see that sin is that impenetrable cloud that is between us and God; and it is said of the disciples that "they feared as they entered into the cloud" on the excellent mount, the mount of transfiguration. And when God opens the eyes of a sinner, and for the first time he enters consciously into the cloud of his sins, then he begins to fear. But when the Sun of Righteousness arises, and that beautiful and wonderful revelation is made, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee," what a change is then wrought! Here, then, is a perfection of light, and an entire freedom from sin. Oh, it is a delightful truth that God the Father sees us thus as a morning without clouds; that he sees us thus fair as the moon, clear as the sun; that he sees us as he sees his own dear Son.

True religion, then, is to be brought into this perfection of eternal light. And then mark again that all three orders of the heavenly bodies are brought in to set forth this perfection of light and this freedom from sin. "Clothed with the sun," which of course spiritually means the Lord Jesus Christ: he is the light, and the soul is brought into that light. To some of you the perfection of Christ is as clear as the sun in the firmament; to some of you the perfection of Christ is as clear as the moon in the sky; to some of you the perfection that is in Christ is as clear as the evening or the bright and morning star. Thus Jesus Christ answers to the sun, for he is the Sun of Righteousness; and he answers to the moon, and he answers to the stars. And you will observe as to this perfection of light, this freedom from sin, this heavenly light that it is eternal, — there is no termination of it; and it is by this light that the Lord gathers in poor sinners to a knowledge of himself. Let us have a scripture or two from the Old Testament upon this matter. "Thy sun shall no more go down;" — now God is a sun and a shield; and, as we are told in this book, they need not the light of the literal sun, or of a candle, to shine in the city; for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. "Thy sun," meaning of course Christ himself, "shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon" — meaning, I should think, the gospel. I speak not that dogmatically, I merely suggest that to my mind the moon there may mean the gospel, — "neither shall thy moon withdraw its brightness."

Ah, my hearer, when from service to service the gospel of God reflects upon our souls the light of Christ, the light of his salvation, what pleasing seasons those are; they are, if I may so speak, our spiritual new moons. Now comes the explanation, "The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." How so? Because here is perfection in Christ, because here is freedom from sin, and because all this light is heavenly light. You see here is no earthly light, here is no earthly wisdom; the church is not arrayed with one ray of earthly light; it is all from the heavenly bodies, — the sun, the moon, and the stars; the sun, Christ Jesus; the moon of the gospel; and the stars the prophets and apostles, whose testimonies all culminate upon the head of the church. Therefore, she is spoken of as having upon her head a crown of twelve stars; not one ray of earthly light. So the soul born of God, all the light that is worth having it must get from Christ, it must get from the gospel, it must get from the testimony of the prophets and apostles, it must get from the bright and morning star. "Thy sun shall no

more go down;" here is a light of eternal life, and this shall never be withdrawn: "neither shall thy moon withdraw its brightness;" supposing the moon there is intended to represent the gospel, how true this is. Has not the gospel upon the minds of some of you shone with wonderful brightness for many years? and it will go on shining brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

"And the days of thy mourning shall be ended," because of this perfection that is in Christ, and because of this freedom from sin. Here you recognize, and here you will presently, to your unutterable, shall I say, ecstasy, delight, and triumph, realize the fulfilment of the testimony in the eleventh of Job, "Thine age shall be clearer than the noonday; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning." It may well, therefore, be written, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." Now the church being thus clothed is a light-bearer, every Christian is a light-bearer, and he is to bear forth the light of Christ, the light of the gospel, and the light of prophetic testimonies. But let us follow out the Lord's explanation. The Lord kindly gives us an explanation, apart from the similes here used. "Thy people also shall be all righteous;" how are they righteous? First, by the perfection of Christ being set to their account, and secondly by their being brought personally into reconciliation to God; by the non-imputation to them of their sins, and by the imputation to them of Christ's work. Let us go back on this point to the forty-fourth of Isaiah: "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins; return unto me, for I have redeemed thee." See how sweetly this accords with New Testament testimony, "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them."

When a sinner is laden with guilt and fear, when a poor publican is trembling before God, and fearing that hell will soon be his portion,—when this light shines into his soul, and shows him the perfection that is in Christ, the freedom from sin that is in Christ, oh, how the soul rushes into the embraces of everlasting love, throws itself down at the dear Savior's feet, according as it is written, "He loved the people; all his-saints are in thine hands; they shall sit down at thy feet, every one shall receive of thy words." What words? Why, that they shall be righteous by the imputation unto them of Christ's work, and by their personal reconciliation to God, by the manifestation to them of the mediation of Christ. "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever." I must not stop to say a word about the land; oh, it is a land of eternity, it is that inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fades not away. The saints may well be called the saints in light when they get there; and they may well be called the spirits of just men made perfect; —they are made perfect by the perfection that is in Christ. "They shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting." So they are, Lord; I will never believe that freewill ever planted one, or that duty-faith ever planted one, or that Popery ever planted one, or that nature, or human works, or human merit, ever planted one. I believe it is God's work to take up the poor dry tree, turn it into a green tree, plant it into the likeness of a Savior's death, cause it to take deep root, spread out its branches, and grow till it becomes a mighty cedar in eternal glory, to adorn the paradise on high. "The branch of my planting, the work of my hands;" and "every plant," —for thousands are planted nominally, but not vitally and really; — "every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." What think ye of this light, then? The woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, the moon of the gospel; she walks in the light of it; and upon her head culminating the twelve stars, a definite number for an indefinite; —the sure fulfilment of all the predictions of the prophets and the testimonies of the apostles.

Now it is by this perfection of light that poor sinners are to be gathered in. It is a remarkable thing that the sixtieth of Isaiah, from which I have quoted, the Lord being an everlasting light, goes on to say, "A little one shall become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation." Those words have had more or less effect upon my mind ever since I have been in the ministry. Many times I have thought when I have come to the house of God, — Well, if any good is done to-day, it must be by the perfection of light that is in Christ; and if I am enabled to go forth as a light-bearer, that perfection of light that is in Christ and God shall open a

sinner's eyes, he will see the light, he will turn to it; and though at the first he may see men as trees walking, the Lord will give his visual powers another touch, and he shall see every man clearly. I have said, Lord, help me to hold forth the word of light, declarative of that perfection of light that is in Christ Jesus the Lord; for here it is that "a little one is to become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation;" and that is to be by this perfection of light.

Now the apostle Peter calls this "marvelous light," and if we are taught of God we shall see there is nothing but darkness in nature, darkness in the law, darkness in human doings, darkness everywhere; that there is no perfection of light but in Christ Jesus the Lord. And I need not here stop to show how he is the perfection of light; —of course he is the perfection of light by the perfection of his work.

We will now come to the next part, —the woman's child. "She being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered;" all of which, of course, must be understood spiritually; but I will bring a scripture or two upon this point presently, to show where Scripture upon that point is to be understood literally, and where it is to be understood spiritually. But in order to clear up the point here, that such language must be understood spiritually, in Galatians iv. 19 you will find similar language used in relation to spiritual things. I may just say, we must always read the word of God with great reverence, and with great deference; lest the enemy throwing ridiculous or absurd thoughts into our minds, we should give way to those wrong thoughts, and turn the word of God itself into something carnal. Therefore, we need sacredness of mind to read profitably sacred things. Now the apostle Paul uses similar language upon spiritual things; his meaning unquestionably is spiritual. He says to the Galatians, "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." Will not that, then, throw a little light upon what is meant by this woman? because the woman here spoken of is not a literal, but a spiritual woman, —the Lamb's bride, the true church of the true God. Now this seems taken from Isaiah; but before I go to Isaiah, I may just notice the child that this woman was to bring forth; —she was to bring forth a child that should "rule all nations with a rod of iron." Not to bring forth Christ literally —that point we will show presently, —but she was to bring forth Christ spiritually; that is, she was to bring forth the gospel. And so, in bringing forth the true gospel, you bring forth the Lord Jesus Christ. And his ruling all nations with a rod of iron simply shows the strength of his government. You cannot break his scepter; he hath a scepter of iron for the ungodly, and he hath a scepter of iron to break his own people down at the beginning; and then he hath a golden scepter of mercy which he holds out to the coming sinner, to indicate that salvation is nigh. "Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron;" he has everything completely at command.

Now she was to bring forth this child, then, the gospel, —labored to bring it forth; and so does every minister, so does every church. What we want is the gospel. But then what kind of a child is it? If we do not know the child, we may make a mistake, and receive a false Christ instead of a true one; so, I should like to know what kind of a child it is, in order that I may not receive the wrong child; for we read of people of old praying that signs and wonders might be done in the name of the holy child Jesus. I should wish to be like Simeon, —know I have got hold of the right child; that as a minister and church we are bringing forth from time to time the right child, the right gospel; for there are many false Christs, that is, false gospels; a false gospel is a false Christ, for the true Christ is not in a false gospel.

Let us hear what is said of him before he is born, and then what is said of him when he is born, and I think that will enable us to see whether we are friends or enemies to the holy child Jesus. I will notice only two things said of him just a few months before he was born. The one was that he was to reign over the house of Jacob forever, —no failure there, you see; there is the eternity of his reign, — "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." He shall reign forever; you cannot dethrone him, and he will never be without a kingdom. He shall reign over the house of Jacob; and we shall presently show how he gets the

house of Jacob to reign over. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever." Meek and lowly in heart is our king; his heart never was and never will be lifted up above his brethren. He breaks to pieces their oppressors; precious in his sight is the blood of his saints; he delivers the poor and needy. "He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." This is what was said of him from heaven before he was born, when his birth was announced. So then, give me a Jesus Christ that reigns over the house of Jacob forever; give me a Jesus Christ of whom you sometimes sing —

"Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves them to the end."

That is a Christ worth having, that is a gospel worthy of a God. Presently the angel descends, and I do not wonder at the glory attending him, for his message was enough to create the glory; and the shepherds were sore afraid. He said, "Fear not; for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Now mark, nine months before this the angel had said that Christ should reign over the house of Jacob forever, and it could not mean the literal Jacob, for that is gone, but the spiritual Jacob.

And now mark how this same Jacob is gathered in. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." There is a society formed lately, I see, to do away with the dismalising of the Sabbath, and proposing to have secular music, and I don't know what all, connected with what they call worship, to do away with the dismalising of the Sabbath. That is their plan. For myself, I like the Lord's plan very much better. "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Was it not so? Did not the person concerning whom this was declared say to his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature"? I know that nothing will take away the dismal feelings that we have at any time like the glorious tidings of the gospel. "I bring you good tidings of great joy." Why there is nothing else but joy;—I defy all the good people in the world, and bad people too, to find one particle of gospel that is not a message of joy. What is God's love but a message of great joy? What is eternal election? Why, a message of joy, —"Rejoice that your names are written in heaven." What is divine predestination? Why, a message of joy that he hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ. What is the death of Christ but a message of joy? What is his resurrection? what is his ascension? what is his intercession? what is his reign? what is the future glory? what is the ingathering of poor sinners? what is the pardon of our sins? what is the reconciliation to God? what is peace with God? what are divine assurances that this God will never leave us nor forsake us? Here is the child then, by whom immortal souls should be ingathered; by whom the eternal God in his inmost thoughts, his deepest plans, his wisest arrangements, should be seen, known, and understood; and when the soul sees this, it exclaims that he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working. But how can we know this if we do not see it? Here is the child the woman labored to bring forth, spiritually; and so does every church. "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again," —until you do your duty better; until you get a better name in the world; until you get more money; until you do this, and that, and the other? Not a word about it, — "until Christ be formed in you." I would sound it out so loud that all the world should hear it if I could, —"until Christ be formed in you." Whatever is formed in your soul, in your affections, in your creed, in your hope, in your expectation, if it be not Christ, the sooner it is dethroned, displaced, and got rid of, the better. Let us have room for Christ; turn everything out to make room for him. There was no room for him in the inn; God grant it may never be written of us that there was no room for him in our souls. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly," is the daily prayer of every living soul. Ah, Lord, without thee I am empty, dead, dark, miserable, wretched, like a solitary desert, like a lonely wilderness. But when Jesus is formed, and I can feel he is my hope, my life, my sanctification, my all in all, then I can triumph in him, and rejoice in his dear name, great salvation, infallible truth, and immoveable kingdom. We will come to the children presently; the children are very much like the child, the pattern.

Now the dragon stood before the woman to devour the child. Of course he did! Satan knew very well that that child would do all the mischief; he knew very well, and knows very well now, that the church that scripturally brings forth Christ is the most dangerous church in existence, and that minister that the most scripturally brings forth Jesus Christ to poor sinners, —why, everybody will call him a dangerous man, —only we should always take those reports just the reverse. You say, Mr. Pharisee, he is a dangerous man, do you? —Very indeed, sir! And Mrs. Pharisee, you stick your two hands into your muff, and walk along and say, What a dangerous man that is! You say he is dangerous, do you? Why, Mr. and Mrs. Pharisee, both, the fact is, he is the only safe man; there is no man safe but the man who brings forth a safe Christ; that brings forth not a Savior that would save, but a Savior that doth save, a Savior that hath saved, a Savior that will save, a Savior that will maintain his throne, acquire crown after crown. He sets out with one crown upon his head, and you find him afterwards with many crowns, arrayed in many honors, achieving many victories, saving many souls, bringing many glories to God. But how has Satan acted to devour this child? Why, all his methods may be expressed in two words, —force and fraud. When Satan could, as he has done in ages gone by, act with forces political, civil, ecclesiastical, military, all combined, —when Satan could marshal all those forces against the people of God,—he would not allow the gospel to be preached. You might preach anything but the gospel, but you must not preach that. Satan would devour the child, as it were, by force. You shall have no Jesus Christ in that pulpit, at least; not that Calvinistic Jesus Christ, not that peculiar Jesus Christ; and you shall not have him in the congregation. And our forefathers went through seas of blood to establish the true gospel, the true church of God, in this our favored land. May it be our happy lot to do our very utmost in our short day and generation to make known this glorious gospel, this Holy Child, of whom Simeon so sweetly sang when he had him in his arms, saying, " Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Then, when Satan cannot work by force, he works by fraud; that is the next way in which he tries to devour the child. He doesn't care about the Savior's name, wouldn't wish to get rid of that, but he will pervert the gospel of Christ. Hence, the apostle Paul says, "I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ. But I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ." The apostle speaks there of another gospel, of another spirit, and of another Jesus. It is a terrible thing to be deceived. Did not Satan dreadfully deceive the Israelites in the wilderness when he got them, not absolutely to deny the true God, but to set up golden calves as the way of serving and worshipping that God? And did not Satan most fearfully deceive the Pharisees and the people of the Savior's day when he labored to persuade the people that Jesus Christ was not what he professed to be? Were they not deceived? And when they called themselves the children of God, and Christ said they were the children of the devil, which was right of the two? They said that God was their Father, Christ said the devil was their father. That plain speaking is gone out of fashion now; we don't speak so plainly now; we handle the Pharisee more tenderly now; we are dreadfully afraid we should burn the last rag off his back, and send him stark naked to Christ; we are dreadfully afraid we should pull down his card-house, and leave him no refuge but Christ; we are dreadfully afraid we should hurt the man's feelings, —we are so polite in our day! But the Savior knew the infinite and eternal value of the soul, and therefore regarded not the feelings of men, but the necessities of men, the necessities of the soul. Therefore, when Peter said, "Far be it from thee; thou shalt not suffer these things:" "Thou savourest," said Christ, "not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Force and fraud, then, are the two means by which Satan has worked to devour the gospel, to hinder the gospel, and to put something else into the place thereof.

Now this seems taken from Isaiah. The church is here described as "travailing in birth, and paining to be delivered;" and yet, in the last chapter of Isaiah, it says, "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before

her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing; who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day; or shall a nation be born at once?" Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child." How was that? There was the church, very quiet, very easy; presently, before she had any pain, any trouble, the angels announced the advent of the Child born, the Son given. Why, says the church, we have not travailed: we have not been in pain to bring forth this Jesus Christ, — did not know he was in the world. And thus, before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. "Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?" "What things?" "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day?" "Yes, when the Savior was born, the whole election of grace were virtually born; their spiritual birth was wrapped in his natural birth; and if he should die, they cannot live. If Herod can reach his natural life, it will destroy their spiritual life; if the adversary can swallow him up, instead of his defeating the adversary, and swallowing him up, it would defeat the church, and swallow them up. But no;—here is the earth made to bring forth in one day, here is a whole nation born at once;—"a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, to show forth the praises of him that hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." "Born at once!" If it be all right with Jesus Christ, it is all right with them; and if anything were wrong with him, it would be all wrong with them. But there was nothing wrong with him, and therefore nothing can be wrong with them. We call Isaiah the seraphic prophet; and oh, what divine revelations were made to him! You may see him in his study. Study? —say you. Yes, study; a prophetic man was a studious, meditative, prayerful man, searching diligently into the great mysteries yet to be confirmed, realized, and enjoyed. Contemplating the fulfilment of what he had spoken in the former part of his book, he sees the whole election of grace virtually born when Christ was born; he sees the preservation of this Child, traces him from his infancy to his eternal throne, as you see in his ninth chapter, beginning with the Child born, the Son given; and going on to declare that "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom; to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Thus, then, this man child was brought forth. I do love this doctrine: I love those representations that represent the poor sinner as one with Christ in everything. Did he take our nature? What did he do in so doing? Took the seed of Abraham; not the literal, but the spiritual seed of Abraham. And was he born? Why, the whole were virtually born. Did he obey? That obedience is the obedience of them all,—imputed to them. Did he die? They were embodied in his death, and died, as it were, with him. Did he rise from the dead?" Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise." Did he ascend to glory? He took them with him on his mystical breastplate, and there presents the whole, until the top stone shall be brought home with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it."

Now Isaiah, when he thus saw the holy child Jesus and the whole Church virtually born, —Isaiah well knew that so far from mediation setting aside personal character, it insured personal character, and secured personal character, and produced personal character. Could there be a Christian personally if there were not a Christian representatively? Could there be any conformity to the image of God if there were not some pattern by which you are to be conformed? and that pattern is Christ. Therefore, Isaiah, after presenting the holy child Jesus, then goes on to the children; and these children he speaks of as belonging to the new Jerusalem, in entire keeping with the latter part of this book. "Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? says the Lord; shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? says thy God." As Jesus Christ did not die in infancy, so no soul born of God ever died in its spiritual birth yet, and never will. Isaiah knew they were born of an incorruptible seed, that lives and abides forever. Let us hear what he says: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem;" that is, the Jerusalem which is above, the mother of us all; "and be glad with her, all ye that love her." Come, you little ones, that are just looking to this new Jerusalem, this new world, this new scene of things, what do you say to that? Say you, I do love this heavenly city; "Jerusalem, my happy home;" I often think of those crystal walls, and streets of shining gold. "If I forget thee, O

Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning; if I do not prefer Jerusalem," this state and order of things, "above my chief joy, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." Says one, I have a liking, but I am afraid it is not love. Very well, we will pick you up if we can; we will not leave one citizen out if we can help it. "Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." Well, say you, my soul at times mourns to know whether I am a citizen or not, whether I am one of the happy number described by the apostle when he says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." Now, as though the prophet should say, be reconciled to this order of things; and what for? Why, that ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory. For thus says the Lord; "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles,"—that is, their spiritual glory, — "like a flowing stream." And now mark, for our encouragement to look to the Lord by Jesus Christ, the prophet's words, or the Lord's words by him. "As one whom his mother comforteth,"—you cannot think of anything more kind, compassionate, and sympathetic, — "as one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." In the world you will be very much discomforted; in the world you must have tribulation; but here, in these eternal things, you shall be comforted. And the Lord describes the effect it will have when we see this. "When ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb." David says of the Israelites when they went through the sea, "there was not one feeble person among them," because the presence of the Lord was there, and their bones, as it were, flourished like an herb; they were all made strong. And so now, when I can see the Lord with me, —with me in all the tenderness of a mother; and the mother knows what comforts the little one wants, and if she does not know, she will find out somehow or another. "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." "When ye see this, your heart shall rejoice, and your bones shall flourish like an herb." Why, I sometimes in the pulpit feel as though I was not above twenty years old; it makes one young, and strong, and lively, and feel as though one never could be old.

What did Caleb say when he was fourscore and five years old? and that is a pretty good round age. "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me; as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out and to come in." How do you make that out? You have not told us. No, but if you are a Christian you will know how it is; God was his strength, and God is unchangeable. "Trust ye in the Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

XIV. THE DRAGON DEFEATED.

I Think in our last lecture we arrived far enough to show that the beast spoken of in the twelfth chapter of Revelation must be understood mystically, and not literally. We have only a few more remarks to make upon that part of the chapter. We showed that the Savior, when he was born, was not taken up into heaven literally; and here, in this twelfth chapter, we must understand that Jesus Christ is meant mystically or figuratively; and indeed, to speak plainly, the gospel is that which is here in reality meant. The church labored to bring forth the Christ of God; and in laboring to bring forth the Christ of God, she did so by bringing forth the gospel of God. No church can bring forth the Christ of God without bringing forth the gospel of God. Let us understand it, then, in this mystical sense, and all will appear easy. The Lord has preserved the gospel to us. Therefore, the child caught up to God and to his throne is to set before us this one truth, that the Lord has taken such care of the gospel as though it was taken up into heaven itself, as though it was taken up to where no creature could reach it. And it is very remarkable, it says, "unto God and to his throne;" that is to show the security of the gospel, and likewise to show the reign of the Lord Jesus Christ. Understand it in this mystical and figurative sense, and every difficulty will

vanish. But this is not the subject we have to consider this evening. This evening we have to note, first, the church in the wilderness; secondly, the conflict between the church and her adversaries; thirdly, the victory realized; and fourthly, the after troubles, after this victory is realized.

We have first to notice the church in the wilderness. When the beast, or the adversary, thus tried to destroy the gospel, and thereby destroy Jesus Christ, it is said that the church fled into the wilderness. Now, this is a truth that belongs to all ages of the church; and I shall do this evening as I have done before, so handle this subject as to try to find out where we ourselves are, —whether we belong to that congregation, to that church, that is severed from the world; for her going into the wilderness is expressive of her spiritual and moral separation from the world. This I believe to be the meaning here, —spiritual separation from the world, and that the Lord is with the people in that separation from the world. You will observe that this going into the wilderness is a circumstance taken from the Old Testament. There are a great many scriptures in the Old Testament descriptive of this; but in this part I will take only one, — that in the second of Hosea, —" I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her." Has it not just been so? The Lord Jesus Christ says, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." And when we are brought into a knowledge of our need of Christ, then brought into the knowledge of Christ, and have a knowledge of the substitutional work of Christ, that makes him attractive to us; it is this that severs us from the world; we have here in a new spirit, as the Lord says, "I will put a new spirit within you." It is a new spirit; it is a spirit of faith in the substitutional work of Christ. And this severs you from the world; you could no longer be one with the profane world, and you could no longer be one with the mere professing world. You cannot now be happy with any but those that are one with the substitutional work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus he draws us into the knowledge of himself, severing us spiritually from the world, and speaking comfortably unto us. "And I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." Now, these vineyards must not be understood literally, because the attractions are spiritual, and the people are spiritual, and the blessings are spiritual. Therefore, when he says, "I will give her vineyards from thence," we must go to some scripture somewhere, and see if we can find out what the meaning of this is, of the vineyards that he gives us in this our separation from the world. The twenty-seventh of Isaiah explains this, "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it;" and so of the rest. The prominent feature of the vineyard which he thus gives to the people is that it is said to be "a vineyard of red wine;" and I am sure you will anticipate what I am going to say, that this red wine represents the blood of the true vine, the blood of Christ Jesus, the blood of the everlasting covenant. In our separation from the world what is there to cheer our hearts? That wine of the kingdom, or shall I say, that blood that cleanses from all sin; that blood that wrought our redemption, that blood that hath blotted out all our faults; that innocent, that precious blood that shall present us faultless before the eyes of his glory. This is the vineyard that he gives unto us, and by this vineyard we have here the presence of the Lord; for it goes on to say, "and the valley of Achor for a door of hope." As you are aware, the valley of Achor was the beginning of the promised land, and so Jesus Christ is the beginning it is in the knowledge of him that we begin to enter into rest, it is in the knowledge of him that we begin to possess the promise, begin to possess the love of God, the mercy and blessings of God. "And she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth." So, while it is called a wilderness, the Lord's presence makes it anything but a wilderness, —this separation from the world. "She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt." Just mark the idea, that she shall sing there by this vineyard, by this blood of the everlasting covenant, as when I brought her out of the land of Egypt. And what Moses says of the Egyptians is true of our sins, and of every one of our troubles, "The Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see no more forever." How complete was the victory! And are there not times when the completeness of our victory delights our souls, and we see that we are free, quite so, of our troubles? Every one of our troubles is virtually gone,

and they would not exist now, you would not have a trouble, only these troubles are the Lord's servants, and he does, by means of these troubles, bring about our good and his own great glory. So it is, then, that in this separation from the world the Lord fulfils his promise, "I will give her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope." And then mark what he says, "And it shall be at that day, says the Lord, that thou shalt call me Ishi,"—meaning, "my husband;" "and shalt call me no more Baali for I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth." And what is it that enables us to cry, "Abba, Father"? What is it that enables us to say, "This God is my God for ever and ever"? What is it that enables us to recognize the delightful truth described in the fifty-fourth of Isaiah, "Thy maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called"? What is it? Why, this vineyard which he gives us, the precious blood of the everlasting covenant. I am afraid, very much afraid, that those of you that know the most of the atonement of Christ know hardly enough to keep you from despair; but the more deeply we are led into this great mystery of the blood of the everlasting covenant, the stronger our confidence will grow, because we shall see that it is a stronghold for sinners. And in this the Savior delighted. "The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." "Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice; I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Thus, then, in our separation spiritually from the world, the Lord fulfils his promise; he gives us this vineyard, the blood of the everlasting covenant; he gives us this victory, and brings us into the endearing relationships to himself, in the manifestation thereof by which we are saved. And then mark one more thing connected with this wilderness state. The Lord says, "I will make a covenant for them,"—what a beautiful scripture that is!—"I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field," meaning, of course, adversaries, enemies of all shapes, and forms, and degrees, "and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and will make them to lie down safely." Where is our safety? All our safety is in the Lord. Thus, then, the church flying into the wilderness is what has been practiced in all ages by the church. It does appear to me to be a piece of folly to try to point out some particular age of the church in which the church fled into the wilderness; it is the experience of every true Christian.

But you observe the church was not to be here always. "She hath a place prepared of God," in the wilderness; "where she hath a place prepared of God, that they shall feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days;" called in the fourteenth verse, "time, times, and half a time." So that she is to be there so long and no longer, and that she is to be nourished. And if you ask how she is to be nourished, the answer is very simple; we may give the answer in a variety of forms, but we have plenty with which to give the answer if we say she shall be nourished by the gospel; that will be true, and blessedly true; if we say she shall be nourished by the Spirit of God, that is true; and if we say she shall be nourished by the Christ of God, that is true; and if we say she shall be nourished by the immutability of God the Father in the revelation of his counsels, that is true. So it is the Lord himself that shall nourish and cherish the church in the wilderness. But to close this part of the subject I may again remind you that at the end of the conflict I presently have to notice, as recorded in the fourteenth verse, it is said of her a second time that she fled into the wilderness; and the second time it is said that there were given to her "two wings of a great eagle," that she might fly into the wilderness where she hath a place prepared of God. Now why is this difference? In the one place there is nothing said about the wings of a great eagle, not in the sixth verse, but in the fourteenth verse there is something added, that "there were given to her two wings of a great eagle." The difference appears to me to be this, that the church of God has come through a great variety of circumstances, and when under conflict and very trying circumstances, then the Lord proportions the strength to the day. If there are high and mountainous impediments in the way, the Lord gives her strength and faith to rise above them all and to sever herself from the world, according to the Lord's own word, when he says, "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you as on eagle's wings, and brought you to myself." It is a great mercy, then, to be thus severed from the world.

The Savior says, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Now that is not true naturally, but it is true spiritually. The apostle explains this spiritual separation from the world very beautifully when he says, "We have not received the spirit which is of the world, but that which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." Here is the separation, so that we are severed spiritually from the world by the knowledge of the things which are freely given to us of God. And in order to understand the things that are given to us of God, it is well once more to remind you that all that is given to us of God is summed up in the person of Christ. When God gave Christ he gave everything, for all spiritual blessings wherewith the Lord hath blessed the people, he blessed them with in Christ; and if the blessings are in Christ, then in giving Christ Jesus he has given all these spiritual blessings. And I hardly know what to say here, any further than to observe what an infinite advantage it is to be thus severed from the world. When we can see religion in its true light, as having severed us from that world which is to be destroyed, and set our faces towards the Jerusalem which is above, towards that Zion that cannot be moved, and that those who are thus brought to trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, that cannot be removed, who in his senses would not be thus severed from the world, and thus united to Christ, to God, to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and enabled to rejoice that he himself is our portion and exceeding joy?

I notice, secondly, the conflict. Now it says in this chapter, "There is war in heaven." We cannot understand this to mean the heaven of glory, because the circumstances here described never could have occurred in the heaven of glory. But if we understand it to mean the heavenly dispensation, then it is clear. "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven." We shall see presently what it was that Michael and his angels contended for, and what it was that the dragon and his angels fought or contended against; but before I come to that I must look at the apparent contradiction we have in the word of God upon this subject. Now it here says that "the dragon fought, and his angels, and prevailed not." Yet in the seventh chapter of Daniel, the 21st verse, you will find it written that the little horn "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;" There the adversary is declared to prevail against them; here, in the twelfth chapter of Revelation, it says " he prevailed not." How will you reconcile these two? Here is as complete a verbal contradiction as we could have. We can very easily reconcile it; and I feel very anxious to be clear upon this part, because when the adversary makes inroads, and we seem to get the worst of it, we are apt to think all is over, and that we are beaten. But let us understand this; let us distinguish between the sense in which the adversary prevailed, and the sense in which he did not prevail. What is the sense in which he did prevail? Why he prevailed first in destroying the character of the people of God; in accusing them and in making them out in the eyes of men what you are strangers to. This is mere theory to most of us now. Only think of it. Why, the adversary went so far in the apostolic age that he persuaded the people at large that these apostles were the vilest set of reptiles that ever lived. What says the apostle upon it? Why he says, "We are counted the offscouring" —I might as well be plain, for so the Greek will bear it —" We are counted the common sewage of all things;" the vilest wretches upon the face of the earth. There was not a crime you could think of that their enemies did not lay to their charge. Why, the devil would say, What is the good of your trying to preach? —everybody knows what you are. What is the use of your going forth? But they did go forth, and prevailed. I have said we are strangers to this in our day. If a little bit of reproach fall upon us, we get a St. Vitus' dance almost, or we are paralyzed, or frightened, like fireside soldiers, or chimney-corner sailors, dreadfully alarmed. Why, in the Savior's day did they not take his reputation away? Did not the people at large believe that he was everything that was bad that men had said of him? Did not Saul of Tarsus think after the evil reports he had heard of such a character, that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus? This is one way, then, in which they prevailed even against Christ himself, and prevailed against the saints. I need not here go to the Old Testament to prove this. Why, says the Savior, "if they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more

shall they call them of his household?" But I will go further; they prevailed so far, as you know, in the Old Testament age and in the New Testament age as to put thousands and tens of thousands of the saints to death. So that they made war with the saints and prevailed; yet in this twelfth chapter it is said they did not prevail. Do you not see here how you must distinguish between the sense in which the adversary did prevail, and the sense in which he entirely lost the victory? Unless you understand this, why you will think you are beaten when you are not. I will therefore here bring before you the apostle's explanation; he says, "As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." But what does he add? "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And until they have done that they have not prevailed. Thus it is that the adversary here did not so prevail as to sever the people from God's truth, to pluck them out of the Lord's hand, or, indeed, to do them any real injury; because the Lord overruled all they suffered for the furtherance of their welfare, and for the glory of his blessed name.

Now "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels." It would be an insult to your understandings to suppose this can be understood in any other way than that described by the apostle. "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The warfare, therefore, is spiritual. I need not remind you here that Michael is the Lord Jesus Christ; this you will not doubt. Go to the twelfth chapter of the Book of Daniel, there you have this mystery unfolded, so that Michael and his angels will mean Christ and his servants. "At that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people; and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Now we shall see presently that it was by seven things the saints overcame the adversary, and it is by those same seven things that we are to overcome the adversary now. Hence it is said in the end of this conflict —not that the conflict is over yet: no, it will go on as long as the world shall last; but then John saw the ultimate defeat of the adversary, and the triumph and victory of the saints. Satan is here nominated by four names, the dragon, the serpent, the devil, and Satan, and it is said of him that "he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him;" and in the previous verse it is said, "neither was their place found any more in heaven." The adversary is thus represented for reasons suggested by the names. He is overcome as a dragon, that is, overcome in his tyranny; overcome as a serpent, —as a serpent he poisons the minds of men against the truth of God, but in this also he is overcome; he is overcome as a destroyer, for the word "devil" means a destroyer; and he is overcome as an opposer. Hence it is in the mischief he does he is limited. Further back in this chapter it is said of the adversary that he "drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." The stars there of course mean the people of God, and Satan cast them to the earth; that is, he put them to death. And now just mark what he could do and what he could not do; he drew them by the powers which he had and cast them to the earth, but he could not cast them any lower than the earth. Hear what the Savior says upon this: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him." Thus, then, the adversary was limited in his doings, and the saints had the victory.

Now just mark the seven steps, or seven things, by which they overcame the adversary. The first thing was the salvation of God. "I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation;" that is, God has become our salvation; and if God be our salvation, if he save us, then what can destroy us? And not only salvation, but "strength;" and so, if God be our salvation, he then becomes our strength." "Trust ye in the

Lord forever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." "And the kingdom of our God," that of course is the reigning power of the blessed God. "And the power of his Christ;" or, as it might read, the authority of his Christ, —the power of Christ to save. And then the blood of the Lamb, and then the word of their testimony, and then they loved not their lives unto the death. You will observe here are seven steps by which they overcame. Here is, first, God appearing as their eternal salvation; this swallows up everything that stands against them; secondly, he appears as their all-sufficient and eternal strength; thirdly, he appears in the stability and eternity of that kingdom which he hath founded; fourthly, he appears in the power of Christ, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him; fifthly, the blood of the Lamb, —" they overcame by the blood of the Lamb;" sixthly, "by the word of their testimony," —here is the glorious gospel of the blessed God and seventhly, "they loved not their lives unto the death." So that these seven might be summed up in very few words; they overcame by the salvation of God, they overcame by the strength of God, they overcame by the kingdom of God, they overcame by the Christ of God, they overcame by the blood of God; they overcame by the word of God, completed by the love of God, for the last is essential, "they loved not their lives unto the death." And we might as well just once more say that if the truth of the blessed God be not dearer to us than anything else, we shall always be in danger of giving it up; the adversary knows when we have a deficiency in our religion, and when opportunity offers he will present something as a substitute for God's truth just where that deficiency is in our religion, and we shall fall in with that, and give up the truth. If it be silver and gold, then it will be written, "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Satan well knew where Judas' fault was. Ah, he says, Judas makes a profession, goes with the other disciples, and appears as they do; but if I could get an opportunity to present some money to him, that money would be dearer to him than the Christ he professes to follow, than the truth he professes to believe, and then he would give up his religion; and as you know, so he did.

On the other hand, if there be a Pharisaic tendency, — Oh, says the adversary, I see that man does not know much of his own heart, of the majesty of God's law, of his own condition; he does not like to be found among the poor and the needy; —he is among them, but. he is not altogether at home there; he would rather be among those that the world deems respectable, and that have a good name, and that are thought well of in the world and by the world. By and by an opportunity offers itself, and away the man goes, because he had no real root in him. But not so the real child of God.

And now mark what is said of the enemy, —"neither was their place found any more in heaven;" —"their place." Mind, it does not say there was no more a place found for them, but "their place." It appears then that the devil and his angels had their place; you know where their place was; but when Satan is overcome, he can never regain his place. You know where his place was; —his place, and the place of his angels too, was in your soul; your soul was Satan's palace. It is an awful truth that every unregenerate man is a possessor of devils; so that the Lord never regenerates a soul without casting out devils. In the case of the natural man the palace is in peace. That man concerned about his state? If he be concerned about his state, if it be not by regeneration it will be a false concern, and a little Pharisaic religion will settle him down. But when Jesus Christ comes in, and takes the armor of Satan away, and casts Satan out, then Jesus Christ himself takes possession of that man's soul, and Satan can never again recover his place, he can never come into your soul and reign there again: he can never come into your heart and reign there again; he can never come to you and do with you as he did before. How did he do with you before he was conquered and cast out? He hid from your eyes the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God; but he cannot do that now, and never will again. He kept you away from God, but he cannot keep you away from God now. He kept you in enmity against God, and against eternal things, but he cannot do that now. Thus it is by the incoming of God as the God of salvation, the incoming of God by the omnipotence of his power, by the eternity of his kingdom, by the power of Christ, by the blood of the everlasting covenant,

by the word of his truth, and thus shedding abroad his love in the hearts of his people, hereby the adversary is cast out; so that in the place where dragons used to lie they shall lie there no more forever. But alas, alas! when Satan goes out (and is not cast out), he takes the key with him, and he can come back again, and bring seven more spirits with him, and the last state of that man is worse than the first. But in relation to the people of God what a mercy it is that his place is no more found; he can possess us no more forever? Worry us he may, and do us, speaking after the manner of men, a great deal of mischief; but take possession of us he cannot; take us out of the hands of the Spirit of God, or the Christ of God, or the power of God, he cannot. Is it any wonder, then, that the saints of God should rejoice that "the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night;" cast down to regain his position and his place no more forever? There is something so sweet in the thought that he cannot regain his place. It was a good feeling in the man that David's servants found, and David said to him, "Canst thou bring me down to this company?" Well, said he, if you do not kill me, or deliver me to my master; for if you deliver me to him, he will kill me; I don't want him to get possession of me again. And so they did not kill him, nor deliver him up. And so the servants of our spiritual David. Ah, says the poor sinner, here would be a little hope for me, but I am afraid this minister is going in his sermon to kill me, send me off in despair, or else hand me over to the devil. Oh no, he will do neither; you are a poor lost creature, a poor bankrupt sinner; these are the very persons that the gospel seeks after; these are the very persons that are, as it were, in the highways and hedges, without home, or help, or friends; these are the poor and needy that shall overcome Satan, because they are glad to receive that order of things in which he is conquered and their souls are saved. John might therefore well say, "Rejoice, ye heavens;" that is, of course, a metonymical form of speech, explained by the next clause, - "and ye that dwell in them:" and the people of God may well rejoice. But "woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Does not this appear difficult? It is astonishing how our learned men have mystified this book; and they make this passage seem so mystical and so difficult; and yet the little child three months old spiritually in the things of God may understand it. What are we to understand by the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea? Why, of course those that have no knowledge of God; those that have never been moved by regeneration out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son; those that have no dwelling but in this world, and dying as they are, in the lower world yet to come. But then, say you, what woe is there to them? Why, what greater woe can befall any man than to be given up to blindness of heart, and to live all his days without knowing his state as a sinner, without seeking God's mercy, without seeking God's Christ? Can any greater woe befall any man than this? Alas, this includes every woe. When such a one comes to his dying hour, —" He that is filthy," and he certainly is filthy by his fall in the first Adam, "let him be filthy still; he that is unjust, let him be unjust still." So then Satan blinds the minds of men to keep them away from God. It may well be said, Woe unto such. What greater woe can befall a man? "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you; having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." He hurries his own servants on to perdition, because he is enraged that he cannot conquer the saints. This I believe to be the meaning there. What greater woe can befall us? When we look, any of us, at our children that do not know the truth, or at our relatives that do not know the truth, or at some persons that we have every reason very highly to respect, and yet we cannot see the grace of God in them, —how our souls mourn over them. We think, of all calamities none can equal that of being without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world. May this not be the unhappy lot of anyone here. May it be our lot to know that we are severed from the world; that the victory is in that order of things I have this evening stated; and while Satan desires to accuse the saints, may we never be found joining with him, but be found in the spirit of Him that came into the world to save sinners, and who hath said we are to forgive seventy times seven. The more that Spirit reigns, the happier we are, the more our God is glorified, and the more Satan is defeated. Hence the apostle says, "I forgave it in the person of Christ, lest Satan should get an advantage over us." For who would follow an unforgiving gospel?

I would not. Who would be united to an unforgiving people? I would not. That religion is not worth holding that is not a forgiving religion. Why, the Lord began our welfare by forgiving, carries it on by forgiving, and he will complete it by forgiving. It is the very essence of the gospel. "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, and will not remember thy sins."

Now in the after part of this chapter you have the adversary casting out a flood of water from his mouth to carry the church away from God, away from God's truth. This flood of water means three things. First, it means adversaries that have been commissioned by Satan; —they have derived their mission from him to persecute the church. Secondly, tribulations. Satan often causes a deal of trouble to the people of God. Mark the case of Job; that was the work of Satan. And thirdly, and chiefly, it means the body of error which comes from the serpent's mouth. Look at them at Rome now. You see they have been making hymns in praise of the Pope, and one of the hymns I see says that he is a second Jesus Christ. Now, how that poor old man can sit there, and hear himself called a second Jesus Christ, —we who know the Lord wonder how he can do it, how he can bear it. But what will not a man do when given up to blindness? It may well be said of that system that it is full of blasphemy. And they are contriving now all sorts of things; we shall have by and by a flood brought in. But the earth shall open her mouth, and swallow up the flood; that is, God shall work revolutions by which all these errors shall be subservient to the welfare of the church. The earth shall not willingly, but subserviently, help the woman. And when Satan saw that he was defeated in all his plans, "he was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

May it be our lot, then, still to hold fast, and keep the commandments of God, that is, the gospel commandments of God; to believe in Christ, to love God, to love the brethren, to love the habitation of his house, the place where his honor dwells, and to hold fast Christ's testimony; then shall it be well with us while we live, when we die, and for ever and ever. Amen.

XV. WILD BEASTS.

We have this evening to notice the thirteenth chapter of Revelation, and though I shall run all through the chapter, I shall be as concise as I possibly can. You have, in the first place, the ten-horned beast, and we shall have to see what his qualities were, and how by the saints he was defeated. We then have to notice the two-horned beast, and the number of his name, —what the meaning of that number is.

First, then, we have to notice the ten-horned beast. This is a part of the book upon which almost all writers and almost all Christians agree. You will observe that it is taken from the seventh of Daniel. John stands upon the sea-shore, and he beholds a beast rise up out of the sea. Daniel, in his seventh chapter, saw the same thing. Here the sea, of course, is expressive of storms, strife's, revolutions, and everything indicated by the restlessness of the sea. This beast means an imperial power; and it was, as you are aware, by wars that the Roman empire was formed; for no one can doubt but that the Roman empire is here intended. That being the case, it requires but comparatively little said upon it. Now it is said of this beast, that is, of this power, that it had the body of a leopard, the feet of a bear, and the mouth of a lion; "and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great "authority." Now the leopard is noted for its activity; and, in those times, how active were they in putting the saints to death; nor were the Jews, in their place, if we go back a little farther, less active in putting the Savior to death. Do you not perceive in the very crucifying of him what a hurry they were in? hurrying him from place to place, and hurrying him to the cross, and in

such a way to know whether he was dead or not. Then the next quality is that of the bear. As you are aware, the bear is a sly, cowardly sort of beast, and always watches an opportunity to spring suddenly upon its prey. What I am now saying is mere theory with us, but see what the poor people of God have had to encounter in times past; what mighty powers were watching every opportunity to spring upon them, and deprive them of their social and every other privilege, and put them to death. "And the mouth of a lion," to denote their roaring tyranny. And it is said "the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." The dragon, abstractedly, of course means Satan; but then that will not satisfy us as an explanation, by saying it is Satan; there is nothing you can exactly get hold of; —you would say you could not clearly understand what was meant. Let us therefore be careful to see if we can get at what is really meant; —whether there is something comparatively tangible that we can get hold of that represents this dragon, represents Satan. My answer is that we must take the word "dragon" here to mean the spirit of tyranny. Now this spirit of tyranny over the saints had got hold of the whole Roman empire; just the same as this spirit of tyranny over the saints still dwells in the Roman Catholic Church. There is still the spirit. You read of the beast that was, and that is not; their power —the beast that was, but now they are not in active power; but the spirit still dwells in all the people; so that all the people, through the delusive teaching they have been under, embody in their creed a spirit of tyranny over the saints. Therefore, by the dragon here you must understand the spirit of the people; and then you have only to take another step, and you will see that it means the people themselves; and then it simply means that the people at large supported the Roman government in putting the saints to death. And did not this spirit of tyranny appear in the main body of the Jews, and did not the mob (for I am sure they deserve no better name) cry out concerning the Savior, "Crucify him, crucify him"? And if the people had not supported the Jewish Sanhedrim in putting Christ to death, they could not have done so. Do you not read that there was a temporary check sometimes given to the spirit of tyranny in the people? so that when the rulers saw that the spirit of tyranny was not uppermost in the people, then it is said "they feared the people;" but when this spirit of tyranny returned, and the rulers saw that the people were ready and willing to support them in putting Jesus Christ to death, then they saw was the time.

Now as to this beast having seven heads. Some have thought this refers to the seven hills upon which Rome was built; but for myself, I do not at all follow them in that idea; I think that is very much to localize the meaning. I think the seven heads mean the various governments that made up that empire, and that the ten horns mean the several ruling powers. Perhaps I need not say any more here, further than this, — that the best message that ever reached this world or ever will reach it, was that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; but in Satan's estimation this is the worst message that ever reached our globe; and the people were blindly, under Rome pagan, stirred up to put away this message, to put away this religion, to put away this eternal life, to put away the only way in which poor lost sinners could escape the scorpion folds of Satan, escape hell, escape the wrath to come.

Then it is said that "upon his heads" there was written "the name of blasphemy;" —as the margin reads it, "the names of blasphemy." It will be important for me here to define what blasphemy is. Blasphemy is to anathematize something that belongs to God, and to put that down which God has set up. Therefore, whatever sets aside the sovereignty of God, and clothes man with that sovereignty, that is blasphemy; to put Christ aside, to anathematize Christ, is blasphemy. Hence the apostle Paul, when looking back at what he did while in a state of nature, says, "I was a blasphemer." How was he a blasphemer? By anathematizing and cursing Jesus Christ; for "no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed;" that is, no man speaking by the Spirit anathematizes Christ. Now it is said here of this beast that "he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle," —that is, his church, — "and them that dwell in heaven." Is not this as clear as can be? Did they not anathematize the saints of God? That was blaspheming God; they anathematized the truth of God, that was blaspheming God. Therefore,

blaspheming consists in anathematizing that that belongs to God, that that God approves, and that God sets up. If this definition be true, what an awful blasphemer was Rome pagan! And we shall come to Rome papal presently. I say, what an awful blasphemer was that Roman empire. Saul of Tarsus acted in that spirit when he compelled the saints to blaspheme, as you read; that is, to anathematize, to curse the Lord Jesus Christ, and to put something else into his place; and believing that he ought to anathematize the sect of the Nazarenes, to set them aside, and put them down, and to anathematize all the truths of the gospel. You therefore understand that to blaspheme is not merely to speak evil, but to anathematize that that belongs to God. And is not this just what Rome pagan did?

"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them." The saints, —why, they had no more chance with the Roman empire than one lamb has amidst a hundred wolves. Suppose a hundred hungry wolves set in upon a lamb, what chance has that lamb? Not the slightest whatever. And here were the saints; they had nothing on their side; they did, indeed, in Rome pagan, as in after times, realize the truth of the Savior's words —you and I know nothing of it experimentally, God grant we never may, —" I send you forth as lambs among wolves;" and so they found it. Here was the whole strength of the Roman empire, —the people, the princes, the priests, the emperors, —all brought to bear upon the poor saints of God. Their oppressors did indeed shed torrents of blood. Talk about your free-will! talk about human goodness! say a word in favor of human nature! Why, my hearer, the whole history of the world, especially in connection with those persecutions that the church has undergone, is expressive of the frightful depravity and blindness of human nature. Well might the Savior say "They know not what they do." But our dear brethren bore it all, and were more than conquerors. Then, say you, if this power made war with the saints, and thus overcame them, in what sense did the saints overcome? That I will notice presently.

Now John says, "I saw one of his heads, as it were wounded to death." The head here means of course a ruling power, and that ruling power was wounded to death; but then afterwards "his deadly wound was healed." Here are seven heads; which of the seven was wounded to death? It was wounded to death several times, and healed again; but I am inclined to think, though I will not advance the opinion dogmatically, that that same head is now wounded to death never again to be healed; I do hope and trust that it is so. How was it wounded to death? and which head was it? Why, it must be that head, that ruling power, that ruled over all the others; and what was that but the imperial power of Rome? Now, several times before the reign of Constantine there were Roman emperors that had no saving knowledge of the truth, but God put it into their hearts to do towards the people of God in their measure as Cyrus of old did. Cyrus was raised up and made a deliverer to the people of God, though he himself originally knew not the Lord. I will take one Roman emperor just to explain this part, —how the head was wounded, and how it was afterwards healed, unhappily. Antoninus Pius, as he is called—in modern language we will call him Antoninus the Good, —when he ascended the imperial throne, and reigned twenty-three years, he put down all persecution; he considered that no man ought to be persecuted on account of his religion. Here he wounded the imperial head, the persecuting power; and the saints had a respite, as Daniel foresaw, —" they shall be holpen with a little help;" a little reviving in their bondage, and a little space, a kind of half-hour's silence, as it were, they had; and so with one or two more emperors. But by and by up sprang emperors of another caste, as, for instance, Dioclesian, — and they recommenced the old barbarous persecutions. Here the head was again healed. Then when Constantine reigned, who was king both of the north and of the south, as described in the eleventh of Daniel, he again put down persecution, and the imperial head of persecution was once more wounded. But soon after Constantine's death it began to shape itself into the Papal form, and that which Satan had done previously by Pagan agency, he now afterwards does by Papal agency. Thus this head was wounded several times, and healed again. Let me draw certain inferences here of an experimental kind. Does not the Lord sometimes come in by the

power of his word, and wound your unbelief, your doubts and fears, and that that seems to reign over your soul, to persecute you inwardly, and to persuade you that there is no hope in God for you?

When the Lord brings home the word with power, it wounds this ruling power, puts it down, your soul finds rest, peace, liberty, happiness, and rejoices once more that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Here is the persecuting head wounded; then it will be healed again, and wounded again; and so it will go on until it is wounded the last time; and when will that be? Not until you die. "The righteous hath hope in his death." So then you will struggle against this tyrant as well as you can, pray God to wound him often, and the more he is wounded, the more your faith will be strengthened; the more your unbelief is subdued, the higher your hope will rise; and the more your doubts and fears are driven away by the presence of the Lord, the more the love of God will be shed abroad in your soul. Thus, then, you see the beast, formed out of the stormy commotions of the world; you see it exhibiting the deadly activity of the leopard, the savage slyness of the bear, and the thundering tyranny of the lion; and you see the dragon, meaning the spirit of the people, the spirit of tyranny that supported the government of persecution; you see what the blasphemy is, —that it is anathematising that which belongs to God. I dare say some of you have wondered why it should be said that they blasphemed the saints; —you say, I cannot see how a saint can be blasphemed, because blasphemy means to speak irreverently. It does mean that, but it means not that merely; it means to anathematise; and therefore, if you anathematise that that belongs to Christ, you cannot anathematise a child of God without anathematising him; if you curse or despise the least of Christ's brethren, you do the same unto him. Therefore "take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones." Into this satanic path, into this way to perdition, into this spirit of sure destruction, Peter had put one foot; —he began to curse and to swear, he began to anathematize, he began to deny; he had got one foot upon satanic ground, he had got one foot towards hell, he had got one foot upon destruction's ground. But the dear Redeemer sent the rays of his godhead through the eyes of his manhood, penetrated the soul of Peter, stopped him, sent him out, and he wept bitterly that ever he should, even with one foot, have sided with the devil against God and against Christ, against his people and against his ways. "Peter went out and wept bitterly." Ah, how many besides have done the same! Martyrs sometimes have temporarily recanted, though they have not done so with all their hearts; —they have taken a step or two in the path of this blasphemy, or anathematizing God's truth; but when they got a little way in, they found it so agonizing to their souls that their conclusion was, —There is no agony they can subject my body to that can equal the agonies of mind which I now feel. Therefore, they returned to the truth, and heroically and boldly faced the rack, the torture, and the flames, and died triumphantly at the last. The Lord knows how to lead his people, to demonstrate to them their own weakness, and thereby make them the stronger.

Now how did the saints overcome? For this imperial power, —why, the thought of resisting it! The people" said, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" They did not call it a beast, of course; they called it royal Rome, and imperial Rome, and the Eternal City, and all sorts of fine Dames. Many things the people give fine names to which the Lord does not give fine names; and many things that men give ugly names to the Lord does not give ugly names to. They gave ugly names to Jesus Christ, but God did not give ugly names to Jesus Christ. They have given ugly names to his people, and do now; but God does not give ugly names to them. They give ugly names to the truth, but God does not give an ugly name to the truth. Therefore, they said, "Who is able?" Why, we must all bow in homage. And yet there were some —and who were they, think you? —that were enabled to stand? Who were they, think you, that stood against these mighty powers, this rampant, monstrous, mighty beast; —who were they? Why, those whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world; for "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him;" be afraid of him, "whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." What is the Lamb's book of life? Everyone knows

that it is the covenant of grace, or the gospel of God, —which you please; you may call the Lamb's book of life the covenant of grace or the gospel of God; in either case you will be right; for in Malachi the Lord says, "My covenant was with him of life and peace," with Christ Jesus; and the gospel is called the word of life. So, then, here were a people who knew that their salvation originated in the sovereignty of God, that God had registered their names in the everlasting covenant, that God had chosen them in Christ, the Lamb of God; that God had blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. They overcame the enemy then, first by a revelation to them of the sovereignty and immutability of the counsel of the blessed God. They understood the new covenant the Lord made with Abraham; they saw that God, as he could swear by no greater, swore by himself, that in blessing he would bless. It is clear that the Christians of that day, who overcame these mighty powers, were what in modern times would be called hyper-Calvinists. I do not follow Calvin; Calvin has written a great many things that I no more believe than I believe in free will; there was a great deal of duty-faith about Calvin, — we use his name, and they call me a hyper-Calvinist, which I take to be a very great honor done to me; for I should not like to be called a Calvinist, because Calvin was not high enough for me; he was high enough in some parts, but too low in some parts; therefore, I like to be a hyper Calvinist. So then their names were written in the Lamb's book of life; this they knew and understood, and in the strength of the immutability of God's counsel they were enabled to stand, because God stood unconditionally by them. They saw that his counsel was immutable, that his covenant was infallible; they saw that he had blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. But mark another thing, —their names were written in the Lamb's book? What does the Lamb mean? A substitutional sacrifice.

So, then, these people saw into the new, the everlasting covenant, and they saw Jesus Christ as the mediator of that covenant. And you see here the book of life and the Lamb are put together, just as the Savior puts the covenant and himself together when he says, "This is my blood in the New Testament." The book of life is called the Lamb's book of life, because he is the mediator of that covenant, and hath, in a testamentary way, confirmed the good will of God the Father and every promise God has made. When a man makes a will, that will is not confirmed till the man dies. Our God has made a testamentary will, and that will wills an eternal inheritance to his people, and there are exceeding great and precious promises; and by Jesus Christ's death the promises are confirmed.

Thus, then, we see the pagan beast, and then the character of the people that overcame. See how many things are put together here; —first, here is the book of life, that is, the new covenant; secondly, here is Christ, the mediator of that covenant; thirdly, he was slain from the foundation of the world, —that is, in promise and in purpose; and fourthly, the people, by the Lord being in this order of things on their side, were more than conquerors through him that loved them.

Now the Lord says, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." This pagan power led the saints into captivity, and the captivity into which they led the saints was temporal, but the captivity into which they must go is eternal; it will be in everlasting chains, shut up in the prison of hell. As Cyprian said to the Roman proconsul, "You threaten me with a fire that shall burn my body to death; but there is a fire awaiting you that can never be quenched, and from which you can never be delivered." Therefore, if you will be an enemy, and bring the people of God into captivity, they will get out of that captivity; but you, dying in that state of enmity, will never get out of the captivity. There is no hope in hell, no passing and repassing the mighty gulf. Thus he that kills with the sword shall be killed with the sword. The saints of God had to endure this. He that kills your body cuts you off from all that is dear to you on earth; I will kill them in another sense, —I will cut them off from all that is dear to them on earth; I will cast them into the second death; I will set my naming sword, that shall turn every way, and they shall feel they are out off to

all eternity. "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints." The people of God endured it; it was hard work, and nothing but the presence and power of God could enable them to endure the same.

We now notice the next beast in this chapter. John says, "And I beheld another beast, coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb." How expressive this is. Why is this second beast said to rise out of the earth? First, because it came up very quietly. Why, who would have thought that these pious priests, and pious rulers, and pious men, would have come into such a position as to be as tyrannical over the true saints of God as Rome pagan had been? Therefore, because they came up in that quiet sort of way, they are said to come out of the earth. The second reason why they are said to come from the earth is because their doctrines are earthy, it is all of the creature; it is ashes to ashes, dust to dust. I will give the priests credit for their craft; they study human nature more than you and I do. They seem to take a hint from the village schoolmaster. You have all, of course, heard of that story. A gentleman met the village schoolmaster one day, and he looked a shabby sort of man, and withal hobbling along: and this gentleman said to him, "What are you, my man?" He said, "I am the ruler of the whole village, sir." "Why, how do you make that out?" "Well," he said, "I am." "I wonder you don't make a better appearance then, if you are the ruler of the whole village." "Yea, yea, sir," he said, "I am the ruler of the whole parish." "Well, but how can that be?" "Why, sir, the fact is I am the schoolmaster; I rule the children, the children rule their mothers, the mothers rule the fathers; and so I am king over them all." And that is how the priests do; they get hold of the little children, and then the mothers sympathize with the little children, and then the wives, and away they all go together —child first, wife next, and the fool of a husband last.

So, then, that is the way that they quietly gain the mastery: they study human nature pretty deeply. Now, friends, that is not our way to go to work. We are to have power from on high; we are to preach the word, be instant in season, out of season, and if the gospel of the blessed God does not do the work, then nothing else can. This poor, this humble creature, his Holiness, as you are aware, is called "the servant of servants;" very humble names; and you know the old women go about our streets wrapped up like a parcel of walking —I won't say what just now; and some time ago the priests ran about without shoes or stockings, until Government very wisely commanded them to be decent like other people. All this humility, all this craft, is to get hold of the senses and minds of the people, and thus quietly to gain the mastery.

Now it is said of this second beast, the lamb-like one, that he exercises all the power of "the first beast." I need not enlarge upon this; you all know that Rome papal has done this, that it has exercised even more cruelty than Rome pagan. But what are we to understand by the two horns? You know the Lord Jesus Christ said to his disciples, "He that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip; and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one. And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough." Now Romanism says, That means me, that I am to have the two swords; that is, that I am to wield the spiritual sword and the civil sword: so that there is to be no power exercised in any way without me. These two horns, therefore, represent the same thing as they make the two swords represent, —namely, civil and ecclesiastical power. The (Ecumenical Council now sitting at Rome has published twenty-one anathemas, which are nothing else but twenty-one blasphemies, —that is what they are, for I have read them all through; everything that they there anathematize is what God sanctions, and everything that they there anathematize is what the people of God would feel guilty to the last degree in not abiding by. And we shall have a lot more anathemas out yet; these twenty-one are only the beginning of sorrows; they are only a few drops before the shower, that is all. In these anathemas they send us to hell,—every one of us, and thereby demonstrate that if they had the power they would sweep every one of us from the face of the earth. I think if this ecumenical Council at Rome have any effect at all, it will be to stir up the Protestant world to renew the "No Popery" cry, not for political, but for spiritual and ecclesiastical purposes. I think the time is coming when the Protestant world, feeling itself

anathematized by a parcel of poor creatures at Rome, themselves under sin, themselves under Satan, and undertaking to anathematize dear old England, all that live in England, that do not conform to their infamous lies, their daring blasphemies, and their insulting statements, — I think the time is coming when the Protestant world will feel it impossible to speak of such a religion as this otherwise than with determined decision against it.

Now it is said of this second beast that "he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." You ask a Roman Catholic, Have you read the twenty-one anathemas? Yes. What do you reckon them? I reckon them to be fire from heaven; for the Pope is infallible, and what he states must be true; therefore, those anathemas are nothing else but fire from heaven; and if men do not conform to what the Pope commands, they shall be consumed. That is the feeling of the poor deluded Roman Catholic, and we cannot alter it; the Lord alone can enlighten his mind, and give him to see that it is only theatrical fire, that it is only theatrical thunder, that it is only the pretense of the creature. How remarkable it is, that it says here of this two-horned beast, "he maketh fire come down from heaven;" the threatening's of the Pope are fire from heaven, so thinks the poor Catholic. And it is said, "he deceiveth them that dwell on the earth." Here again, you see, the dragon, the spirit of tyranny, the people supported him, — he could not do it else. If the eyes of the people were opened, and they were to leave the Pope and the priests, they would be powerless; it is the people that give them the power. Bless the Lord, the people are leaving them civilly, that is, temporally, in temporal matters; and we hope that is a preliminary step, in the order of God's providence, to enlightening millions of them, that they shall forsake that dark system, and be brought into the light of the new and the everlasting covenant. "He deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast." The beast will mean, of course, the main body of the people, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them.

So, then, they are miracles in their idea, —not miracles in the sight of God, but in the sight of the wild beast, — that is, the main body of the people. You cannot persuade the Roman Catholic out of it. I will not here bring forward a sample even of the nonsensical miracles which they pretend to work. They pretend to work miracles now: to turn a piece of bread and a drop of wine into the body and blood, and soul and divinity, of Jesus Christ. Is not this substituting their own inventions for God's truth?

Then again, they must have an image made to the beast. "We must make an image to the beast, say they. What is the image? Anything that shall represent the beast. It is wonderful that while you can trace the spirit of the gospel all through the Bible, you can trace the spirit of the world all through the Bible. Hear what the people there said. Now we must have an image, —that is, we must have one man to represent us all. The people of old said, "We will have a king, that we may be like the nations around:" so "the Lord gave them a king in his wrath," — just as he gives a Pope, —"and took him away in his anger," just as he will every Pope "sitting in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Why, these men put God down, they put Christ down, they put you and me down; it is not what God says, it is what they say.

So, then, by their pretended miracles they thus cause fire in the estimation of their followers to come down from heaven; but these miracles you and I well know to be nothing but myths, fables, and delusions.

I have two more points to name, and that is all. One is that no man, whether rich or poor, old or young, who did not receive a mark in his hand, or his forehead; that is, no man who did not secretly subscribe or openly profess subjection to this beast, this dragon, this image, —" no man might buy or sell;" that is, his citizenship, his commercial and social privileges, should be taken away from him. You know that the papal power has done this in times past; and that spirit of persecuting power got into the minds of Protestants.

Why, if my brother Stringer here and I had lived two hundred and five years ago we should not have been allowed to come within five miles of a town. If brother Stringer and I were together, —Where are we to get a breakfast? Don't know. Can't you go into the town, and buy something? Mustn't go, —dare not go. Can't you go and get a cup of coffee, or a cup of tea, or a cup of cold water? No; mustn't go. That was in 1665, and this is 1870; only two hundred and five years ago. Only think of it! we poor parsons mustn't go within five miles. How they knew when they got just to the bounds I don't know; but at any rate that was one of the fragments which the Toleration Act swept away. Toleration Act! Toleration Act! My Maker commands me to believe in Jesus Christ, and then I am to go and ask a dying worm whether I may or not! My Maker brings me to trust in him, and I am to ask a dying worm whether I may or not! My Maker tells me that I am to do as he bids me, and that I am to cease from man; and I am to go and ask a dying worm whether I may do as my Maker says I must do! Toleration I toleration! it is botheration, I think. I will accept toleration of no man. If my Maker command me, the matter is settled. If God command me to believe in him, and trust in him, and receive his truth, my answer to man is, "Whether it be right to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye!"

But lastly, —"Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred three score and six." I will first of all give you other people's opinion about the meaning of this, and then I will give my own. One opinion of the meaning is this, —that as in the Hebrew word Romuth there are found numerical letters amounting to 666, that describes the seat of the beast, Rome; and as in the Greek word Latinos the same numerical letters are found, 666, that describes the language of the beast; —they speak in Latin, because they say that is the only language the devil doesn't understand. Of course that is nonsense; but they do say that. With this interpretation I have no sympathy at all, because you may find plenty of words in the Hebrew or Greek language wherein you have the same amount of numerical letters. I think, therefore, that interpretation is very ingenious, but not very solid.

The second general opinion is that the number means his character. That is an approach to what I think to be the meaning; —that as Belshazzar was weighed, and found wanting, so this man of sin is numbered, and the badness of his character is known by his number. Well, that is an approach, perhaps, but I cannot see with that either; nor am I sure that I have got the meaning at all. I will give you what I think to be the meaning; —I think the man here means the representative of the man of sin, and the representative of this huge body of error; and that the number means the number of persons whom he represents. Taking that view of it, then it does not matter whether you call it 666 or 666 millions; it is an expansible number, and will bear this. I said, I believe, at the commencement of these lectures, that this book was taken from the Old Testament, —that is, by the new revelations which the Lord made to John. I take, therefore, the number here to mean the number that are on the side of those who are enemies to the church of God, and the Scripture that many years ago (and I cannot get anything better now) threw a light into my mind upon it is this, —that Pharaoh pursued the Israelites with six hundred chariots. Ah, then, I said, he represented the six hundred, —" and all the chariots of Egypt." Well, said I to myself, there are the sixty-six. So if I take the six hundred chariots and all the chariots of Egypt, then I get Pharaoh the representative of that number. And so the Pope is both the representative of the man of sin and the representative of all that follow him. So that this 666 is a definite number for an indefinite, and he is the representative of them all. "Here is wisdom." I do not know how many followers he has, but he is the representative of them all. I do not know how many followers Jesus Christ has, but Jesus Christ is the representative of them all; he represents them all. I do not know how many they are, yet they are spoken of in one place as a hundred and forty and four thousand; there is a definite number evidently meaning an indefinite. So then I take this 666 to be expressive simply of the man of sin, representing all his followers; just as Pharaoh represented the people, and the powers he had at command against the Israelites. But as Pharaoh was

overturned, and Israel gained the victory then; so this hostile power, the man who stands at the head, and represents the powers and the people he has at command, that come against the church, shall be finally overcome, and the saints of the Most High shall be delivered. Amen, and Amen.

XVI. GLORY OF THE GOSPEL.

OUR lecture this evening will be upon the fourteenth chapter of the Revelation. I thought of passing rather lightly over this and the next chapter as well; but the more I look into it, the more I see there is something by which, under the Lord's blessing, we may greatly profit. And, after all, what is the Book of the Revelation but a synoptical representation or review of the whole of the Scriptures? We have gathered together in this book (and the book consists chiefly of that) the summing up of all that is past, of all that is present, and of all that is future. You will thus see what a wide range this very small Book of the Revelation has when viewed in this light; it is, as it were, the summing up of all that ever has been said and done, that is said and done, and that shall be realized to all eternity.

This chapter we may range for our convenience into five parts. The first is the blessedness into which the people of God are brought. The second is the gospel by which they are brought into that state. Thirdly, the fall of Babylon, together with the penalty that those shall be subjected to that are one with that Babylon. Fourthly, the blessedness of holding out to the end; and fifthly, the judgment of God as represented in the latter part of this chapter.

First, then, we have the blessedness of the Lord's people. John says: "And I looked, and lo! a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him a hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." In the preceding chapter the saints had undergone most terrible persecutions; thousands of them put to death; but still you have the same number here that you have in the seventh chapter. "With him an hundred forty and four thousand." And Christ is still the Lamb on Mount Sion; his atonement is still there in all its perfection, in all its spotlessness. Christ is still there in all that familiarity of character indicated by the Lamb. But we must look at these hundred forty and four thousand as the Jewish church, —not the Jewish nation, but that church that was taken from among the Jews; for you find these hundred forty and four thousand are the leaders of that eternal song which the saints shall sing when time shall be no more. The Jewish church, then, or the church gathered from among the Jews, takes the lead in this matter. And John sees them here all standing on Mount Sion, the same mystical Mount Sion that we are brought to, where the Lord hath commanded the blessing, even life for evermore; —he sees them standing there with the Lamb, "having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Perhaps as long as we live we shall never get a better explanation of this inscription on the forehead than that that was on the forefront of the mitre of the high priest: "Holiness unto the Lord;" for that will include every relation in which the Lord stands to us, and in which we stand to him.

Now we will go on to show the blessedness of these people; see how they are represented; and let us see, as we go on, whether we ourselves are brought into the same spirit, whether we ourselves are partakers of the same spirit. If we are, then the same God is our God, and the same dignity, glory, blessedness, and happiness await us that the Jewish church, or the church taken from the Jewish nation, are now in full realization of.

Now John, in the first place, sees the gospel going forth east, west, north, and south, to bless the nations of the earth. It is a beautiful verse wherein John says this: he speaks thus, —"I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters." What is this voice of many waters but the antitypical Edenic river, the river of Eden, divided into four parts, east, west, north, and south? This has, then, a spiritual meaning. Here you have the many waters going forth east, west, north, and south, to bless the nations of the earth. Let us then bless the Lord that we know anything of what the dear Savior describes when he says, "The water that I shall give shall be in him a well of water springing up unto everlasting life." Let us here stop and ask the question, since we have known the Lord have not we had thoughts spring up, desires spring up, feelings spring up, so that if we would really die spiritually and give it all up, we cannot? There is something springing up within us. It is time to go to God's house, to hear his servant, and to see if the Lord hath a word for us by him. There are still these feelings springing up within us, if we are partakers of this spirit. Now, "the voice of many waters." We have said these waters represent the gospel, and the many waters represent the many blessings, the many mercies. Blessing upon blessing, mercy upon mercy. Where sins and sorrows and troubles have abounded, God in his mercies outnumbers the whole. We cannot have too much faith in God, in his multitudinous mercies and blessings. Why, he has not begun to bless us yet in comparison of the blessings yet to be enjoyed. Here are the many waters, then. And then mark, "as the voice of a great thunder;" —what does that mean? The majestic power by which the Lord awakens the dead, and by which he rolls these waters forth; so that these waters, the blessings of the gospel, come forth under the commanding power of the majesty of heaven, in a voice of thunder, —not literally, but spiritually, —denoting power and majesty. Jesus says to the dead soul, "Live!" and it doth live. In comes the Eternal Spirit, and that man is alive for ever. And when the time comes for that man that is thus made spiritually alive to realize pardoning mercy, then Jesus shall come in on behalf of this poor sinner, and with a voice of thunder, say to the enemy "The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan! even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee; is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" And so terrible is the voice of Christ to the dead soul, so terrible is the voice of the gospel to Satan and the powers of darkness, that they fly before him; the soul comes out of prison, realizes the victory, and glories in the majestic power of the blessed God.

And then, to show there is nothing but pleasantness in this, John says, "I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps." Well they might, in the realization of these divine, these innumerable, these sure, these eternal mercies, under the guardianship of the majesty of heaven, whose voice is as a voice of thunder, that neutralizes the adversaries, and a sun and a shield to them that fear the Lord.

"The voice of harpers harping with their harps." They may well thus go forth with the voice of melody and thanksgiving; they may well thus dance before the ark of the everlasting covenant; they may well thus honor the Lord, and go forth in the dances of them that make merry. Why, there is not a single particle of gloom in the gospel of God; there is not a single particle of sorrow in the gospel of God; there is not a single drawback in the gospel of God; in Christ is no darkness, in Christ is no sorrow. Once all our sorrows were concentrated upon him, because all our sins were concentrated upon him; but he has put away the sins, thus destroying the sorrows, and there is nothing in the gospel but that which is pleasing. "I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps;" these harps representing the sweet, soothing, musical, charming truths of the everlasting gospel. When the harpers, the ministers, play their harps well, how many sorrows do they charm away! The poor tried soul has been listening to his own heart, and to his sins, and to the devil, and to his troubles, and to his doubts, and to his fears, and to death, and to hell, and a thousand other things; and when the minister is favored to play the harps of the gospel scripturally, the soul drinks in the music, sin is forgotten, Satan forgotten, death forgotten, troubles forgotten, the world forgotten. Ah, says the man, bless the Lord, though the harp is sometimes upon the willow, it is not

always there. Here then are the harpers harping with their harps. We get them, then, standing in the mercies of the gospel, under the guardianship of heaven, and happy in the music of everlasting love. You know the words of the poet, —

"No angel's harp such music yields,
As what my Shepherd speaks."

Then, secondly, you get their new creatureship. "And they sang, as it were, a new song." None but a new creature can do this. This new song means new creatureship. "They sang as it were a new song." We rejoice in new creatureship, in the new covenant, in the new and living way, in the new heavens and the new earth. And the Old Testament saints, the moderns tell us, did not know much about these things; but these are the Old Testament saints, these are the people gathered out from the Jewish nation. Now mark, "they sang as it were a new song before the throne." Yes, we can come acceptably before God with no other. If you come with poor old Adam songs, or old covenant songs, or old law songs, or old nature songs, the Lord will not listen to them; but if you come in the name of Jesus, new creatureship, the new and living way, then he will listen to you. "They sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts;" —who are the four beasts? Gentiles gathered in from all nations; and the Jewish church has set the Gentiles a good example; they began the song. Why, even those gathered in in the Savior's day are a part of these; he says, that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "They sang as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." That is, there was no man in that age that could learn this song of new creatureship, this song of eternal redemption, but those that were redeemed, and knew where redemption was. And just as it was then so it is now, —the natural man then received not the things of the Spirit of God, neither could he know them, nor can he know; but the spiritual man knows all these things. "We have not received the spirit of the world, but that which is of God, that we may know the things freely given unto us of God." We get then their new creatureship indicated in the new song; then we get their consecration, then we get their straight forwardness, then we get their redemption, then we get their pre-eminence, then we get their truthfulness, then we get their faultlessness. Now would you not like to be all this? If you are a wise man you would; and if you are a poor sinner in your own eyes, and a believer in Jesus, you will be all this.

"These are they which were not defiled with women." Women here of course means erroneous churches, that bring in lies, shut out in part God's truth far enough to pervert that truth; "to whom," says the apostle, "we gave way, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you." And the apostle felt deeply concerned to present the people as a chaste virgin to Christ. I hope when the hour comes for me to close my eyes, that I shall leave a Christian church here in a state of uniform decision for God's truth; I hope I shall leave a Christian church, and I hope many in the congregation, too, that can, with heart, and eye, and conscience, and soul, look up to a covenant God and say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." Thou art that covenant God who alone could reach my case, befriend my soul, forgive my sins, save me, justify me, and make me happy for ever. So then they were new creatures, and they were preserved from error. "If it were possible, they should deceive the very elect;" and these were God's elect, and they could not be fatally deceived. They might be tinged with error for a time, but God should open their eyes and bring them out of it. There is their consecration, then. I do not know anything under the heavens more clear to the real Christian than this—none but Jesus. They know nothing but this free-grace gospel. You will not care a single rush what they may call you; —they may call you Antinomians, and all the ugly names they can think of; never mind that; you have not to do with man in these matters, you have to do with your own soul and with God.

Then comes their straightforwardness. "These are they which follow the Lamb." What a wise people! I do not know how it may seem to you, but it seems to me that thousands of professors are not followers of the Lamb. There is a wonderful deal about duties, and doings, and works of one sort and the other, but Jesus Christ is almost left out; and sometimes when he is brought in in their sermons, he is brought in only as a sort of compliment, not so as to be of any use; —as much as to say, "I must bring the name in;" it is only brought in as a compliment, that is all. Whereas those that are partakers of this new creatureship, and are thus consecrated to God, "these are they which follow the Lamb." How can I follow a God of holiness? By following the Lamb of God, whose blood cleanses from all sin. How can I follow on, and expect the fulfilment in my soul of promise after promise? By following after the Lamb, who has sealed the promises with his own blood? How can I follow on, and expect from time to time that the Lord will appear for me? By following the Lamb of God, by whom the great God is on my side; by following that Lamb by whom the Lord will not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perverseness in Israel.

Let us, then, still go on straightforward, not only individually, but as a church. Oh, in how many ways does Satan try to turn the people of God aside from this straightforwardness! May we still be enabled to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goes. If he should rise a little in the public opinion, still we will follow him; and if the perfection of his atonement should go down so low as to be everywhere scouted, as it is in many places, we will still follow him, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt. Thus you see how one thing follows the other; —here is new creatureship, here is consecration, and here is straightforwardness.

Now comes the redemption. "These were redeemed from among men." And how are we redeemed? Why, as the old divines very properly say, by price and by power. We were redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; and then God, on the ground of that redemption, fulfils in our happy experience the testimony, "The redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion." Then comes their pre-eminence —" being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb." They are called the first-fruits, not merely because they are the Jewish church, or the church out of the Jewish nation, but they are called the first-fruits because they are one with Christ; —he is the first-fruits; he stands pre-eminent; he is God's first consideration, and we are next.

"Christ be my first elect, he said,
Then chose our souls in Christ our head."

So that we stand pre-eminent; —no world can be drowned, no cities can be burnt, no Egyptian host overturned, no Jerusalem destroyed, nor anything else, without the Lord considering us. Therefore, it is, while his people may be sifted among all nations, as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet not the least grain shall fall to the earth. Is it not one of the privileges of the Christian to realize, as far as he can, his own position before God as a Christian? For how can we glorify the Lord for the great things he has done for us if we have no understanding of these things?

Then comes their truthfulness: "And in their mouth was found no guile." Now, if I were going to die, and any one were to propose to bring me into this chapel on my dying bed, I could die looking at this pulpit very comfortably and it could not say a word against me, —no, not one stone could cry out of the wall, nor could one beam out of the timber answer. I could look at the pulpit and say, There I have agonized with God in prayer; there, in the depth and honesty of my soul, I have dealt with God and man; there, as far as I have known it, and as far as I have been favored with humble gifts, I have preached the gospel fully, faithfully, and honestly. I have loved the people of God with a love of great delight, I have admired the grace of God in them, I have wept with them, I have rejoiced with them, I have gloried in the Lord's

appearing for them, both in his wonderful providences and of course above it all in the eternity of his love, in bringing them into the truth and keeping them in the truth. "In their mouth was found no guile." Many of you could say just the same; you could, on your dying bed, say, I can look to that pew, and can say I have never heard God's truth in that pew without approving it. I have often heard it without feeling it, without profiting by it as I could wish, but I have never heard it without approving it. What a mercy, then, that no guile is found in our mouth. There the people of God shine, but with a light that the world detests, with a light that the world hates, — like the bats and owls, they have just visual power enough to see the light so as to hate it, —to perceive that it stands against them. But let us not talk of them, let us talk of ourselves. "In their mouth was found no guile;" so they shall not speak lies, neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth."

Then comes their faultlessness: "They are without fault before the throne of God." That, of course, is by the perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Ye are complete in him, approved in him, accepted in him." Thus, then, you see that this beautiful chapter opens with showing the glories of the gospel, the many waters, the voice of thunder, the harpers harping with their harps, the new song, the Jewish or Old Testament church leading this song, going before, setting the Gentiles a good example; and you must yourself say when you read the eleventh of Hebrews, from Abel down to the end of the chapter, that the Old Testament church has set us a good example; and we know what it is to sympathize with and enter somewhat into the spirit of Abel, when he brought the more excellent offering.

The next thing we have to notice is the gospel by which they were brought into this. John sees an angel flying "in the midst of heaven." I like that. Once more I should remind you that the ministers of the gospel in the beginning of this book are called angels, and you see the name is kept up through the book. Here is an angel, a minister, —it represents a minister, —flying in the midst of heaven. The minister is sure to preach well then. Alas, alas! when he cannot get off from the earth nor above the earth, not much liberty then. But when he can rise with wings as eagles, and soar after heavenly things, his discourse seems laden with heavenly incense and savor: these are times when the church can indeed rejoice. Then it is said of this angel, —" Having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and kindred and tongue and people." Do not you see here is the beginning of the gospel dispensation. "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come." Who will fear God? None, in the sense there intended, but those to whom the Lord gives the command with life-giving power. Who will glorify him? None, in the sense there intended, but those to whom the Lord gives the word with life-giving power.

"For the hour of his judgment is come." This does not mean the final judgment; this is the beginning of the gospel dispensation. This angel has the gospel to preach, —it is in prospect, you see, —to every nation, kindred, and tongue; and yet the hour of his judgment was come. You know what the judgment was: Daniel points it out. He says, "the judgment was set," —"he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned," —"the judgment was set, and the books were opened." Take faith away, you thereby take Christ away, and the Bible becomes a sealed book; but let us have faith in Christ, and all the books in their meaning are opened to us, and we get the advantages thereof.

Then it is said, "Worship him that made heaven and earth and the sea and the fountains of waters." Nothing about Christ, say you, here? Well, if Jesus Christ be not here, then what is meant by the word "gospel"? He had the gospel to preach. I think you would be very much puzzled to manufacture a gospel without Christ, — very much indeed. Say some, you bring him out where he is not. That is impossible; for, "beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself;" and if he is not in the gospel, then there is no gospel. But we will go to the apostle

Paul to help us a little upon this matter. Why does John speak in this form? He speaks in this form, bringing in the supremacy and oneness of the Most High, in order to sweep away all images, idols, and inventions of men; —that is the meaning of John. I will prove it. Go to the seventeenth of Acts, where the apostle addresses the Athenians, and looking at the various things they had set up for religion, he says, "We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent." How doth he command all men to repent? Why, says one, by making it the duty of all men to repent. That in the mere creature sense repentance is a duty, I admit; but I deny in total that God commands all men to repent savingly as a duty. I deny it in total. How does he do so, then? First, by the exaltation of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ hath ascended up on high, having led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell among them. Acts v. 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." He commands it by the exaltation of Christ, and if he commands it by the exaltation of Christ, that command can no more fail than Christ can fall from his throne. The "all men" there intended will as surely repent as that Christ will gather in all his sheep. "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." He therefore commands it first by the exaltation of Christ; secondly, by the power of the Eternal Spirit. Peter, where have you been to? I have been down to the Gentiles. What have you been doing there? The same as I have been doing here. What is that? Preaching the gospel. What business had you there? The Lord sent me there. What good have you done? Why, a great many brought to know the Lord. Well, give us the particulars. So he did. Well, they glorified God, and said, "Then unto the Gentiles God hath granted repentance unto life." So his first commandment was by the exaltation of Christ; and secondly, by the power of the Eternal Spirit. This is the repentance in the doctrine of it; now what is it in the experience of it? Repentance in the experience of it is to repent of all we are by nature, and then we shall never repent of what we are by grace. Unless a man is brought to repent of all he is by nature, he will never know what a saved soul is by grace. So, then, we are to turn from, change from, —the original idea of repentance is that of change, —change from all we are by nature; for as sure as the world, if we do not, we shall someday repent of what we are by grace. Why, say you, you don't say that? O yes; you meet with a croaking professor, or perhaps some poor deluded child of God. I don't know, I think now we ought to exhort everybody; I begin now to repent of having said so much about grace; I rather repent of being so high in doctrine: I rather repent of this. That is because you have not repented of all you are by nature. If you are brought to repent with that repentance that is by the exaltation of Christ, the victory he has wrought, the redemption he has achieved, the power by which he impresses it upon the soul, you will see that in what you are by nature there is nothing for you to call your own but sin; your very righteousnesses are filthy rags; and you will not repent of what you are by grace when you have once repented of what you are by nature. "Repentance and remission of sins." God commandeth all men everywhere to repent." Why so? Now mark the language: "Because he hath appointed a day," —and he is determined that every one of his people shall be prepared for that sublime, that tremendous day, —" He hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man," Christ Jesus, "whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." Now who are the "all men"? "He commandeth all men to repent;" and all the men that he, in the gospel sense, commands to repent, acquire an assurance of Christ's resurrection; therefore, the "all men" that repent and the "all men" that have an assurance of Christ's resurrection are the same people. Now this is the gospel; it is called an everlasting gospel. Suppose we take the word, as we sometimes do, analytically, and call it everlasting good news; for it is everlasting good news; it will always be good news; Jesus has put everything right; by him all is settled, and our souls approve it well.

Then John says, "There followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city; because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." Wherever the gospel has been

preached, there the cup of error has been also held forth; and as the cup of error suits the taste of the people better than the cup of truth, the cup of error has been extensively taken, and they drink in that that fills them with enmity against God's truth. When a man drinks in error, he drinks in that that is described in the thirty-second of Deuteronomy, —"their grapes are grapes of gall;" their doctrines are doctrines of bitterness against the free-grace truths of the gospel; "their clusters are bitter;" and what does it lead to? "Their wine is the poison of dragons," —tyrants, —" and the cruel venom of asps." So that, under the influence of this error, this wine, how many thousands have been put to death. But "Babylon is fallen." What is the fall here meant? Not that fall of Babylon is here meant that we shall come to when we close our lectures upon this book. What is the fall here described? "Babylon is fallen." Why called Babylon? Because it describes a people belonging to a system of confusion. And what is a yea and nay gospel but confusion? what is Popery but confusion? what is Puseyism and other isms but confusion? "What is the fall, then? The word of God shall describe it. "Stand fast," says the apostle, "in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Behold I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised," —if you bring in a little law work, — "Christ shall profit you nothing. For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." There is the fall. Therefore, Babylon falling means apostatised Christendom; they have gone down from the great principles of grace which were established by the apostles; they have fallen; and this fall prepares them to fall into hell at last, —this fall prepares them for the one final fall to which they must be brought at the judgment of the last great day. There are a great many scriptures that bear upon this, — for instance, that in Jude, —" Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, — from apostatizing, — " and to present you faultless," —the gospel alone can do this, —"before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Much more might be here said upon Babylon, but the next chapter but one will bring these circumstances again before us, so I will say no more upon it here.

In the last part of this chapter John says, "I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man." What is here called a white cloud is in another place called a white throne; so, then, the cloud is the throne. But why is it called a cloud? I will ask this question, —Was there ever such a thing in the world as for a man to make a cloud his throne? The king of Babylon said he would, in the fourteenth of Isaiah: "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds:" I am going to make the clouds my throne. I do not think you will; my opinion is that Jesus Christ is the only person that ever reached such a throne; my opinion is that none but Jesus Christ could reach such a throne. The cloud represents his throne. Why represented by a cloud? First, because none but such a person could reach such a throne; secondly, because this throne is heavenly. Hence it is that the clouds are called the clouds of heaven. It is therefore to denote that he has reached a throne that no other could reach; secondly, it denotes that the throne is heavenly. The throne of Christ is not earthly: the Pope would fain persuade us that it is; but Christ has no earthly throne except the hearts and affections of his people. Therefore, this white cloud represents him as attaining to a throne that no other person could attain to, represents the throne as being heavenly, in contrast to that which is earthly; and a white cloud, representing his purity. It is a heavenly throne, a pure throne, a throne of light; he dwells in light, and his saints shall dwell in light, darkness shall pass for ever away. Then it is said of him, "having on his head a golden crown," to denote the purity and value of his reign. Oh, friends, we would not have the Savior dethroned for ten thousand times ten thousand worlds! Would you get the purity and value of his reign, and the advantages thereof? Go to the thirty-second of Isaiah: "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. And the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, and the ears of them that hear shall hearken. The heart also of the rash shall understand

knowledge, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be ready to speak plainly," or eloquently. We may well rejoice in the purity and preciousness of the government of Christ,

But this is not all: —"He had in his hand a sharp sickle." Now comes the twofold judgment; first, here is a cutting down; and secondly, here is a treading down. "Another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle." What does that mean? It means the proclaiming angel; it means that the ministers of God and the people of God acquiesce in God's judgments, because they are righteous judgments; and the angel requesting the Son of man to thrust in his sickle is simply testifying that Christ will thrust in the sickle. And when Christ cuts the sinner down, that confirms the message of his servants; the Lord confirms the message of his messengers. The ministers of God declare judgment to certain characters, dying in that state; the sickle comes in at the appointed time, and cuts the sinner down, in fulfilment of the proclaiming angel's message.

Then comes the treading down. . "Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." Now this is taken from Joel, where it says, "Thrust in thy sickle, for their wickedness is great." Joel there points to the crucifixion of Christ; and of all the wickedness ever perpetrated under the heavens, the most wicked deed that was ever done was putting Christ to death; the next wicked thing is that of persecuting his people. That was a wickedness that sealed the doom of that devoted nation which is here referred to. And so I believe this twofold judgment refers primarily to the Jewish nation; then afterwards it will accommodate itself to future solemnities.

"And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." I should like you, very much, clearly to understand this. First, then, you must not understand it literally, — that the blood came out of the winepress for such a distance literally, —any more than you can understand the sixty-third of Isaiah literally, where the Savior says, "Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." You cannot take that literally, any more than you can the fifty eighth Psalm, —"The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance;" —that is true; but the next clause is not literally true, —"he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked." You would not take that literally, would you? Therefore, if you take this figuratively, as it ought to be taken, then it will simply mean the terribleness and the irresistibility of the judgment, and the ease with which the conquerors, the riders on horses, shall gain the victory.

The people of God are represented as riding on horses, following the Savior, and treading down the wicked as the ashes under their feet; it means, therefore, the entirety of the destruction of the wicked, and the ease with which the saints of God shall gain the victory through the blood of the Lamb. "By the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs,"—literally 200 miles. That 200 miles would give a very good representation—of course I speak not with exactness, but in general terms—of the length of the land of Canaan; and the judgment compassed that whole land, for that is the land, I think, that is primarily meant. And just as the judgment compassed that whole land, so that no part could escape, all was handed over to destruction; so at the last great day, whoever shall be found in the land of enmity against God, against Christ, the judgment shall reach them, destroyed they must be.

May it be our happy lot to escape these things, and stand at last accepted before the Son of man. Amen.

XVII. THE VICTORY OBTAINED.

The fifteenth chapter of the Book of Revelation is our subject this evening, and in going through that short chapter the first thing we have to deal with is the victory which the saints shall obtain; secondly, their song of victory; thirdly, the ingathering of sinners as the consequence of that victory; fourthly, the opening up of the new and everlasting covenant; fifthly, the ministering angel spoken of in this chapter; sixthly, and lastly, the fullness of the glory of God, as revealed in this chapter; and if every one of these items did not personally, immediately, and eternally concern every one of us, I do not think I should be doing justice to your never-dying souls in occupying the time by mere speculation; therefore each one of these items does directly and immediately concern us.

You read in this chapter of a sea of glass mingled with fire; and what follows shows that this sea of glass refers to the Red Sea, through which the Israelites came, — called a sea of glass, or crystal sea, to indicate transparency. Now this sea represents, in the first place, the restless world, the world restless as the sea; and then, if we can ascertain the respects in which fire was mingled with this sea, we shall at once get this spiritual meaning. We may take the Red Sea, of course, as being a figure of other things as well; but we take it here as representative of this restless world in which we live. There is a threefold sense in which fire was mingled with that sea. The first was the fire of the cloudy pillar that was to show the Israelites their way through that sea out of all their woe to the land of promise; and that cloudy pillar never forsook them; that he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness hath, if we are regenerate, shone into our souls, and he hath thereby shown us what we are as sinners. It is a wonderful mercy, to be convinced of your lost, ruined, and helpless condition as a sinner. Believe me, there is no acceptance with God, there is no saving reception of Christ, without this conviction. Let the fire, then, in the first place, represent that light by which the Lord hath convinced us of our state; and then let it secondly represent, of course, as the apostle goes on to say, the glory of God in the face of Christ. It shows us that Jesus Christ is the way out of this world, it shows us that Jesus Christ is the way out of sin, out of error, out of death, out of the wrath to come, the way out of everything that stood against us.

Now as this light thus showed the Israelites the way through the sea, and the way to the victory we presently have to notice, and abode by them till they reached the promised land, so the blessed gospel of God hath thus come to us, shown us our condition, shown us the way out of all our woe, shown us the better country, the heavenly land, set our faces toward Zion. And I am sure that while we sometimes say, "One thing I know, whereas I was blind now I see," we sometimes also say, "God is the Lord which hath showed us light; come, let us bind the sacrifice with cords to the horns of the altar," to denote we do not mean, God helping us, to part with that sacrifice, that substitution, by which the Lord hath showed us light. Does not this concern us? Is it a matter of small import whether I am still in unbelieving blindness, or whether the Lord has lightened mine eyes, delivered me from the power of darkness, and brought me into the kingdom of his dear Son? The sea is still a restless world, but it could not stop the Israelites, nor shall it stop us. No, each might say, —

"J will be gone,
My God hath broke ray chain."

What a sweet thing to have this heavenly light; for it was not the light of the created sun, nor the light of the moon, nor the light of the stars, that lighted them through the sea; it was the light of God's presence,

of God's favor; and so it continued all their journey through. What a mercy, on the one hand, that we have no desire to turn away from the light, but desire to walk in the light, as he is in the light; and God is in Christ, and Christ is the light; God was in the cloud, and the cloud was the light; God is in Christ, Christ is the light, and we desire to walk in him. And on the other hand, how sweet the thought that as long as we want the light the Lord will never take the candlestick away. The Lord's people are light-bearers, and as long as they love the light, the light shall be with them; and the more they love the light, the more they shall have, for "unto him that hath shall be given, and he shall have more abundantly," Here then we have the first feature of this fire mingled with the sea. This world is a restless scene of things; but light divine hath severed us from it, shown us the way out of it, revealed to us the better country, and set our faces towards the same.

The second thing intended by the fire mingling with the sea, mingling with the world, is, I think, the afflictions of the people of God. I must, of course, say but little upon each of these parts, but to my mind and taste they are very beautiful. Now the fire will mean, then, that light and warmth with which we are favored to show us our way out of the world, and to show us our way through the world, and to show us our way through the valley of the shadow of death, and to show us the way in which our bodies shall rise at the last triumphant from the dead. Is it any wonder that the prophet Isaiah when contemplating this should say, "Thy sun" —sweet Redeemer! blessed covenant God! —"Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall thy moon withdraw its brightness"? Then comes the unmistakable explanation, —"The Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory;" and then it is said a little further on, "The days of thy mourning shall be ended." But it means, we have said, the afflictions of the people of God also, —fiery trials. What is said in the tenth of Zechariah of Christ personally will apply to his people relatively as well: —"He shall pass through the sea with affliction."

Now Jesus Christ certainly did pass through this world with affliction. They were very restless, as you know; they could not leave him alone; he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. But "he shall smite the waves in the sea;" the waves could not move him, but he moved them, —" and all the deeps of the river shall dry up; and the pride of Assyria shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away;" that is, he should obtain that victory by which the world should be overcome, by which Egypt should lose its power, and by which the people of God should be free. Now this world to us is in some respects, then, like a troubled sea; we pass through it with affliction, sometimes affliction of body, sometimes affliction of mind, sometimes affliction of circumstance, and sometimes all three together. Some people think their troubles always come by trinities; well, perhaps they do. But so it is, —it is nothing more than what the Savior hath said, —" In the world ye shall have tribulation."

And now mark, in thus passing through the sea, it says that "the pride of Assyria " —Assyria there represents the world —"shall be brought down, and the scepter of Egypt shall depart away." Just compare that with the last verse of the sixteenth of John, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." Therefore, Assyria and Egypt there represent the world in its hostility to the people of God; but Christ says, " I have overcome the world." So then, if we would lose nothing by our afflictions, it must be by holding fast Jesus Christ; if we would gain by our afflictions, it must be by holding fast Jesus Christ; if we would overcome the pride of the world, and the scepter, or power of Egypt, and walk in the liberty of the gospel in spite of the adversary and all his agents, it must be by holding fast Jesus Christ. "Continue ye in my love;" there it is we enjoy freedom. So it says, "I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name."

Then there is a third sense in which the sea was mingled with fire, and that is the fiery judgments by which Pharaoh and his host were destroyed. Do we not see around us the fiery judgments of God? Do you ask me how, where, and in what way? I will tell you. Have we not around us, and we cannot alter it, daily our fellow creatures evidently dead in sin, blind to their condition, blind to their ruined state; and they will send for any one and every one to see them and talk with them when on a dying bed, except men of truth? Can a greater judgment occur to a man than to die without Christ, without hope, and without God? Is not this world, though it sees it not, thus drowning men every day in perdition? Just now, coming along to chapel, a gentleman asked me, Do you know such and such a medical man? Yes. Do you know such and such a clergyman? I want him to come and administer the sacrament to my brother; I am afraid he will not live. Well, I talked to the gentleman (for such he evidently was, in language and manner), I talked to him as well as I could, cut it up root and branch as well as I could, and told him what was essential to our welfare, and so on; and if I had had time I would have gone and seen the poor man. But what are these circumstances but fiery judgments mingled with the sea of this world? I am sure, you that know the Lord, if you had a father or mother, or husband or wife, or sister or brother, or child die, dead in sin, —if you had no reason to think there was any work of grace there, would you not look at that as the most terrible judgment that could overtake any one? because it is the sure prelude of the last tremendous judgment. We that are ministers may well be stirred up in private to pray to our God to enable us to preach the gospel in a way that the adversary shall neither gainsay nor resist. There is plenty to do in this metropolis, and in this kingdom, and in the world. In ten thousand ways is Satan at work; and I am sure we may pray the ancient prayer, "Arise, O Lord, let not man prevail."

As to ministers being jealous of each other, if such a thing exists, wherever it does exist it is an infinite disgrace. What, shall I be jealous of another lest he should be the means of getting more souls out of the snare of the devil, and out of the state they are in, delivering them as brands from the burning, and instrumentally bringing them to God? Why, the more the better. It matters not who the instrument is, who the minister is. We want to see in all parts of this metropolis, and if it were the Lord's will in all parts of the world, his mighty work goes on.

This sea, then, mingled with fire is not the same sea, you will perceive, that is spoken of in the fourth chapter of this book, —that sea is not represented as mingled with fire; that sea, as we have shown, represents the gospel, but this sea represents the world, which none but true Christians will get safely through. The rest will be lost.

Now John saw "them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. Here is the victory. I must once more express my surprise that such a scripture as this should be reckoned, by any Christian minister especially, ambiguous. In the seventh of Daniel you find four beasts, and those four beasts are positively explained to be the four successive empires. Now as three of the beasts preceded the Christian era, we live in the age of the fourth beast; and therefore, while the sea represents the world, so also this wild beast is another representation of the world; it does not matter what form the beast has taken. Now mind, when I say this beast represents the world, I do not mean that it represents the world of men in their lawful callings, I mean that it represents the world in its spirit of hostility to God. And here this beast took a pagan form; the saints had to encounter that power, but they overcame, they resisted unto blood, they were killed all the day long, but were more than conquerors through him that loved them. Then it took the papal form, but still the saints were conquerors, because they could not be severed from the love of God, nor be disinherited, nor plucked out of the Savior's hand. And then it took a Protestant form; for it is not so very long ago —just before some of us were born—that professed Protestants in this country practiced a wonderful deal of persecution, and appeared in the character of the beast; and the

spirit of the beast, or hostility, still exists. So then this wild beast means the world in its hostility to God's truth; and tens of thousands in the world that do not practice hostility, possess the spirit of hostility; they are of the same spirit.

There is a wonderful deal contained in those words of the apostle when he says, "The carnal mind" —as though he should say, whether that mind is in the female or the male, in the learned or in the unlearned, in the coarse or in the refined, in the sage or in the savage, in the rich or in the poor; let the man be what he may in other respects, whether objectionable or admirable, —"the carnal mind is enmity against God." We were once in that condition. Are we better than they? In no wise. Who is it that hath made us to differ, and what have we that we have not received? To overcome the beast, then, is not to be moved by it, to stand fast in the truth, notwithstanding all the persecution and obliquity that may be thrown upon us. "And his image," —I need not enlarge upon this —because I have touched upon it before. What difficulty is there in understanding the meaning of the image of the beast? Originally the beast was the power of Egypt, and "Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." Now he overcame Egypt by forsaking it; but we must be careful to show how he forsook it. Pharaoh was the image, —the image means the representative. Pharaoh was the representative of the power of Egypt, of that hostile power that persecuted the Israelites; therefore, Pharaoh had to be overcome; and so Moses forsook Egypt, not fearing the image, not fearing the wrath of the king, the representative of that hostile power; for "Moses endured as seeing him who is invisible." He knew that the God of Jeshurun rode in his excellency in the heavens, and therefore cared naught for Pharaoh, but overcame the image. And then the imperial power of Rome became the image; and then the Papal chair became the image; the Pope is an image to this very day. It is true he has now partly lost his life, —he can just breathe officially, and that is all, and a pretty lot of nonsense he breathes out. They want to persuade us that the chair in which he is placed is literally the chair occupied by Peter! Why, if I wished to turn liar I could with as much truth swear that the chair on this platform is the chair that Peter sat in. And yet there are millions in the world that believe these horrible, I was going to say disgusting, falsehoods.

So then to overcome the image is to overcome that that represents the power; and so the saints did, so the saints do, and so the saints will. And then, "his mark." His mark means of course his faith. You must have this mark in your hand, or else in your forehead. It is a very accommodating religion. The Pope says, —Well, if you are so placed that you cannot openly be a Roman Catholic, you must be Jesuitical, and secretly believe it; —that will be receiving the mark in your hand, and keep your hand shut; don't let anyone know what your faith is, except when you get into a position where you think you can, with advantage to the church and to yourself, let them know what you are; then you can open your hand. But the man that is taught of God will neither secretly believe nor openly profess that which he knows to be of the devil. Thus, to overcome his mark is to overcome his faith. The mark of the saints of God is the faith of God's elect; and what are the saints of God marked by? Hear what the apostle says, —"He hath not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ;" —"he hath from the beginning chosen us to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth." There is the mark, the belief of the truth.

Now if what I am saying be true, this brings us to a very serious matter, because it seems here that if I believe false doctrines, my faith is the mark of the beast, and not the mark of the child of God; for, true faith in God, that receives his truth, is the evidence, the mark of things not seen, the confidence of things hoped for. So then we must overcome the mark of the beast; there must be no secret, sly work about our profession. Hence I have heard some say, —Well, he belongs to So-and-so, but I believe privately and secretly he really believes So-and-so. He belongs to So-and-so, but I have reason to believe that secretly

he has more faith in So-and-so than he has in that which he professes. Thus such a one does not overcome the mark of the beast.

"And the number of his name." This I need say but very little upon; we have had this in a recent lecture. The number means the number that are represented by the beast and by the image, and they must be overcome; therefore, David says, "Although ten thousand should set themselves against me, I will not fear." What a sweet thought it is, —just look at it; here is a solitary individual, who might easily be destroyed from the face of the earth; and yet all the powers of earth and hell put together can not only not destroy you as a Christian, but cannot really injure you as a Christian. Only think of it, —the privilege of being a Christian! Are you a rich man? Why, you may be killed, and lose everything in one moment. But are you a Christian man? For you to die is gain. See here the helplessness of the world; see here how the Christian may stand and defy the whole world. Here, he says, I am in love that took me up before time, in love that holds me up through time, in love that will make me happy when time shall be no more. Here is the lofty register of heaven, —my name, inscribed before time, continues the same through time, will be the same after time. Here is the interposition of an eternally perfect priesthood; by that priesthood I am perfect through life, through death, at the judgment day, and to all eternity. Oh, what a glorious victory is this!

Now I have omitted one thing here, which I must go back to note, and that is the turning-point of victory with the Israelites. I love it; I have dwelt much upon it lately, and I think I shall as I draw towards my end. The turning point was the Paschal lamb. The adversary did not go into entire despair until he saw the Paschal lamb; but when the Paschal lamb was brought in, what a lesson that was to the Israelites to trust in God! Now, Israelite, not strong doors, nor strong houses, nor locks, nor bolts, nor bars, not a guard of soldiers, nor a body of police to protect you, — nothing of the kind; your confidence must be in God. And naturally the blood on the side-posts and on the lintel would be not the slightest protection whatever; why, the adversary might laugh, and say, Is that all the protection you have, —that blood on the side-posts and on the lintel? Who cares for that? But, says the Israelite, that is the token of the presence of my God; that is the token of an uplifted arm of omnipotence to crush the wretch that would attempt to touch me; that is the token of the eternal God being my refuge, being on my side. So, you deluded men, while you laugh at this way of protection, and see no protection in it, we who are Israelites know that we overcome by the blood of the lamb; if he sees the blood he will pass by, and all who thus receive the Paschal lamb are reckoned friends of God, and God is their friend; they never can be hurt; live they must, live they shall, and can never die. Pharaoh follows up the Israelites, and he says, —They are entangled in the land, and the wilderness will shut them in. Pharaoh, you are too late; they have received the Paschal lamb; the Passover has been held; they have gained their confidence in God; and besides, Master Pharaoh, if they are entangled in the land, they are entangled just where God intends them to encamp; if the wilderness shuts them in, it is just where God intended it to shut them in, in order still to keep up the idea that their trust must be in the Lord, and not in the creature. And so, when they saw the host of the Egyptians, they cried unto the Lord, —that was good; and when they began to murmur and rebel, that was bad; but nevertheless Moses felt, let them be what they may, the gospel was needed.

Now, you rebellious Israelites, there is nothing can do you any good but the gospel, and so I will not preach anything else: —"Stand still, and see the salvation of God, which he will show you to-day; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day ye shall see no more for ever;" nor did they alive; —they saw some of them dead, just to show they were dead; —"for the Lord shall fight for you." And what shall we do? You do? —pretty doers you are, look at your rebellion. Why, do nothing but what the Lord tells you to do. What shall we do? Why, keep your mouths shut, and you cannot do much mischief then; and do as he tells you, —that is all you have to do; —you go quietly along, and leave the Egyptians with him, leave the sea with

him, he will manage it; leave everything with him; you hold your peace. Oh, my hearer, it is a nice thing to have this secret peace with God, —and while rattling thunders seem around you to roar, and adverse powers threaten you here and there, pray to your Father in secret, and say to yourself, —

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love see fit."

Here, then, is the victory over the world, over the representative of hostile power, —over his image, over his mark, over the number of his name: and then the turning-point is by the precious blood of the Lamb, because in that way God is on our side.

Now comes the song; and you see it is taken from the Old Testament. Now they that had gotten this victory stood upon the sea, —that is, upon the sea-shore, "having the harps of God." Mystically, of course, the harps of God mean the truths of God. When I go to hear a minister preach, I think to myself, Come now, what are you going to play? —the dulcimer and sackbut? If you are going to have those Babylonian, free-will, duty-faith concerns, I shall not stop. But if he play the harps of God, the musical testimonies of what the dear Savior hath wrought, that charms my sorrows away, calms the troubled breast, heals my wounds, and I say, that is the music not of Babylon, but of Zion; not of earth, but of heaven; not of the creature, but of the Creator; not of the sinner, but of the Savior; and the more he can play the harp of eternal truth and charm my soul, the better I like the man, the more I feel a union of soul with him and with all that do the same. "Having the harps of God," the testimonies of the blessed God. "And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God," —the victory there wrought, as you see, was typical, —"and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;" there is the typical victory, typifying the victory Christ should work at Calvary's cross, and give to all his people; —"just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints;" —justice and truth. This is taken, you see, this last clause, from the thirty-second of Deuteronomy. Let us just trace it out for a moment, because it is as well for us to learn this song, you know. And before I go any further, what do we say this evening? —Are the works of Jesus Christ, are the works of the gospel, are the works of calling us by grace, are the works of interposition for us from time to time, and are the works yet to be wrought in our resurrection and glorification, marvelous in our eyes, — more marvelous than any other works? If so, we have begun to learn the song. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." This latter clause, you see, is to bring us to Christ, —taken from the thirty-second of Deuteronomy. Let us trace out what is there said; and I think you know that song, and none can learn it but the saved sinner. If you cannot say Amen to every line of the song I am going to set before you, I was going to say I would hardly set it before you; —yes, I will, too. What is the first line?" He is the Rock." Say you, I have learnt that? —he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

"Is he a rock? How firm he proves;
The Rock of Ages never moves."

We are all astounded at the stability and faithfulness of the dear Redeemer, the stability of the gospel, the stability of our God, the stability of these eternal things. "Let the inhabitants of the rock sing;" and well they might; for it is a lovely song to sing,

"Rock of Ages, shelter me."

Again, "His work is perfect." How lovely is that. There it is, thrown over all the ground you have trod; — all your steps of disobedience covered by his steps of obedience; all your sins covered and put eternally away by his propitiation, by his wondrous death. "All his ways are judgment." Whatever the Savior said,

he said with judgment. He never said an unwise thing, he never did an unwise thing, he never thought an unwise thing. "All his ways are judgment." That is clear in his personal conduct. Apply it in another way, not so easy to believe, —in the Lord's dealings with you. He knows what he is about; we hardly know what we are about sometimes; he always knows what he is about. He permits the flood to rest here, the clouds to rise there, an arrow to come there, a messenger of Satan there, a thorn in the flesh there. Have you not many times in substance said, —If I were the Lord, I would order matters different from this, I would order matters better than this; — have you not said so sometimes? I can tell you I have many times. And yet when the end shall come, it will prove that if I could have had my way it would have been wrong; the Lord has had his way, and it is right. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Then Moses says, "a God of truth;" — where do we get sworn truth? By Jesus Christ, —that is another part of our song. "And without iniquity;" — that is just contrary to what the world thought of him. He was without iniquity, but the world would not have it that he was; they laid many things to his charge, and the language of the Pharisee to Christ was, "Stand by thyself; come not near me, I am holier than thou." That is the reason why the testimony stands, notwithstanding what the world said of him, he was without iniquity. Well, that cannot be said of anyone else. Yes, it can; it is said of every one of his people. When he speaks of them in their corporate capacity, or of his church as a bride, his language is, "Thou art all fair, my love, there is no spot in thee." Look at that. "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." "A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he;" —the just dying for the unjust, to bring us to God. "And right;" —"I have loved thee with an everlasting love." And some of you call that high doctrine; but you will find out at last it is right. I have chosen you before the world was; —some of you thought that was not right, but you will find out at last it is right; —I have ordained you to eternal life, and some people told you that was not right, but you will find at last it is right; —and that Jesus Christ was the end of the law and of sin, and people told you, you must do something; but now you see they are wrong, and he is right. What a sweet thing, then, it is to be right with God; as Christ was right with God in everything, so he brings us into this reconciliation.

Then comes the ingathering, "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy;" that is, he only is underivedly holy; —"for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest." Just as the victories the Lord wrought in Egypt confirmed the faith of the Israelites, just so the victory the Savior has wrought shall be preached to the end of time, and the poor Gentile Rahabs shall be impressed, enlightened, made faithful, and gathered in. "All nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest;" and so in the apostolic age it was done.

Then you have the opening up of the everlasting covenant. "And after that I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened." This is a repetition in substance of the last verse of the eleventh chapter. Here is "the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony." The testimony refers to the ark, and the ark was in the holy of holies; and the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony is opened in heaven; that is, the church is opened, and the ark of the everlasting covenant brought into that church. You know what a solemn occasion the introduction of the ark was in ancient times; and just so now. Here is the opening up to these same people, that are gathered in to God, of the ark of the testimony, the opening up to them of the everlasting covenant. I cannot imagine anything that can equal in value that beautiful scripture —it cuts up all legality, all fleshly pretension, —"He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation and all my desire." Away with your doings then, your hypocritical pretensions —efforts, efforts, efforts, go wherever you may, we must do, and do, and do. It is nothing else but the rattle of the devil's rough music to keep the people of God away from God's truth. Thus David found salvation, and no saved soul ever found it anywhere but in "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; this is all my salvation and all my desire, though he make it not to grow." If it does not grow today, it will to-morrow; and if not tomorrow, it will the next

day; for the covenant is in Christ; and as we said about the sixth day's manna, that it could not corrupt because Christ died on the sixth day, so the blessings that are in Christ cannot corrupt; the covenant is in Christ, and cannot corrupt; that covenant remains the same through all the revolutions of time, and this covenant shall the saints admire, in all things ordered well, —when time shall cease to be. Here is the opening up of the temple, of the church of God, and the tabernacle of his testimony, —the testimony of the everlasting covenant. We live in a day when the Savior is wrapped in swaddling clothes with a vengeance; they wrap him up in one thing and the other, so that you can't hear the babe cry, I was going to say. There is everything except Jesus Christ. Oh yes, —show you the napkin where his head lay, and the cloth where his feet lay, and I don't know what all; but as for my Lord, they have taken him away, and I was going to say, I don't know where they have laid him; —I know where the Lord has laid him; he has laid him in the Holy Scriptures; we can find him there; there he shines; there is the life, the substance of the whole.

Now a word upon the ministering angels. Here are seven angels, "having the seven plagues," and in them is filled up the wrath of God; and these seven angels are said to be a great and marvelous sign. Recollect in the beginning of the book the seven ministers of the seven churches are called seven angels; and you recollect the seven priests blew the seven trumpets, and brought the completeness of the judgments of God upon the Canaanites. Therefore, they are said to be a sign great and marvelous, because of that awful part of their ministry.

There is a completeness in the wrath of God; you have several terrible demonstrations of that in the world. Take the flood, —how complete the judgment of God was there in the destruction of the world, —not one escaped but Noah, and those in the ark with him. Take the Egyptians, —not one that went into the sea escaped. Take the last great day; —not one can escape. There is a terrible completeness in the judgment of God. These angels, therefore, represent the ministers of the gospel, that testify of these eternal judgments of him that lives for ever and ever. Now it is said of these angels that they came out of the temple; that means that they belonged to the temple. The temple means the church of God; and these angels, or ministers, belonged to the church of God; they were not sent by man. The prophets and apostles belonged to the spiritual building; and so does every true minister of God. And their being clothed in pure and white linen of course means that they are clothed with Christ; the golden girdle denotes the girdle of God's eternal truth.

Now one of the four living creatures gave to these seven angels the seven vials full of the wrath of God. How will you understand that? —one of the four living creatures? Now we have said further back in our lectures that these four living creatures represent the church of God east, west, north, and south. Now one of these living creatures gave to the seven angels the seven vials; but which of the four living creatures was it that gave these seven vials to these seven angels? The answer is, the first, of course, of the four. What was he? In the second of Numbers and the tenth of Numbers you find the tribe of Judah, whose ensign was a lion, —that tribe was to go first. So in the fourth chapter of this book, there are the four living creatures: the first was like a lion. If you had been living in the time of Rome pagan, you would then have needed much of the spirit of the lion of the tribe of Judah to bear what there was to bear; —they had to give up all for God's truth. God grant us more and more of this lion-like spirit. The righteous should be bold as a lion, for if God be for us, who can be against us?

"And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled." The temple was full of the glory of God. In the fortieth of Exodus it is said that the tabernacle was so full of the glory of God that Moses could not enter. Thanks to God for that. Moses, can't you get in? can't you get in to lay something

to my charge? can't you bring in your law against me somehow or another? can't you bring your broken covenant in somehow or another? No, I can't get in. Why? Because God is here all in all; he fills the temple; there is no room for Moses. Then a little further on it is said the priests could not get in; and if they could not get in, much less can a popish priest get in. Why could not they get in? Because God was all in all. Another scripture says, —"And no man can enter." There is not a man under the heavens can put in any claim. If you go in, you must go in as nothing; you must go in by the living God being your all in all, by Christ Jesus. Then it says, "until the plagues were fulfilled." Jesus Christ is the end of sin, the end of the law, and all the plagues that were due to us were fulfilled in him. And if you wish to join this Christian church, unless you come with that faith in which you testify that Christ bore all the plagues, paid all the debts, wrought all the victories, did all the works, —if you think to enter in without God's law being magnified and established, without sin being atoned for, without these plagues being ended, then you will be deceived, Christ has done it all. Jesus comes in and says, —

"Come hither, soul, I am the way."

"I am the door; by me if any man enter in" he shall have a standing in which it shall be written over the door where he enters, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Amen, and amen.

XVIII. THE VIALS OF WRATH.

We come this evening to the sixteenth chapter of the Book of the Revelation, and in that chapter we have an account of the seven angels pouring out their seven vials. We must understand that the angels, or ministers, did this only testimonially. And as the testimonies which the prophets bore of the calamities that should come upon those of the Jews who were enemies to the Lord on the one hand, and of the mercies that should come upon his friends on the other, —as those testimonies all took effect in due time, so the testimonies here. These vials of wrath, therefore, simply signify the testimonies of the true ministers of the gospel. They are here called seven angels, or messengers, as in the beginning of the book; and what they testified would be sure to take place, because their testimony was the testimony of infallible truth. This is not the only part of the Holy Scriptures where ministers are represented as doing what they only testify of.

Hence Jeremiah was to root up and to pull down and to throw down and to destroy and to build and to plant, all of which Jeremiah did prophetically and testimonially. And we find five of these vials of wrath, five of these testimonies, refer evidently not to the judgments of God upon the heathen world, but to the final judgment of God. Hence we have the first angel pouring out his vial on the earth, the second on the sea, the third on the rivers, the fourth on the sun, the fifth on the seat of the beast, and the sixth on the river Euphrates, which I should think is as far as we shall get this evening; because the seventh vial, poured into the air, is of such vast significance that it strikes me it will require all the time we shall have next Wednesday evening to open it up. We have this evening, then, to go, as far as time will permit, through the vials before us.

"The first angel went and poured out his vial upon the earth, and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image." Here I think is the final judgment. But what are we to understand by the earth? The earth here, to my mind, represents

the world at large, and therefore the judgment being poured out upon the earth means that the judgment belongs to them, and to them only, that belong to the earth, but do not belong to heaven; belong to this world, but do not belong to that better resurrection to which the saints shall come. Let me just point out the judgment, and at the same time set by the side thereof the remedy.

Now it is said, "there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast." What is this noisome and grievous sore? How many conjectures and opinions there have been as to what it is; and yet we ought not to be at a loss for a single moment to know what it is. "A noisome and grievous sore." Let this scripture explain it to us: "The fire that is not quenched, the worm that dieth not." The lost man, what a noisome sore his sin is to his conscience when in hell, when this judgment overtakes him; what a grievous sore his guilt is to his soul, what a grievous sore his guilt is to him altogether. There he is one with his guilt, one with his sin; his sin will be to him a noisome and a grievous sore to all eternity. This is the judgment upon the lost man. Now contrast the saved man; but, before so doing, just mark what is there said: "Upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image" —the mark of the beast of course means, as I have before said, faith in a false Christ; therefore if you have faith in a false religion, and you are marked by your decision for that false religion invented by man, then you belong not to the living creatures that encircle Jehovah's throne, but you belong to that world which is alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them —"and upon them which worshipped his image." The image, of course, means the imperial power; that was done in Rome pagan, and it has been done in Rome papal, and is done to this day. Disguise it as they may, they do pay an idolatrous homage to the Pope, who is one of the images of the beast. These are they, then, upon whom shall come this noisome and this grievous sore. Let us stop here for one moment: I shall point out the remedy as I go along. Happy that man that is, while in this world, before he comes to the final judgment here indicated, brought to know and feel that he has a wounded conscience, a wounded heart, a wounded soul. Ah, he says, where is the remedy for this? Here is the remedy: "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son;" —now comes the remedy; — "in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."

Here, then, the noisome and the grievous sore is healed. This made one of old say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindnesses and with tender mercies, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." I take, then, this first angel pouring out his vial on the earth upon them that have the mark of the beast, as expressive of the judgments that shall come finally upon all that thus die out of the faith and out of Christ. So that these persons can never be well; they will always have this noisome and grievous sore; they will always be sick, always be ill, always writhing under this affliction. See again the remedy: "The inhabitants of Zion shall no more say, I am sick, for the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquities." Here, then, is an angel testifying of the judgment to come; here is the terribleness of that judgment, called a noisome and a grievous sore upon men; and here is the remedy, —in Christ Jesus the Lord.

"And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, and it became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea." How wonderfully ambiguous this appears at first sight. Just now I said that the earth represented the world, and this is nothing else but another representation of the same thing. The world is spoken of, as you are aware, as a sea. Hence the Savior compares the world to a sea, and the preaching of the gospel to the casting of the net into the sea, to bring poor sinners out of the sea of this world. "The second angel poured out his vial upon the sea;" that is the world, so I take it; "and it became as the blood of a dead man." Is there any difficulty here? Will not every hope, every pleasure,

every advantage, —will not everything be by and by thus turned as into the blood of a dead man? And what is more poisonous, what is more terrible, than the idea of the blood of a dead man?

So this world, everything that is in it, is destined to die. Sin is in the earth, and the earth itself must die by the great conflagration at the last; sin is in the sea of this world, and all the inhabitants thereof must die. "Every living soul died in the sea." This seems something paradoxical, but there is nothing paradoxical in it. "Every living soul died in the sea." So with us when we come to die, if we have no standing in Christ, if we have not been brought out of the sea of this world. Thanks to the Lord for that testimony in the sixtieth of Isaiah, where it is said, "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee." "Every living soul died in the sea." Every man that is not brought out of the sea of this world, and brought to Christ, —that is, every man so dying, —everything dies. There he is left with only wretched self, all his sins, the wrath of God, —nothing else. Now let us look at the remedy. If we are brought out of the sea of this world, see then the mighty difference; if brought out of the sea of this world, and brought to Mount Zion, then the Lord will be there unto us all that we can need or desire. We may well fly, then, from the world as our hope and our confidence. Those that are taught of God know they can make nothing their hope for eternity but the Lord Jesus Christ; and all the Lord's trying dealings with us are to destroy all our false confidences, and to make us see and feel this. We cannot hope for eternal salvation by anything in this world; it must be something from heaven; it must be by Jesus Christ who is from heaven; it must be by the Holy Spirit that comes down from heaven; it must be by the God of heaven; it must be by that gospel that comes down from heaven. Here, then, the restless world is compared to the sea, and every living soul died in the sea. Why, this is that that has been going on in all ages, and is still going on. You see we have had, or it seemed to be, the first part of this winter, a merciful sort of winter; but see what a number have been taken from us—ministers and hearers. We in one sense regret their loss, but still their work was done, and the Lord has taken them home, out of the sea of this world, to be tossed about no more forever. Is there, then, any difficulty, if you understand the earth to represent the world, the people of the world, and the ultimate destiny of such dying in that state? Take the sea to represent, in another sense, the same thing, and the second death, the dreadful destiny, that awaits all those that die in the world. What shall I say of you that are severed from the world, that are not of the world, that are brought to Mount Zion, and that know something of the way of escape? You can never die. "He that believeth on me shall never die."

But we come to the third angel. "And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters, and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be; because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Here are four things that we must pay particular attention to. The first is, what are the waters? The second is, what is meant by their being turned into blood? The third thing here is God's eternity, set in contrast to the temporary gospels of men; and the fourth thing to be noticed is God's omnipotence on the side of his people by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. What are these waters? I go back to the twelfth chapter of this same book, and there I read that the serpent cast floods of water out of his mouth. What were those floods of water? False doctrines, delusions of all sorts and kinds; these are the rivers, these are the fountains of waters, and the earth drinks,—eagerly drinks in,—these delusions. I need not name the delusions, but see how many of them are eagerly drunk in. And it is a remarkable thing, but the greater the delusion, the more eagerly men drink it in and seek after it. If we look, for instance, back even in relation to the Book of the Revelation, we have had from age to age men spring up and take hold of the dates of the Book of Revelation, and assure us that the end of the world is very near. Why, they have been doing this for hundreds and hundreds of years; but all these speculations have proved to be delusions. But I will not dwell upon them, but upon something infinitely more important.

False doctrines, then, are the rivers and fountains of waters; and what are false doctrines? Why, any doctrine and every doctrine that is contrary to the covenant ordered in all things and sure is a false doctrine. I give that definition to save the trouble of ranging over the false systems. These are the rivers and the fountains of waters. The Pope himself is reckoned a fountain by-his followers, and so are the priests also. You will perceive that the angel here has his eye particularly upon persecutors: "For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets." Now these were deadly persecutors. How came they to be persecutors? By the drinking of these waters. If you drink in a false doctrine, what does that do? Why, it poisons the mind against God's truth. Hence it is this has been Satan's object in all ages, —to poison the mind against God's blessed truth. Now these waters, these false doctrines, are to be turned into blood; that is, they are to come to naught; and these same doctrines are to be made a dreadful curse to them that live and die in them. Here the angel saw the heavy judgments that should come upon those who, being led by false doctrine, drinking in these satanic waters, have thereby had their minds poisoned against God's truth. Why, none of us can read carefully the Epistle to the Galatians without an aching heart. The apostle Paul had preached to them the pure truths of the everlasting gospel, and had shown them that salvation was entirely of God. By and by the serpent came —Satan — and by his ministers poured out his satanic waters, his satanic doctrines; and this wonderful man of God, this man of sensitive feeling and of wonderful devotion to God, looks to these Galatians, and makes this appeal, seeing their minds were bewitched and poisoned by drinking in these false doctrines. He says, "Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" Am I an enemy to you because I tell you it is all of grace? Am I an enemy to you because I tell you there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus? Am I an enemy to you because I have told you of God's goodness? Am I an enemy to you because I have distinguished between Hagar and Sarah, between the Jerusalem that now is, and is in bondage with her children, and the Jerusalem that is above? Am I an enemy to you because I have set forth the great truth that God the Father in his counsels set the people free; that Christ by his mediatorial work hath achieved freedom for them; that the Holy Spirit is called the free Spirit? "Uphold me with thy free Spirit"? But these Galatians had been drinking in some of these satanic waters, by which their minds were poisoned against the blessed God. Those that live and die in these false doctrines, lost they must be. I have never yet been able to preach just such a sermon upon this department as I could wish, because we live in a day when it really does require a great deal of thought and care on the part of good men to show that a man must be saved not only by Jesus Christ, but he must be saved by the true Jesus Christ; and at the same time he must be saved by that gospel that is the gospel of God, by that gospel that is the gospel of truth. I cannot be saved by the true Christ, and at the same time be receiving a false gospel; I cannot be saved by the grace of God, and at the same time hold doctrines contrary to that grace; I cannot be saved by a covenant ordered in all things and sure, and at the same time hold doctrines contrary to that covenant. Besides, is the word of God a sham, or is it a reality? Is it the word that decides the matter with us, or are we playing with it? There stands the positive covenant declaration, and it is a part of the covenant, —"They shall all know me, from the least to the greatest; I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more;" and the Lord Jesus Christ says of the Holy Spirit, "He shall guide you into all truth." What will the Holy Ghost tell us? That all judgment is committed to Christ, that we are approved in Christ, accepted in Christ, complete in Christ. Will the Holy Ghost at the same time tell another man that the merits of prophets and apostles, the Virgin Mary, and I don't know what all, are essential to salvation? The Holy Spirit is not the author of confusion, but of order, in all the churches of the saints.

These rivers, then, are satanic rivers, and God will damn every false doctrine at the last; God will curse the doctrine which hath cursed his people. God will anathematise and curse the people with judgment without mercy that have shown no mercy to his people, —"for he that hath showed no mercy shall have

judgment without mercy, and mercy rejoiceth against judgment." Beware, then, of these satanic waters. I do not stand here to judge men, but I do stand here to say that I am saved from first to last by the sovereign, free, and infallible grace of God; and I would rather my breath should stop this moment than that I should ever live to see the day when I should, by word or deed or look, or in any shape or form whatever, sanction anything contrary to that pure river of water that proceeds out of the throne of God and the Lamb. These rivers, these satanic waters, these false doctrines, being turned into blood, then, will mean that they will die. Why, your transubstantiation will die; your priestly absolution will never realize any ultimate advantage, —it will die. Free-will will prove to be a liar, and die; duty-faith must die; all the doctrines of men must die, —they must all come to naught: "Cursed is the man that trusteth in men."

"And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets; and thou hast given them blood to drink;" that is, their own doctrines. As the objects of Egyptian worship were turned into curses to the Egyptians temporally, so these false doctrines, these floods which come from the serpent's mouth, shall be turned into a curse to those that drink them to all eternity; —left to drink their own murderous doctrines, with all the bitterness of God's wrath in them; —this is what they shall drink to eternity. See, then, the awfulness of drinking in false doctrines, that poison the mind against God's truth; see the awfulness of the destiny; see what practices these false doctrines led the people to: they led them to shed the blood of the saints and the prophets.

But now mark another thing in this vial; here is God's eternity brought in. "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be." Here is God's eternity brought in in contrast to these temporary doctrines. You will find very often, when the Lord intends to set before us the glory of the gospel, he brings in the eternity of it, to contrast it with those doctrines that must by and by die. See how Moses sums all this up. "The eternal God is thy refuge," —he has been virtually your refuge from eternity, he has been the refuge all through time, he will be the refuge all through eternity; —he will be your refuge in his own eternity. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms;" —here is eternity again; "and he shall thrust out the enemy from before thee," and to show that the victory is final, shall say, "Destroy them." "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be." Here then, is God's eternity. Hence you find very often in the Old Testament the Lord is thus set forth in his eternity. The Old Testament saints very much delighted in this. How delighted Jeremiah was, —he might well say that his sleep had been sweet to him, for the Lord said unto him, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." And how delighted was Habakkuk with this eternity of the Lord, when he says, "He stood, and measured the earth; he beheld, and drove asunder the nations; and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow; his ways are everlasting." So says the apostle, "We look not at the things that are seen, for they are temporal; but at the things which are not seen, for they are eternal." And what a beautiful use does he make of this eternity when he says, "These light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." So in this book you read of the angel having the everlasting gospel to preach; but how can it be everlasting if it be fallible? If it can anywhere or in any sense fail, then it ceases to be everlasting.

But there is one more thing in this vial worthy of your notice. "I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments." Now here is an angel from the altar, and he associates God's omnipotence with the altar: —"Even so, Lord God Almighty." Now, "Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" But where is he on our side in his omnipotency? Is it not by the altar, by the sacrifice of Christ? Secondly, do you not read that the Savior did by his own arm —and was not that an omnipotent arm —bring salvation? "His own arm brought salvation unto him." Do you not read in the fortieth of Isaiah

that the Holy Spirit "taketh up the isles as a very little thing"? Why, if I am a lover of the altar, if I am united to this sacrifice of Christ, then I am a friend to God, and we have that on our side that the apostle Peter describes when he says, "Kept by the power of God."

""Where is the power can reach them there,
Or what can force them thence?"

What a remarkable thing it is that in connection with these satanic waters, in connection with these enemies having shed the blood of the prophets, not only is God's eternity brought in, but also the sacrifice of Christ, for the altar here must not be taken literally, but spiritually. We have no literal altar now. As to your popish and Puseyite altars, let them go to whence they came. We want no literal altars now; the altar we now have is a spiritual altar, Christ Jesus. "We have," says the apostle, "an altar whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." If you will have a literal ceremonial altar, you shall not have a spiritual altar; for God never did unite the two, and he never will. Abraham knew this; — he lived a long time before the Savior died — upwards of two thousand years before the Savior came; and Abraham would not unite the vital altar of eternal salvation with the ceremonial. In the third verse of the twelfth of Genesis, when the Lord made the covenant with Abraham, "In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed," Abraham built no altar. How very significant that is. Why not? Because God there made with Abraham a covenant that none but Christ could be the sacrifice in, that none but Christ could be the mediator of; and therefore for Abraham to have built an altar would have been to associate the ceremonial with the vital, just as though Christ was not sufficient without something ceremonial in connection with him. But if you go on in the same chapter, and come to the seventh verse, when the Lord said, "Unto thy seed will I give this land," then "he builded an altar unto the Lord," because that pertained to the typical, the earthly, the ceremonial; but he built no altar in connection with the new covenant. So the altar here must not be taken literally, it must be taken spiritually. "We have an altar of which they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle." Why not? What is the right? Faith is the right. "If thou believest, thou mayest:" — that is the law of faith. But if thou dost not believe in the sufficiency of this one mediatorial altar, Christ Jesus, then thou hast not the right of faith. "Ye are all the children of God by faith." But if thou hast not the faith, then thou may not eat, for thou hast no right; but if thou believe, thou may.

Now in connection with these satanic waters, in connection with what the saints had to endure, here is God's eternity for their comfort; and then in comes the altar — God's omnipotence — a voice out of the altar; there the angel sounds, and declares the omnipotency of the Most High. It reminds us of that beautiful scripture, — "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Here is eternal Omnipotence. Why, I laugh to scorn the thought of eternal Omnipotence laying hold of an immortal soul to save it and cannot do it; and if God cannot, I am sure no one else can. There is something very expressive on this subject of the altar in the words of David in the forty-third Psalm; I have often thought of it, and got much comfort from it. He longed to get to God by this altar. He saw that while he had a mighty world against him, he had by this altar an almighty God for him; while he had the earth against him, he had by this altar heaven for him; while he had sin against him, by this altar sin was ended; and while he saw that wrath was against him, by this altar wrath was ended; he saw that while death was against him, by this altar death was conquered; he saw that while tribulations were against him, by this altar those tribulations should work his present good and everlasting welfare, subserviently. Therefore, he says, "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacle," where the mercy-seat is. "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy; yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God, my God." I look at the altar, and I see the fire has

descended, the sacrifice is accepted, the sin is gone, the wrath is gone; love to God flows into my soul; and if he meant to destroy me, he would not have showed me this. Therefore, he says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" —there is nothing to be cast down about —"and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God?" You can understand, then, how Omnipotence is on your side by the altar of God. Job understood this very nicely; —"Oh that I might come even to his seat!" What, Job, the mercy-seat? Yes. Well, but the high priest is there. I know he is, The blood of atonement is there. I know it is. The God of mercy is there. I know he is. What of that? Why, I say this, —" Will he plead against me with his great power? "No; if he meant to plead against me with his great power, he never would have shown to me the way in which Omnipotence is on my side; he never would have shown to me the way in which his saints shall dwell on high, their place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given them —not offered to them, but given to them —and waters shall be sure.:

Thus, then, you see how these satanic waters are turned into a curse; you see God's eternity in contrast to a temporary gospel; and God's omnipotence on the side of his people by the altar: —"I heard a voice out of the altar." Look at Isaiah's experience of this altar. He said, "I am a man of unclean lips," —altogether unclean; "I am undone;" what is to be done? Done? I can do nothing. Stop, —don't be in a hurry; —the seraphim comes with a live coal, which he had taken from off the altar, "and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." Now the Lord says, "Whom shall I send? and who will go for us?" Says Isaiah, " Here am I, send me." You don't know where it is. I don't care, whether it is to life or to death, or where it is. What says the apostle? "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." He has died for me, rolled in a tide of eternal mercy and I am willing to die for him. What is mortal life compared with that better and enduring substance we have by the altar of God? "A voice from the altar." When the Lord put destroying weapons into the hands of the ministers you read of in the ninth of Ezekiel, they were to take their stand by the brazen altar. What was that for? Why, to cut off everything that would cut that altar off; to cut down everything that would out that altar down. And therefore everything that would cut the Savior down, cut his truth down, cut his sacrifice down, and put some human invention into its place, must be cut down; spare not young or old, stand to no repairs; wield the two-edged sword right and left, defend the altar; and then if you defend the altar, you will keep the way open for every sinner that is flying for refuge; he will say, There is the minister with the sword, beating the enemy off; the way is open, I will go; if I perish I will perish only there. Such never did perish, never will, never can. See the contrast then here, between satanic waters, poisoning the mind, and God's eternity, God's altar, and God's omnipotence.

But I must hasten to the fourth vial "And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun, and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues; and they repented not, to give him glory." What is the sun in this fourth vial? My idea may be curious, perhaps. I believe the sun here spoken of means Satan's religion, or Satan as the (false) luminary of the world. I believe that he is the Lucifer, the star, the sun. What a light he brought into the garden of Eden. What, mustn't you eat of that tree? No, mustn't touch it. Oh, I can throw a light upon that subject; why, you will be as gods —know good and evil! What fools you are! Take of the tree, you will be as great as God then: you won't be the poor, cringing, dependent creatures you are now. God knows that in the day you eat thereof you will be up-sides with him. What a light bearer he is! what a light he throws upon the subject! How they were deluded! And so in all ages Satan has been a light-bearer. I grant, from the bottom of my heart, most freely, that it is false light, devilish light, hellish light. What do you say, Paul? Why, that "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, and his ministers as ministers of righteousness." The Roman Catholics and the Puseyites

have thrown such a light upon things, —only it happens to be from a certain quarter, —from beneath instead of above.

Dr. Manning some time ago prayed that the Lord would enlighten England; that is, with the satanic light of Popery; make the people of England as great fools as he is himself, I suppose. Here is a luminary, then, —the devil, —whose light the world at large have followed. But what does the Lord say to such?" Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks; walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." Now here comes the final judgment. I tell you that I do in the sight of God believe that the devil will be a fiery flying serpent to the last to all eternity; that he will be, by the greatness of God's wrath to him, a burning fire and a burning curse to the last to all eternity. I believe this to be the sun that scorched men, and they blasphemed God. Here, then, is Satan, "transformed into an angel of light," —mark the language. You hear a Socinian preacher, — you would think a little piece of fresh butter of a June morning wouldn't melt in his mouth; and you hear a great many others, —their systems, oh, so pious, so good! —and the greater part of our ministers that now preach, you would really think, to hear them preach, they were the most holy, dear creatures that ever lived. Their preaching consists chiefly of be-laboring poor old Adam, but old Adam will be old Adam still, notwithstanding their be-laboring. Ah, brother, if you would do this, and that, and the other, and make yourself quite perfect, I should be quite proud of you. This is the general spirit of the age, and has been of all ages more or less. "Transformed into an angel of light;" —mark that, "an angel," —so holy, so pious! Ah, says the devil, I don't mind your having righteousness in Christ, but you must not have holiness in Christ, —that must be your own. But we are to rejoice at the remembrance of his holiness, because it is by his holiness that we are made holy; or else how could we shine brighter than the sun at last? So, then, this light will scorch men. Well, what am I to do, says one? Get out of that satanic light; I am afraid I have been walking in false light: what am I to do? The thirty-second of Isaiah will tell you what to do. "A man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Through Jesus Christ you escape this curse, and will come at last where you shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, where there is no more fire, but where the Lamb shall lead them into fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. This, then, is the final judgment, that Satan will be finally a curse, a burning curse, to all that are with him. On the other hand, Jesus Christ to all eternity will be a living blessing to all that are with him. Oh, the contrast between the two, —the one to sink into the flames of hell, the other to rise to the fountains of glory, where they are made happy for ever by the Lord.

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness." Is there any difficulty in understanding this? Here you have the final judgment. The seat there means the throne: indeed, the original word translated "seat" is by some of the learned rendered "throne." "The fifth angel poured out his vial upon the throne of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness." We have shown in times past that the beast represents the people, that body of people that have a spirit of hostility to God, and who support this throne, this tyranny, this satanic government. Now, what must Popery become? A kingdom of darkness? What must Mohametanism become? A kingdom of darkness. And what did that traditional Jewish kingdom become? Full of darkness. Here, then, you have the final judgment. Now, what is the remedy for this darkness? The apostle looked at these kingdoms of darkness, and described his beautiful mission thus: "To open the blind eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among all them that are sanctified by faith in Christ Jesus."

XIX. SIXTH AND SEVENTH VIALS.

We have this evening to attend to the sixth and seventh vials, as described in Revelation xvi. These vials are said to be poured out by the angels. Their pouring out the vials simply signifies their bearing testimony of certain things that shall be done, and they bearing that testimony by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God, the things which they testify are sure to come to pass. We see this in the predictions of the prophets and the predictions of the New Testament. Therefore their sounding the trumpets and pouring out the vials are in substance one and the same thing, simply signifying their prediction of what should take place. Hence, when the vial is said to be poured out, that is to say, when the testimony is said to be given, then comes the explanation of that in which the testimony consists.

Now it is said, "The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates, and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. Here we must take the waters to mean something that keeps people away from God; and then, when these waters are dried up, the kings from the sun rising see something they would not see if those dark waters were not dried up. There are plenty of scriptures in the old Testament that refer to this point. What kept you away from God? Sin. Who dried that water up? Christ. What kept you away from God? Death. Who dried the river of death up? Christ. What kept you away from God? Delusion. Who dried that up? Christ dried it up. Here then the Euphrates represents that that kept us away from God; but the Lord comes in, and shines unto the saints. Mark, they are called "the kings of the east;" some of the learned render it, "kings from the sun rising," and indeed that is the meaning. Now these waters of sin, and death, and the curse, and delusion, were all dried up when Christ died; and the Lord's people are called kings because they are intended to be kings and priests unto God. When the Lord brings a soul thus out of the mystic Babylon, to show him that all the sin and everything that kept him from God is dried up, the light shines into that man's mind, and presents to him a distant object, and he cannot get rid of that distant object. He may lose sight of it for a time, days or so, but he cannot get rid of that distant object. You know you cannot see very far by artificial lights, —gas, and candles, and so on, but you can see a long way in the sunlight; —you read of the morning spread out upon the mountains. So when the Sun of Righteousness rises upon the soul, shines into the soul, it presents a distant object, and that object is looked at, and that object never again will be entirely forgotten. What object is that? God in Christ. Ah, says the poor sinner, I never before saw that I was so far off from God. Oh, how far I am from God; what a distance there is between me and God! Will the Lord have mercy upon those that are so far off as I am? I am indeed afar off; I have been scattered in the cloudy and the dark day. How am I to get near to God, so that my sins may be forgiven? How am I to get near to God, so that I may obtain mercy and find grace to help me in the time of need? How am I to get near to God, that I may be saved from the wrath to come upon all that are not reconciled to him? How am I to get near to God? Here is the distant object; all the impediments are mediatorially dried up. How am I to come near to God? In comes the dear Savior, —" I am the way, the truth, and the life." And, says the apostle Paul, "ye who sometime were afar off;" but you did not know it, you did not see it, you did not feel it, you did not care about it, you did not know that Jesus had dried up these destructive waters, that were carrying you away down the current of time to eternal damnation; you did not know it, but now you see it, — "Ye who sometime were afar off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." Here then is the drying up of these mystic waters of sin, and death, and error; here is the light that shows the distant object, and that object will be sought until it ceases to be distant.

Just like the wise men, —they saw the star afar off; that star representing Christ, and Christ representing God; and though they lost sight of the star for a few hours, yet they lost not the impression, and they kept travelling until that object ceased to be distant; the star went and stood over where the young child was, and they came and worshipped. Here was nearness, here was access; and God after that was never a distant object; for when they would have returned to Herod, supposing he meant no harm —of course he meant to destroy them —God went with them, and he said, No, you must go into your own country another way; you shall not return to Herod; go into your own country, and I will go with you; you shall no more be far off from me, for there is a place by me, and "thou shalt stand upon a rock;" thou shalt dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and shalt abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Happy the man, then, on whose behalf the waters of sin, and death, and the curse are dried up; happy the man into whose soul that light has shone that shows him he is afar off, that God is a distant object; for that man will seek God until God ceases to be a distant object. What a sweet thing it is to be brought nigh to God, to have fellowship with God, to lean upon the bosom of Jesus.

"The place of John I covet,
More than a seraph's throne,
To lean on my beloved,
And breathe my final groan."

Thus, then, you can understand at least what I believe to be the meaning here, —that this river must be taken mystically, and that it is thus dried up, that the way of the kings from the sun rising might be prepared; here is the ingathering of poor sinners. It is in entire keeping with the latter part of the eleventh of Isaiah, and many other scriptures, which time does not allow me to notice, expressive of this great matter.

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs" —now a frog is a very contemptible thing, and frogs were a great plague to Pharaoh, and he was glad to get rid of them —"come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet," and they are called "the spirits of devils," or demons. The spirit that comes out of the mouth of the dragon means the spirit of tyranny. Has not the spirit of tyranny been exercised over the saints? The spirit that comes out of the mouth of the beast means the spirit of the world. Has not the spirit of the world put the saints to death? And the spirit that comes out of the mouth of the false prophet means a spirit of falsehood, a spirit of delusion. "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

These spirits are said to go to the kings of the earth; and they are all three found in Catholicism. Has not Roman Catholicism in times past gone to the kings of the earth? Yes. And has not Catholicism bent them to its demoniacal purposes? Have not kings been enslaved by it? Have not the civil powers by that religion been made use of to turn the world into an aceldema, a field of blood? And now mark, "and of the whole world." It is the language to this day, —the Pope to this day holds that the whole world is given to him. Nothing contents that religion but it must have the whole world; no man, no woman, must think, or speak, or pray, or believe, or anything else, only just as that religion dictates.

We have in connection with these spirits of delusion the solemn admonition, the tendency that delusion is to strip the soul of the true garments of salvation, and so the solemn admonition says, "Behold I come as a thief; blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments," lest, being stripped of Christ's righteousness and God's truth, he stand in all the destitution and nakedness of his sinner-ship, and so have nothing but sin and shame to call his own. Blessed then is he that escapes the delusion of these

spirits of error, and so be ever clothed with Christ Jesus, and thus be ever prepared whenever the Bridegroom shall come.

And what will be the end of them that are led by the spirit of error? He, the deceiver, gathered them together professedly for God, and for the good of what they call the church, and so in slaying the saints think that they are doing God service, as the Jews thought in crucifying the Savior, and so these will find at last in Armageddon, that is, the mountain of Megiddon. Here is an evident allusion to the fifth chapter of Judges. There we see it was by the waters of Megiddo that the God of battles gave the victory to his oppressed and persecuted people. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord, but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might." And thus doth Satan deceive the enemies of God's truth. And so this gathering into the false church will prove to be a gathering together, not of salvation, but of ultimate condemnation. This 1 hold to be the meaning of being gathered together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

We now come to the seventh vial. "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." We must take the words "It is done" as an explanation of what is meant by this angel pouring his vial into the air. What air? what atmosphere? Here is some atmosphere belonging to some world, and the angel pours his vial into this atmosphere, puts an end to it, so that nothing can any longer live in that atmosphere; there is no longer any life in that atmosphere. Are we at a loss to understand it? It is one of the plainest scriptures in the Book of Revelation. Just look at the words, "There came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." Now, what was done? This was done —accomplished —the old covenant, Jewish world, was ended; Christ by his sacrifice put an end to the world of Jewish sacrifice; Christ by his royalty, bringing in his royalty, put an end to the national royalty of the Jews; Christ, by bringing in a heavenly city, put an end to the earthly city; Christ, by bringing in a heavenly inheritance, put an end to the earthly inheritance; Christ, by bringing in the new covenant, put an end to the old covenant; so that these sacrifices have no longer any legal life in them. God's authority was the life of those sacrifices, but when that same Divine authority that originally instituted them abolished them, that royalty, and that national service, that temple, and all pertaining thereto, came to an end; there was an end to one world in order to establish another world. You know what the apostle says of Christ, that "once in the end of the world" —now Christ did not appear in the end of the mundane world, but he did appear at the end of the Jewish world; he himself put an end thereto: —"Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." "There came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done." "The seventh angel poured out his vial into the air," so that there was no longer any life in that dispensation. Hence the Jews to this day are scattered, and are spiritually like the bones at the grave's mouth.

This, then, is what I understand by the air, —the Jewish world, —" once in the end of the world." But what a pure, what a vital atmosphere hath the dear Savior established in the place of that which he abolished. Those that breathed the life of that covenant nevertheless died; but those that breathe the spiritual life of the new covenant, of the spirit of grace and supplication, of God's love and salvation, these can never die. Here it is that in and by this New Testament dispensation God breathes into our souls the breath of everlasting life. And, indeed, this comes to be one of our very common forms of speech; for we very often say, Well, such and such a state of things is quite another atmosphere to live in. And just so, the gospel dispensation is quite another atmosphere; it is quite another life, quite another state of things altogether. And then the vial being poured into the air denotes, of course, the universality—that that system was abolished and ended forever.

Then it is said, "And there were voices and thunders and lightnings." When I began this book I reminded you that there were in it a great many repetitions, as there are all through the Bible. Why, the first promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," contains as it were, in the root thereof everything that the prophets ever said; and all they ever said upon eternal things is a kind of repetition of what is embodied in the first promise; and so also what the apostles said was a kind of repetition of the several mysteries of the kingdom of God, of course in a great variety of forms, for our instruction. So we have noticed these voices, and thunders, and lightnings before, and therefore I need not stop to notice them now; for this vial brings us to the beginning of the gospel dispensation, and it is at the beginning of the gospel dispensation that we get an entire explanation of what is here said. There were voices, and we know what those voices were. They were, in the first place, the voices of the people, crying and saying, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And the thunders are nothing but the testimonies of the prophets and apostles, who are, as you are aware, in one of their characters called "the sons of thunder." And then the lightning is expressive of those convictions of sin which the Lord should strike home to the conscience and soul, and thus bring them to a saving knowledge of the truth. "And there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." Now an earthquake here, in the figurative sense, means a revolution of things; and here it is declared that "there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great." Now substitute the word "revolution" for the word "earthquake;"—"there was a great revolution, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty a revolution and so great." It is utterly out of my power to find language or simile to describe to you the greatness of this revolution, of this earthquake. Here was a great earthquake that swallowed up something that was never swallowed up before, for there never was such an earthquake since men were upon the earth. Here was an earthquake that wrought a revolution that never was wrought before; here was an earthquake that did away with something that before existed, and brought in something that was never before brought in. "So mighty a revolution and so great." There never was such a one before.

Are you at a loss? Just look at it, and you will fall in with the thought in a moment. Take the idea, then, of the earthquake meaning a revolution, and swallowing up something, and ask, when was sin swallowed up? Why, when Christ died he swallowed up sin. When was death swallowed up in victory? When Christ died. When was Satan dethroned, defeated, confounded, cast down, and eternally beaten? Why, when Christ died. When was the law met and magnified, and the people as much freed from that law as though the law had no existence? Oh, what a revolution was this! what a mighty earthquake! Such a revolution, such a swallowing up of things, had never been before since men were upon the earth;—"so mighty an earthquake and so great." And if you took the earthquake literally, what would you gain by that? We all tremble as we read the history of the tremendous earthquakes that have taken place upon the shattered globe that we inhabit; but here we must take it spiritually;—"so mighty an earthquake and so great." This revolution, this earthquake, swallowing up all our sin, and all the curse due thereto, may it not well be called the greatest that ever was? How shall I find language to describe the greatness of this earthquake, of this revolution? Who will undertake to describe the difference between the soul damned in hell, in all its sin, and guilt, and woe, chained by the fiery, eternal, and infallible law of God; and the soul redeemed by blood, regenerated by grace, justified by grace, formed for God, dwelling in the love of God, in the choice of God, in the presence of God, in the glory of God; the man made as holy and as righteous as Christ himself, being made holy by the Savior's blood, and righteous by his righteousness; that man a king and a priest to God? What language can ever fully describe the difference between the rich man in hell and Lazarus in Abraham's bosom? Why, this is that great earthquake, that great revolution, that we are always preaching. And if you ask what is the greatest revolution you have ever had in your life, it is not the changes you have had in your

circumstances. If you were as rich as Job yesterday, and are as poor as Job when he had lost everything to-day, that is a revolution, I grant; but there is a greater revolution than that. The greatest revolution that you ever underwent in this world, or ever will undergo, was the regeneration of your soul. Ah, how that revolution dethroned the devil, how it dethroned the prince of darkness, how it shed light into your soul! — what a revolution! so great that you are called a new creature. So that this regeneration was a kind of earthquake, swallowed up all your old confidences, all your old hopes, all your old plans, and now you are brought to see there is nothing worth living for, much less worth dying for, in comparison of a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here then is the great earthquake, the great revolution. And what will the resurrection be? It will be a kind of earthquake; it will swallow up your mortality, and you will come out of the grave immortal; it will swallow up your corruption, and you will come out of the grave incorruptible; it will swallow up your weakness, and you will come out of the grave mighty. It will swallow up your earthy image, and you will come out of the grave in the image of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Here then is the mighty revolution which the Savior has wrought. Indeed, everything is there; everything that ever was, that ever will be, or that ever can be brought about in our favor, will be by Jesus Christ having swallowed up death in victory; because he could not have swallowed up death in victory if he had not swallowed up sin in victory, for sin is the cause of death; he hath swallowed up the whole.

And now what shall I say to that scene of things he has established? Is it any wonder the dear Savior, in this new earth, this Christian world, which he hath established by the mighty revolution he hath wrought, should say to every inquiring soul, to every one longing to know him and rejoice in him, "Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away; for lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;" the scene is changed; there shall be no more curse? He might well, therefore, say, Arise and come away from all these legal systems, come away from all false confidences; —he himself is to be our confidence. And if we compare the last verse of the Old Testament with the last verse of the New Testament, how beautifully those two verses will set forth this mighty earthquake, this mighty revolution. The very last verse of the Old Testament is "curse:" —" Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." There that curse remains until the Great High Priest of our profession comes and blots out that curse with the bitter waters of his sufferings. Now the last verse of the New Testament is, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all." mighty work wrought, and so great and mighty a work as had never been wrought since men were upon the earth.

Why do the two books end so very differently? Because in the one case the curse was not removed; but in the other case the curse was removed. So then, these are things that concern us. I said at the first that every chapter in this book may be turned to practical use; and just so here. Have we not, through mercy, come into the very atmosphere of gospel truth, into the very atmosphere of the Holy Spirit, who again and again in the Holy Scriptures is spoken of as the wind, both in the Old and the New Testament? "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Again, in Ezekiel's valley; and again the Savior says, "The wind bloweth where it listeth," Thus the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the very atmosphere in which we breathe.

And then if you look at the revolution, does not that concern us? Is it not a theme delightful beyond description? Mark the words, "There was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great," Suppose, for instance, you take away the word " earthquake" for a moment, and put the word "work" in the place of it, as applied to the work of Christ, as well as to other departments, but especially to that, see with what force it applies, —that there was a

mighty work wrought, and so great and mighty a work as had never been wrought since man were upon the earth.

The Old Testament saints, as the apostle shows in Hebrews xi, and as the Old Testament scriptures show, did great things, but none of them did this great work, none of them could put away sin; they were all sinners, saved by the same Savior and by the same grace.

"And the great city was divided into three parts;" — that is another effect of this change of things. By the great city we must here understand the world at large. Babylon is a kind of representation of the world, and this great city was divided into three parts; and the world has been divided into those same three parts from that time to the present moment, and I suppose will continue so to the end of time. If you go to Zechariah xiii., there you will get the three parts. "It shall come to pass, that in all the land, says the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." And what will be the result of his dealings with them? "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them. I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." This is the one part out of the three, —the remnant of Israel. The Lord there says that two parts shall be cut off and die. Now the world stands at this moment divided into three parts, namely, —the non-professor, the mere professor, and the real possessor. These are the three parts. Here is the profane world, that make no profession, that despise religion altogether; then comes the empty professing world, or the false professing world; that is the second part; but the third part are the people of the blessed God, called again and again a remnant. And even they themselves, the people of God, are sometimes divided into three classes, as it is indicated in Genesis i. that they would be, for the Lord caused the earth to bring forth grass, and the herb, and the tree yielding fruit. The grass represents the little ones in Zion; and the herb represents those that have got on a little further; and the tree represents the good old fruitful Christian; for "they shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing; to show that the Lord is upright. He is my rock," says the Psalmist, "and there is no unrighteousness in him." But these three parts are one people.

Thus "the great city," the city of Babylon, the city of this world, "was divided into three parts; and the cities of the nations fell;" that is, the different cities about the world fell. What does this mean? First, then, Satan is spoken of as the god of this world; and when he is cast out, and cast down, and poor sinners are brought to know the Lord, then the Savior says, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." But this does not give clearly the meaning. Follow the apostles; see them at Lystra, Derbe, Iconium, and other cities. They went and preached the gospel, and the cities fell before them. That is, great numbers in the cities fell before them. The weapons of their warfare were not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. Oh, how many cities thus fell before the word! You read on one occasion, when the apostle was preaching and showing that the gospel was for Gentiles as well as for Jews, that the next Sabbath almost the whole city came together to hear the word of God. The cities fell; and how did they fall? Why, under conviction of sin; they fell down at the Savior's feet. In a word, the dear Savior went forth with his apostles, as he will do more or less with his ministers in all places as long as time shall last; he went forth with them in the power described in Psalm xlv.: "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies, whereby the people fall under thee."

Now it is said that at this time "great Babylon came in remembrance before God." Why is it that great Babylon came in remembrance at this time before God? And there was one particular part of mystic Babylon that came in remembrance before God at this time. Let us look at it, I am sure that no circumstance that ever took place from the creation of the world down to that time so forcibly called great Babylon, the hostile world, into remembrance before God, as when that Babylon put to death God's beloved Son. Let an enemy injure one dear to you, would not that bring that enemy very powerfully to

your mind? When the adversary was determined, if he could, to do away with the Jews, and of course would have slain Esther as well, when Esther appealed to the king, it brought the enemy so vividly to the remembrance' of the king that he said, "Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?" Therefore, this great Babylon was brought to God's remembrance in a most forcible way by what it did in crucifying Christ. Say you it was not Babylon that crucified Christ? Yes it was, not literal, but mystic Babylon. Babylon represents the bond-children, and the apostle says "Jerusalem is in bondage with her children." Jerusalem forms a part of Babylon to this day. So great Babylon came in remembrance before God.

Again, when the blood of the saints was shed, what could bring, next to the death of his dear Son, so forcibly to God's remembrance this great Babylon? And so when his people are persecuted in all ages. You know the tone of the Scriptures upon this matter, —" He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." Thus, then, "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Now there never were temporal judgments since the foundation of the world poured out in such an unmixed way as the judgments of God were in the destruction of that part of Babylon, that part of Egypt, that part of Sodom, where our Lord was crucified, —spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, spiritually called Babylon. There was the fierceness of God's wrath. You have nothing to do but open the pages of Josephus, and you find him a kind of unconscious witness of the fulfilment of the terrible predictions of the prophets of God's wrath upon that devoted nation. Hence the apostle Paul says that "the wrath of God is come upon them to the uttermost."

"And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found." The fourth of Jeremiah will explain this: "I beheld the earth," meaning the Jewish earth, "and lo, it was without form, and void; and the heavens," that is, the heavenly dispensations, institutions, "and they had no light;" they were now darkened, there was an end to them. "I beheld the mountains, and lo, they trembled, and all the hills- moved lightly." Therefore we must understand the islands and mountains spiritually; not literally, not physically. It does not mean that any islands moved, or mountains either, but it means the institutions of that dispensation; those were the hills, those were the mountains of judgment, to which the people resorted for judgment. But now that that dispensation is ended, this mighty revolution wrought, all these mystic hills and mountains are gone. John describes what should come upon the Jewish nation; for though this book is represented, according to the date given on the top of the page, as being written after the destruction of Jerusalem, there is no authority for that; it is very clear this book was written before Jerusalem was destroyed. And you have nothing else in the last verse of this chapter but the destruction of the Jewish nation; that I believe to be its primary and proper meaning; it may have after-applications, but that is its proper meaning. "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great." We cannot understand this literally; we know very well that such things did take place literally in the Old Testament dispensation; but here are judgments compared to great hailstones thrown down from heaven, and the effect it had upon the people was that they blasphemed God because of their troubles. If you go to the latter part of Isaiah viii. there you have an explanation of this very verse; there it says, "They shall pass through it," —meaning the Jews, in that final judgment that should come upon them by the Romans, —"hardly bestead and hungry; and it shall come to pass, that when they shall be hungry, they shall fret themselves, and curse their king and their God, and look upward." Why, this was fulfilled, I was going to say, to the very letter. Take the word "curse" to mean "to anathematise." Was not Jesus Christ their king nationally? Was not Jesus Christ their God nationally, in that covenant? And what did the Jews do? They anathematised Christ, and in so doing they cursed their God, namely, Christ. They did not know that they were cursing God, but that is what they were doing. "They shall curse their king and their God, and look upward," mark that; it is very instructive. They anathematised Christ, and yet looked to God

for deliverance from the Romans. There were prophets among them to the very last, as was the case in the Babylonish captivity, that insisted upon it that the Romans should not prevail to their destruction, that God would appear for them. Thus they anathematised Christ, who was their king and their God, and yet looked upward, and expected God to appear for them. But what did the Lord do? He laughed at their calamity, and mocked when their fear came.

Thus then this seventh vial is very solemn in all its departments. Here is, in the first place, the atmosphere of one dispensation terminated, its sun is gone down, its moon turned into blood, its stars fallen, its land desolate, its atmosphere poisoned, as it were, cursed of God, and passed away. Here is a mighty revolution which the Savior hath wrought, such as never was before, and will never be needed again. Here is the world divided into three parts, —the non-professor, the mere professor, and the real possessor. Here are the cities of the world falling before the power of God that accompanied the preaching of the apostles. Oh, how I should like to see such a day as that again! How I should like to see ministers go two and two to this city, that, and the other, and the city fall before them, and the devil enraged. We should not mind being dragged out of the city, and left for dead, if we had ministered instrumentally eternal life to the precious souls of our fellow-creatures, and had thereby displayed again instrumentally the boundless grace of God, and glorified that God who is indeed worthy to be praised. I think, then, you can understand the several parts of this vial; and is there one part that does not concern us? I think not; I think it all concerns us. There is a greatness in every department; —the great voice from on high saying, "It is done;" and the great earthquake; then the division of the great city into three parts; then the falling of the cities; then the judgments of God. These things have lately seemed to play so round my mind that I saw in the contrast such a greatness in the achievement of Jesus Christ that I only hope when I come to die, and when you come to die, we shall see as much of the greatness of Christ's work in this matter as I have been favored to see; —ten times more than I have been able to speak. And I do need your prayers in the sense in which the apostle sought the prayers of the saints when he said, "that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel." Oh, to feel that Christ hath swallowed up our sins, and sorrows, and the curse; that he hath ended the old world, the world of law, the world of a broken covenant, the world of sin, and death, and trouble, and brought us into a scene of things altogether new, —oh, it is a sweet thing to live such a life of fellowship with God, and a sweeter thing still when we come to die.

XX. THE FALSE CHURCH.

We have this evening to notice the seventeenth chapter of the Book of the Revelation, and we have two orders of creatures to deal with this evening: first, the enemies of God; and secondly, the friends of God.

At the beginning of the chapter John says, "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither: I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore," —the false church. Any religion that hath any mediators besides Jesus Christ is a harlot religion; any church that has any mediator besides Jesus Christ is a harlot church. What shall we say, then, to that church, or if we speak of it in the plural, those churches, that have as many mediators as there are days in the year, or more? And how many millions of our fellow-creatures are to this day deluded by a religion that hath these many mediators. Jesus Christ is called a Husband; and therefore for a church to profess to be married to Christ as the Mediator, and yet admit, as you are aware Popery does, a thousand other mediators, why, such churches may well be called harlots.

But we read that this false church, called a harlot, was in the wilderness. I think, in setting out, we ought clearly to understand what is meant by this. You will recollect that the true church, spoken of in the twelfth chapter, is in the wilderness; she is there represented as flying into the wilderness. This false church is also said to be in the wilderness. Here you observe oneness of language, and yet the meaning is infinitely different. Wherein lies the difference? Why here lies the difference; that the true church, in the twelfth chapter, is simply in the wilderness as her way to the promised land. As the Israelites had to pass through the wilderness to reach the promised land, so the true church is in a wilderness as her way to the promised land. But the wilderness here, where the false church is, is quite another thing. If you go to Galatians iv. you will learn what is meant by this false church being in the wilderness. You there find Sarah and Hagar made use of allegorically to set forth the two covenants: "the one from the Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage; for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." The meaning is that they are under sin, under the law, under wrath, under the prince of darkness; whereas the true church on her way to the promised land is no more under sin than the Israelites were under the Egyptians after leaving Egypt. Jesus Christ finished transgression, made an end of sin. The true church travelling through the wilderness is not under the law, but under grace; not under wrath, but under God's love; the true church on her way to the promised land is not under the prince of darkness, but is led by the Prince of life and light, led by the Prince of salvation. You will perceive, then, that this false church was in the mystical wilderness of Hagar, —Mount Sinai under the law. But we will take Jerusalem, as the apostle there presents it, to help us out with this idea: "And answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Now Jerusalem despised the Savior, and despised the gospel, and despised, as you are aware, God's eternal salvation. Well then, if they do that, there is only one place left for them, namely, the law. There are but two places for men: you must be under the law or else under the gospel; just as in the future there are only two places, —you must be in hell or else in heaven, one or the other. Can you not perceive the difference, then, between the two characters? Here is the one in his wilderness home: the wilderness was Ishmael's home; he was a wild man, and his mother, the bond-woman, was at home there; it was her home. And just so a false religion is the home of the man that is deceived; he is under the law, and does not know it; he is under sin, under wrath, under the prince of darkness, and does not know it.

Here is the mighty difference. The true believer has to travel as through a wilderness, experience much solitude, and often wander in a solitary way; "Hungry and thirsty," he says, "my soul fainteth within me;" but then, at the same time, the true Christian, with all his troubles, sees the end of sin, that Jesus Christ hath redeemed him and delivered him from the power of Satan and brought him to God; that God is in Christ, reconciling us unto himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us. Therefore the difference is that the one is under the law; and though the one that is under the law takes the name of Jesus Christ, yet all such have legality enough to show where they are. They are advocates of human merit, human mediators, human authority in divine things. Here, then, is the difference between the two: the one is in the wilderness, like Ishmael at his home; the other is in the world, travelling through it to future glory, and therefore does not belong to this world.

Now John saw a woman sitting upon a scarlet-colored beast. Let us understand the meaning of this. You recollect our definition. If you do not, I will just call it to your remembrance. Our definition in one of our former lectures of what is meant by this wild beast was, that it means the spirit of hostility to God, so that whatever man partakes of the spirit of hostility to God, and especially if that man be an active persecutor, he then is a part of this mystic beast, as Saul of Tarsus was before called by grace. Therefore, you will understand that the beast means the spirit of hostility to God's truth. Now the woman sat upon this beast, —that is, the woman was supported by this spirit which was in the people, —for, as I have already said in former lectures, if the people did not support the Romish government, —for that is evidently the spirit

here referred to, —it could not be maintained. Now this woman is said to sit upon this scarlet-colored beast; and you need not for a moment be at a loss as to who this wild beast is, spoken of as scarlet-colored. This same chapter gives an explanation, for it speaks of the woman as being "drunken with the blood of the saints;" and thus people have supported this woman in putting the saints to death. But let us be careful to define what this woman is, and you will see as I go along I am right in my interpretation of the word "beast;" that it does not mean any particular person, but it simply means a spirit of hostility against God; and if that be my spirit, then I belong to this mystic beast. What shall we understand by the woman? The woman here, of course, means the church supported by this spirit of the people. But what does the Roman Catholic priest mean by the church? He does not mean the people at large; he means the Pope, the cardinals, and the priests. They are the church, and therefore they are here called a woman. This I believe to be the meaning here. And you will perceive that this woman was decorated with all sorts of worldly acquirements, —gold and silver, and I don't know what all. And everyone knows that Popery is a religion that appeals to the outward senses.

Now just mark very carefully one thing, —that you have in this chapter a threefold representation of the enthronement of this church —the Romish church. I will say the Romish church, because this chapter photographs her so clearly that no one can well mistake it. In the third verse she is enthroned upon the beast; that is, supported by the people; then, in the ninth verse, you will find these words, —"The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth." What are these seven mountains? They are called, a little further on, seven kings; and there we are, of course, to take the definite number with an indefinite meaning, —seven kings meaning many. See how expressive it is. Has not the Roman Catholic church been supported by kings? Have not our English kings, in times past, given unto her their power? and do not some of the kings even now give support to that church? Thus, then, she sits supported by the people at large, and then here is her enthronement upon royalty. And she never sat so easily as when she had got these seven mountains to sit upon; when she had got all the kings and all their power to support her, and to give effect to the mandates of the Vatican, she was then in her glory. But she got drunk with the blood of the saints, and she has been tumbling down for a long time: God grant she may soon break her neck; I should rejoice very much in it. And then, if you go to the fifteenth verse, you will find another description of her enthronement, entirely in accordance with what we have said as to the meaning. "And he said unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." See how it accords. Here is the threefold enthronement: first the spirit of hostility to God that supports that system; secondly, seven mountains, or ruling powers, —kings; and thirdly, the multitude of people at large. You will therefore see that the beast, the kings, and the multitudes represented by the waters, are all in reality one.

And does not this point out the way to deal with Popery? I am speaking of it this evening, not with the hope of doing much good, therefore shall not enlarge upon it; but the only way to deal with it is in the spirit of the mission of the Savior,— "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Never mind whether they are sage or savage, learned or unlearned, whether they are superstitious or not superstitious; preach the gospel to every creature; for the man of sin can be consumed to the salvation of a sinner only by the spirit of the Savior's mouth and by the brightness of his coming. Thus then, I think, you will understand what is meant by the beast, by the seven mountains, and by the multitude of people supporting that system; but if the Lord should be pleased to enlighten their minds, they would take their shoulders from under this huge mountain of error and delusion; down it would come, the souls of men would rise, and we should all glory therein.

The next thing we have to notice will be the seven heads and the ten horns. "There are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

And the beast that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." What are we to understand by this? Here are seven kings, and five are fallen. I am not aware of any learned man that has written upon this book that has not tried to prove the literal fulfilment of the words I have just read. One will tell us it means the several ruling powers that preceded the coming of Christ. Another will tell us that it means the Roman emperors that reigned before such and such a time; but if we attempt to literalize this book we get into error directly. We must therefore take it as we are in the very beginning instructed to take it. The seven candlesticks must be understood not literally, but figuratively. The seven stars must be understood not literally but figuratively. You will therefore at once see that these kings simply mean ruling powers. "Five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition." We go to Joshua x., and we find Joshua at war. He had worked at the southern part of the land, and got on pretty well; but somehow or another, the enemy was still very strong in the northern parts. Just so when first called by grace, —the sun is in its zenith, and shines upon us, and we enjoy the sunny south, and think we shall have no storms, no winter, nothing to meet with. By and by we get into those northern latitudes of tribulation the Lord intends we shall go into; and then he steps in and displays his power.

Now in that tenth of Joshua he made his way towards the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were very foolish in pretending that they came from a far country; but they were afraid to come in a straightforward way, and therefore pretended they came from a far country. If they had said, We are afraid of Joshua, we are afraid of the Israelites, we are afraid of the God of the Hebrews, and we desire not to fight against him any longer; if they had had my good old Rahab there, she would have told them to take the straightforward way. She would have said, Oh, don't go with that story; go and tell the plain truth, the same as I did to the spies. I told them that I knew their God had given them the land; I told them I knew how matters went; and in that open, straightforward way I sought their kindness, and by them the kindness of God; and I stood out for my principles, sheltered the spies, sent them out another way, and here am I, safe; I have got a good standing, a good husband, a good God, and everything good. Well, the poor Gibeonites, we must forgive them; for the fact is they did not know what to do. They were no worse, I suppose, than some of the rest of us. Now these kings came against the Gibeonites; but the God of the Hebrews was for the Gibeonites; and so Joshua was sent up to meet the enemy, they were scattered to the four winds, and the five kings hid themselves in a cave, and were taken. And Joshua brought the Israelites to put their feet upon the necks of these kings. The fall of these kings denoted that the substance of the victory was gained, that all the after victories would easily be won, and that the power of the Canaanites was now thoroughly broken. "Sun," said Joshua, "stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon;" and the Lord abode by them by the sun and the moon; the sun representing Christ, as you know, and the moon the gospel; and by his dear Son and by his blessed word he will abide by his people until the victory is complete. I think, therefore, that the victory wrought over the five kings, as described in Joshua x., explains what is here meant. "Five are fallen," to denote that the very substance of the victory is gained. And these kings represent the ruling powers of sin. Sin is a king, tribulation is a king, death is a king, wrath is a king, and Christ hath conquered the whole of these ruling powers; so that these five are fallen. Therefore, it is expressive of the great essential victory; and there shall be no difficulty after this. So if you once get hold of what Christ has done, and take that with you, that will conquer all you want to conquer. "Five are fallen;" that is, the chief powers are fallen; so Jesus Christ wrought that victory by which the adversary is defeated. I cannot, for the life of me, believe that the Book of Revelation contains anything whatever different from the Old Testament, or from the other parts of the New. The subject is the same: enemies and friends, judgement and mercy; the two voices, the voice of the law and the voice of the gospel.

Now it is said here in John's time, "the beast that was, and is not," and yet "is." There is no difficulty in understanding that. What is the beast that was? What was the business of the wild beast that is, the spirit of hostility? You know what the business was: "Crucify him, crucify him." So, then, "the beast that was, and is not." By and by the persecution ceased for a time, and now the beast "is not;" that is, not in operation, not in actual perpetration of deeds of death now, —stopped for a time. "(The beast that was, is not, yet is;" that is, the spirit of the beast still exists. Let us apply this now to our own times. First, the beast that was. There is not a Roman Catholic in the world, if not blinded by the priests, among the laity, but must admit that his church has been in times past a wild beast to tens of thousands of our fellow-creatures. Oh, talk of the deeds of cruelty that that infernal religion has perpetrated, —calling that the church of God, calling that gospel! Why, the gospel of God comes in all the love, tenderness, meekness, mercy, compassion, kindness, forgiveness, —everything that is pleasing, everything that is attractive: the dear Redeemer so gentle in all his dealings that he would not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed; he would not even strive, nor cry, nor lift up his voice in the streets; he did things so kindly. He seemed to answer a sort of inquiry, How is it that this wonderful person acts in this kind way? Why, he says, the secret of it is this, —"I am meek and lowly in heart." Oh, hell itself cannot be farther from the spirit of the gospel than the spirit of persecution, then the spirit that hates our fellow-creatures. It is astonishing to the last degree that there should be any man found to advocate such a religion. True religion makes a man more willing to be persecuted than to persecute. The Savior never persecuted any one; the apostles never persecuted any one: they suffered much, but when reviled, reviled not again. The beast that was, then —the Roman Catholic beast that was. But we will not apply it to that church only; there are others that are of the same spirit. Puseyism is nothing else but an attempt to exalt the priesthood, one class of men above the other; whereas the dear Savior says, "Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. But so shall it not be among you; but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister; and whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all" Humility is the way to Christian greatness. Jesus Christ, though in the form of God, thinking it not robbery to be equal with God, yet made himself of no reputation; and that path he took was the way to greatness. And no minister will ever be great in usefulness, or great in the eyes of the people, if he be not a humble, broken-spirited man, that knows what it is to enter into the necessities of the people of God, their spiritual and temporal necessities, and thus weep with them that weep. "The beast that was," —you can understand that; "and is not," and I trust never will be again; "and yet is," in spirit; its spirit still exists. I need not, I think, say anything more upon that, except what is meant by the eighth. "The beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth." Well, the people of God would say when they got rid of the seven —Rome pagan —surely we shall not have any more; we shall not have another spring up now. Presently up springs a body of professed Christians; they have got civil power, and what is the use they make of it? Why, just what Rome pagan had done —to shed the blood of the saints. And he is called the eighth because he is a kind of an unexpected power that rises; but he is said to be of the seven. Why? Because as the kings in Joshua x. were led by a spirit of blind hostility to God, so those powers have been led by a spirit of blind hostility to God; and therefore Romanism is nothing else but heathenism in the Christian name; the spirit is the same, that of enmity against the blessed God.

Now to show that I am right in what I have said, we read in the eighteenth verse, "And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." I must say one more word upon these harlot churches. Perhaps the testimonies of God were never thought less of by the professed friends of God than they are in our day. Do you know what the language of men-made ministers is? We do not trouble ourselves, say they, about theological opinions, meaning thereby the testimonies of God. We do not trouble ourselves about your Calvinistic dogmas, or any other dogmas; all we insist upon is all that moral virtue and moral excellence by which we show improvement from time to time. As a church minister

says in a book I was foolish enough to read some part of the other day, "When I test my temper now with what it was some years ago, when I test my sympathies now with what they were some years ago, I can find I have made considerable progress in goodness." Deluded man! —and the object of the book is to make us all good; —as to Jesus Christ himself, he is a good example, but no substitute for us. So he goes on in that strain; and they are all more or less of the same spirit. I solemnly believe that Jesus Christ in our day, in the sermons of many, is brought in as a mere form; they bring him in at the fag-end of their prayers, and as a mere form. But a sinner saved by the substitution of Jesus, what a cleaving there is to him by such a soul: —

"Still my soul would cleave to thee,
Though prostrate in the dust."

Now it goes on to say that the ten horns shall hate this harlot, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. Well, they have begun to do so already. I believe the Emperor Napoleon would get away from the Romish Church if he could, but he has got a Jesuitical priesthood, and a superstitious people, that can hardly go with him in his present most excellent reforms, trying to establish constitutional government. I believe that man in his heart hates Popery most heartily; and he has most grievously vexed the Pope by saying that all religions shall be tolerated in France. Have not Spain and Austria moved in the same way? and did not our own country and Germany about three hundred years ago? And then our cousins across the Atlantic, the Americans. That makes the Pope so uneasy. He sees that America is determined to be a free people, and he cannot get any standing there. He sees that America is rising, and becoming what I believe it "will become by and by, the very essence of the world. The Pope sees that the civil powers are determined to separate the spiritual from the temporal; and when the poor old Pope has got nothing but the spiritual left, he will find his position very shaky; —he is losing his substance, and will soon have only the shadow left.

Now we will come to the eighth and fourteenth verses, and from those two verses see how this affects the people of God. It is said, "They that dwell on the earth shall wonder," —that is, shall subscribe to that tyrannical power and submit to it, —" whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." You will observe that the persons who escaped the delusion, and could, in the name and strength of God, face that tyrannical power, and submit to any suffering or any kind of death rather than give up God's truth, are said to be persons whose names were written in the book of life from the foundation of the world. Now just mark me for a few moments. When a sinner is brought to trace up his entire salvation to God, and to see that God loved him before the world was, that he chose him, and blessed him with all spiritual blessings, before the world was; that Christ's goings forth were from of old, even from everlasting; that every provision was made for his salvation before time began, —then what hand can man have in it? Every provision was made before time was; and God, in all his movements in time, has been carrying out that provision; for if he had not chosen us before the world was, he would not have made us acquainted with his truth now; if he had not blessed us then, he would not have blessed us now; and if he had not imputed in counsel our sins to Christ, he would not have brought us unto the knowledge of substitution now; and if he had not ordained us to eternal life, he would not have brought us to that knowledge of salvation that enabled the apostle to say, "He hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ." You see, then, that he loved the people, that they are all in his hands. Do not let any creature have any authority over your conscience; take the word of God, and the God of the word, as far as the Lord shall enable you; let no creature have any dominion over your conscience whatever; let it be a matter between you and God. And if your experience be right you will trace up your salvation to God, and you will see that the provision was complete before the world was; and then, when Jesus Christ lived and died, his work accorded with the completeness of that religion;

there is a completeness in his work, and there is a completeness in the work of the Holy Spirit. If, therefore, you trace up your religion to God, you will cease from man, and rejoice that your springs are in the Lord. Now this is the second time in this book, in connection with this tyrannical power, that the Lamb's book of life is brought in; so, then, it seems that when electing grace comes in, it cuts down all creature sovereignty, all creature pretensions, and leaves no room for any in these eternal things but the blessed God. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee."

Now, in the fourteenth verse, we have another representation of the saints; you have the enemy at war, and the victory which the saints gain. "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them; for he is Lord of lords and King of kings; and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Let us, for the sake of explanation, take away the word "Lamb," and substitute another word:—"These shall make war with the Atonement;"—not professedly so—no; but what is transubstantiation but warring with the Atonement? It is taking the Atonement out of the hands of God, and putting it into the hands of man. What is purgatory but warring with the Atonement? as though the Atonement could not bring us off without our going to hell—for purgatory is next door to it—and finishing the wrath due to our sins. And the Virgin Mary set up as a mediator, what is that but warring with the Atonement? And if you are acquainted—I was going to say I hope you are not—with Roman Catholic books, you find they tell us that it is by the merits of the prophets, and apostles, and martyrs that we get to heaven. Now this sounds like a lie, does it not? and it is one too; but what is it but war with the Atonement? Anything, under whatever pretense to piety, as they hypocritically call it, anything that sets aside in any shape or form the Atonement of Christ, is at war with it. Hence that never-to-be-forgotten circumstance in Ezekiel ix. In the eighth chapter you see they had set aside God's sacrificial order of worship, and had set up the image of jealousy. When you come to the ninth chapter, the men with their destroying weapons in their hands were commanded to go through the city to set a mark upon all those who sighed over the absence of the atonement; that sighed at the presence of those idolatrous ceremonies, and the absence of God's order of things. Where did these men take their stand? By the brazen altar. That is just where every minister must take his stand; there he can rejoice in the testimonies of God, there he can defy every foe; there he can find everything, for God is there. How senseless were all the sacrifices on Jewish altars slain, if they had not a typical meaning. And were not all those sacrifices substitutional? Just so Jesus Christ; he answers to the whole; there is not one offering in that dispensation that is not answered by the Atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. So then you overcome by tracing up your salvation entirely to God; secondly, by abiding fast by the Atonement. "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb." "These," the enemies, "shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them." He said, "These things have I spoken unto you that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." "The Lamb shall overcome them;" they shall not be able to lay anything to your charge. "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, says the Lord."

Now there are two thoughts here; the one is what Christ did in his humiliation, and the other is what he carries out in his exaltation. You know people cannot always carry out what they intended to carry out, or even what it would be right to carry out; there are hindrances. Not so with Jesus Christ; he died on earth, he went to heaven; the disciples waited; he left a promise with them; he left a word of direction and a word of promise; the word of direction was that they were to tarry in Jerusalem, and the word of promise was that they were to be endued with power from on high. Now were they so or not? They were. "They that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." First, they are called. The calling here, I apprehend, is not the calling by grace—it is another calling; there is a calling after the calling by grace. A soul is called by grace—does not know which way to look, nor which way to go; he has heard a bad account of that

free-grace vineyard. By and by the Lord says, "Go into my vineyard." I will not, he says; I am not going to be a high-doctrine man; —I will not go into that vineyard. Why, I have read what is written: —"In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it;" and I am to do nothing but eat and drink; —oh, I cannot go into that vineyard. "Lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Oh, I will not go. Very well, —the Lord has called you to go. I will not go. Suppose you should not get anything anywhere else, what would you say then? You would be like the man in the parable, who "afterward repented, and went." They are called to God's service, then, —called to be proved; called to be good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Here is the war; — now I call you to prove you. Can you stand persecution? can you stand imprisonment? can you stand being dragged away from your wife, and family, and home, and all you have? Yes, Lord, if thou wilt fulfil thy promise that "as is thy day, thy strength shall be."

"Through floods and flames if Jesus lead,
We'll follow where he goes."

Those that are with him are called into his service. Then they are "chosen." The Savior called his twelve disciples, and they all proved to be good soldiers except one —Judas; he did not prove to be a true man, and so he was called, but not chosen. "And faithful." "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Oh may it be the happy lot of every one of us to meet the gratulation of the Great Master at the last, "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

Now I cannot close without asking, what difficulties are there in this chapter after all? Here you get the wilderness, —that is pretty clear; the scarlet-colored beast, — that is pretty clear; the false church, with her threefold enthronement —on the beast, on the seven mountains, and on the multitude of people, — that is pretty clear; and the five fallen kings, the victory gained by the presence of the Lord, —that is pretty clear; and the saints of God tracing up their salvation to God alone, —that is pretty clear; and their being called into God's service, "chosen and faithful; —these are they that —

"Shall sing, as they pass through this valley of tears,
The righteous shall hold on his way."

May the Lord lead us more and more into these dear mysteries, for his name's sake. Amen.

XXI. THE MYSTIC BABYLON.

We come this evening to consider the eighteenth chapter, and we shall have, speaking generally, these four things to attend to: —first, the glory of the gospel; secondly, the mystic Babylon; thirdly, the judgment awaiting that mystic Babylon; fourthly and lastly, the summing up of the whole, as given in the end of this chapter.

First, the glory of the gospel. "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory." Now this chapter brings us again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. Jesus Christ, I need not remind you again and again, is called an angel; and he is said here to come down from heaven with great power, and the earth was lightened with his glory. The earth was lightened with his glory at his birth, seen by the shepherds; the earth was lightened with his

glory in the ministry and miracles of his life; and the earth was lightened with his glory when he said, "It is finished;" the earth was lightened with his glory when he rose from the dead, and returned to his disciples; the earth was lightened with his glory when on the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended, and fulfilled that great scripture in Isaiah lx., "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee;" and the earth has shone with his glory ever since, and will do, as the seventy-second Psalm says, as long as the sun and moon shall endure. And we may sum up all his glory in the two thoughts presented concerning the prophets, — namely, the sufferings of Christ; in other words, what he achieved by his sufferings, and the eternal glory that should follow.

Now the angel appears in this chapter "having great power;" and so the Savior came, as you are aware, with great power, and he still reigns with great power, having all power in heaven and in earth. The subject of the first verse of this chapter is evidently taken from that circumstance in Ezekiel xl.iii., where the prophet was taken to the gate whose aspect was towards the east; "and behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east." And the reason, of course, why we are in the Old Testament so frequently thus directed is to remind us that Jesus Christ is spoken of as the Sun of Righteousness, and therefore the coming of his glory is compared again and again to the rising of the sun upon a dark and benighted world. And it there says, in Ezekiel, that "the earth shined with his glory;" and then the prophet goes on to show that this glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the east; more clearly understood if rendered thus, —that the glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the sun rising. Jesus Christ is the Sun of Righteousness, and God comes to us in his love, and grace, and mercy, by his dear Son. And then the prophet says, "The spirit took me up, and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the house." We therefore must take the temple there to mean mystically and spiritually the church of God, and that all the blessings come by the way of the east, the way of the sun rising, by Jesus Christ.

And Ezekiel saw that this glory kept coming, and coming, and coming, until the temple was filled with the glory of the Lord, till all should be gathered in, and the whole church be filled with the glory of the Lord. See how this accords with all the testimonies of the gospel. You see there is no coming short; —there is the temple, it shall be finished, and shall be filled with the glory of the Lord. The apostle Paul has the same meaning when he says, "Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Therefore, the temple being full of the glory of the Lord, doth in reality mean the presence of the Lord by Christ Jesus, as described in Psalm xvi.: "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." I need not then enlarge upon this verse; —you see that here is Christ, the Angel of the covenant; you see that he came with great power. Let us take away the word "power;" not that we could do so absolutely, or would for a moment insinuate that there was not power; but let us substitute the word "authority," —that Jesus Christ came with great authority. He was authorized to obey the law, he was authorized to die for sinners, he was authorized to govern the world; he came with great authority; —all authority was committed unto the Son of man. To sum up his authority, he was and is Lord of all.

Now we have to go on to trace out the mystic Babylon, that stands in direct contrast to the properties and to the character of the everlasting gospel of God; but I must try and prepare your minds for this before I enter upon it, after I have read the second verse. "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Now the fall here spoken of means apostasy; —this

is the fall of apostasy; but we will try and make that clear presently, after I have just reminded you that you read in this chapter of delicacies, luxuries, gold, silver, pearls, and all the riches and precious things of the world, none of which you must take literally; you must take it all figuratively and mystically. Let us see if we can find authority, as it were, for so doing. Here is the true gospel in the first verse, and consequently the true church; and then comes the mystic Babylon, apostate Christendom.

Now I do not find anything in this chapter pertaining to the mystic Babylon that is not used as a simile in the true church to set forth spiritual and eternal things; and if we find no difficulty in taking these things figuratively pertaining to the true church, why should we feel a difficulty in taking the same things figuratively when intended to point out the mystic Babylon? Let me make it clear. First, you read in Isaiah xxv., "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Now you do not take this literally; you would not take that to mean wine literally; you find no difficulty in taking that spiritually; you know that the provision there spoken of must be understood spiritually; you know that the wine there spoken of points to the blood of the everlasting covenant, and the feast of fat things to those spiritual blessings wherewith the people are blessed in Christ Jesus.

And again, "Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars; she hath killed her beasts; she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table;" and so of the rest. You find no difficulty in understanding this figuratively; you know it has a gospel meaning; you would not take the beasts and the table there literally, you take the whole of it spiritually. So if you come to the New Testament, you find no difficulty in understanding the spiritual meaning of the Bridegroom; you do not take the Bridegroom literally, except by way of figure, as the representative of that which is spiritual. Then again, when- you come to Matthew xxii., there is a marriage, and the king sends out his servants to say, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage." You would not take that literally. Then again, you read of the merchant acquiring the pearl of great price; you would not take that literally either, except by way of figure. I make these few remarks in order that we may enter with a clear idea upon what we may have to consider this evening, — the mystic Babylon; and it is that that concerns us all, because we are either deluded, we are either under the power of delusion, or we are brought out of that delusion into the truth as it is in Jesus.

The things of God in a gospel sense are compared again and again to gold, and silver, and precious stones; just so the very same things are employed to set forth the treasures of the apostate church, —that is, those things which they think to be treasures. Just review some of the points in our lecture last Wednesday evening, and you will at once see that they cannot be taken literally. One thing I will name which I then passed by, the golden cup that was in the woman's hand; but I showed then that you cannot take the beast that carries the woman literally, and you, cannot take the woman to mean a woman literally, and you cannot take the many waters to mean waters literally, because it actually says that the many waters are multitudes of people; and you cannot take the seven mountains literally, but you may take them to represent many ruling powers. Just so this mystic Babylon, this woman, has a golden cup in her hand; but you cannot take that cup literally, you must take it mystically. And that cup is "full of abominations," and what are those abominations? Why, delusions, false doctrines, that intoxicate the mind, delude the soul; and so Satan carries on his work. We must take these things, then, not literally, but figuratively. This is where the learned have dreadfully erred. One very learned man in writing upon this chapter says this, — when I read it I thought, is it possible that any Christian man could take such a view of mystic Babylon? — he says that we shall soon have railways in the valley of the Euphrates, and that ancient Babylon will be rebuilt, will be more glorious than ever, and then, after that, will be destroyed, according to this eighteenth chapter. Now, how absurd this is. We will suppose a mighty commercial city to rise there, and

that that city should be destroyed afterwards, what has that to do with religion? Suppose you build a house, and it is knocked down; and you build up another and a better one, and by and by that is knocked down, what has that to do with religion? No, we must understand it, therefore, strictly in the figurative and mystic sense of the word.

Now we will go on to say a word upon this. "For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." The word "fornication" here must be taken mystically, and of course signifies idolatry. "And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her;" that is, idolatry with her; "and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Who were these merchants? Not literal merchants, certainly not. It says further on, "her merchants were the great men of the earth." Suppose we took the merchants here literally, and that it meant the commerce of the world literally, then what sense would there be in the fourth verse, "And I heard another voice from heaven saying. Come out of her, my people"? What, come out of the commercial world? Don't you see the emptiness of it, the absurdity of such a notion? If you take it literally to mean literal commerce, then the people of God are called out of the commercial world; so you may go home to-night, and shut your shops up, and never open them again. Well, say you, we are not so foolish as that. But according to the common interpretation men give to this scripture, that would be the meaning.

Now let us find out who are these merchants; and I will begin with one, whose title I need scarcely name. Is there not one, not a hundred miles from Rome, who is a great merchant? Is he not a very great bone merchant? Have there not been tons of human bones sold, and have they not brought great riches to that merchant? Is he not also a great timber merchant? Have not as many pieces of wood been sold under the pretense of being the wood of the true Cross as would form the forest of Lebanon pretty well? And is he not a great rag merchant? Has he not a quantity of rags displayed about? This is a bit of Peter's coat, and this is a bit of Mary's bonnet, or a bit of her dress, or a bit of her tippet? A very great rag merchant indeed he has been. And in the next place it says in this chapter that this merchant dealt in the bodies and souls of men. Why, is he not a very great body merchant? Does he not tell us that all the bodies of all the population of the globe are virtually his? And is he not a very great soul merchant? And is he not a very great falsehood merchant? and is he not a very great cruelty merchant? I think he is: —and so in many more respects. Then who are the merchants under this one great merchant? Why, the priests; and they are the great men of the earth, —I should think so, —so great that they can turn a piece of bread and a drop of wine into the body, and blood, and soul, and divinity of Jesus Christ. Why, they are such great men that for a few halfpence they can get an immortal soul out of purgatory; and if you go and confess your sins to them, they can secure the forgiveness of these sins; and furthermore, they are such great men that if you abide by what they say you cannot be lost, for they are infallible. Is there any difficulty in understanding who these merchants are, and that these are the great men of the earth? —not the great men of Zion, but the great men of the earth.

But it is said of these merchants that they "waxed rich." It is a solemn truth that there is such a thing as being rich in name, but not in reality; there is such a thing as being rich in imagination and in false confidence, but not in reality. They "waxed rich." "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Let the poor Catholics be once convinced of this, as Luther, and thousands of others in that apostate church have been convinced, —that they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked, then they find out that all their traditions, and all their pretensions, and all their ceremonies, and all their relics, instead of being riches are nothing but shadows and delusions.

It is said "the kings of the earth lived deliciously with her;" and that men waxed rich. Ask the Roman Catholics — perhaps those in England will hardly confess it, but go abroad and you will find Catholics that will, —what do you get by Catholicism? Why, I get rich by being a Catholic; I get eternal life, I get the kingdom of God, the goodness of God, the merits of the prophets and apostles, and the intercession of the Virgin Mary and all the prophets; —in a word, I get everything. Thus, then, spiritually they "waxed rich" in their own estimation. And has it not been so in all ages where a church has apostatised? The riches of the gospel have been despised, and the traditions, doctrines, and institutions of men have been put into their place. Now I will take that which I just now referred to, and what a treasure that must be, what a delicious life to live; it stands thus: —"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Come, says the priest, I will turn the bread and the wine into the body and blood, and soul and divinity of Christ; and if you take the Eucharist as I thus transubstantiate it and minister it to you, thereby you are sure of the final resurrection; you need not trouble yourself after that, you need not be uneasy after that; you may make yourself quite comfortable; and if you should be overtaken with a few faults, five shillings will settle the matter at any time; and if five will not, ten will; and if ten will not, twenty will; —we will charge you, not according to the real debt you owe, but according to the depth of your pocket, and also according to the darkness of your mind; for if you should be a little suspicious whether we are right or not, we will not charge you too much, lest we should get you searching our books to see whether we have charged you the right amount or not. And so they easily wax rich; — these merchants that trade in these things wax rich.

I just now said that there is nothing in this chapter descriptive of the mystic Babylon, nor a simile made use of, that is not made use of in the gospel sense for better and spiritual purposes. Hence the people of God are spoken of as trading with the merchandise of wisdom. Here is the same simile applied in the pure and gospel sense, "The merchandise of wisdom is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; all things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto it." And as I just now observed, there is the merchant seeking the pearl of great price. You see it is the same simile made use of; and if we take it figuratively in one case, why not in the other?

Now, in the second verse it is said this Babylon "is become the habitation of devils." The original word here translated "devils" is one of those words that it is rather difficult perhaps to give a definition to; but the original word is not "devils," it is "demons;" that is to say, that is the way we should pronounce it in our language; —it signifies a demon, and it seems in the first place to mean heathen gods; in the next place it seems to mean mediatory gods. If this be true, how descriptive is it of this fall; — that they fell from the one God and the one Mediator whom they professed once to follow, —they fell from this into the delusion of having a great number of demons, gods, mediators, and intercessors. You have only to compare what is here said with facts that have existed, do exist, and will exist as long as the world shall stand, in order to see the meaning. "And the hold of every foul spirit." The foul spirit here means a satanised spirit, a demonised spirit, a spirit of deadly enmity against God. All of us by nature are at enmity against God; but when there is superadded to our native enmity a religion that doubles and trebles that enmity, then we become of a foul spirit with a vengeance. Hear what the Savior says, —Ye apostate Jews, that have apostatised from Abraham's principles and from his spirit, for if you were the children of Abraham, then you would love me; Abraham saw my day, but you have apostatised from that, and you are fallen down into that that belongs to Satan; —you compass sea and land to make proselytes, and when you have converted one, you boast of the conversion you have made; why, says the Savior, you make him twofold more the child of hell than he was before. Thus you see what the foul spirit is. Can there be a fouler spirit than that that crucified the Lord of life and glory? Can there be a fouler spirit than that that has shed the blood of saints upon the earth? And mark one thing, that just as the Lord sets that good down to the account of his people which they would do, but cannot, just so he sets that evil down

to the apostate church which they would do, even when they do not do it; for anger in the heart is murder. Now the dying thief, if he had been called by grace apart from his thus going out of the world, would have been consecrated to God as we are; but that practical consecration to God is set down as much to the account of the thief as though he had done it, because called by grace under circumstances where he could not have done it. Just, on the other hand, the same as if the Pope wished to put us to death, which he would do, of course, if he could; he would not stop till to-morrow if he could help it, he would light his fires to-night, and burn the whole of us now if he could; he knows that is his feeling and doctrine, and that is the doctrine of the whole church of Rome. God will lay our blood to his account just as though he had actually murdered us, because he would if he could. And this foul spirit, forsooth, must be called "Your Holiness;" and this foul spirit in the under strapping merchants, the priests, must be called "Your Reverence."

Many a silly woman, when the priest goes into a house, flings herself on the floor, overawed by the combination and concentration of holiness then in her presence; poor thing! not knowing that she is bowing to the devil, not knowing that she is bowing down to the foulest spirit that has ever corrupted the earth we inhabit. "And a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Well, if they were only literal birds, we might shoot them and get rid of them; but you see it happens they ate mystical birds; they pretend to be very heavenly, as if they did not live down upon the earth. A priest some time ago in Central America told the people he had established a post office up in the air for the Virgin Mary; he must have ascended up there first, you know, of course. And see how they walk about our streets; look at the poor sisters of mercy, —they walk rather slowly; that is to impress their holiness on our minds.

Now these hateful birds, then, are the devil's birds of passage, they are carriers of lies from place to place. Now it is said that "all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication," of her idolatry; that is, to drink is to drink into her faith, into her spirit, into her traditions. And why is it called the wine of wrath? For two reasons: —because it inspires the mind with enmity against God, and because it brings the people that receive that intoxicating wine under the wrath of God, as you will presently see. These, then, are the merchants that deal in the things I have stated, and this is the Babylon whose spirit is hostile to the sovereignty of God, to the glory of Christ, to the souls of men, and to the gospel; this is the Babylon that we are to come out from.

"And I heard another¹ voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." This is God's command; how nicely he works it into the hearts of his people. They do come out. Let us, in order to understand this part, take the dear Savior's own words. He said to these apostate people, "Ye hear not my voice, because ye are not my sheep; my sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and a stranger's voice will they not follow, but will flee from him." I have all the martyrs to back me up in this idea; see what they suffered rather than be reckoned one with the mystic Babylon; see how they lost their liberty, their life, and everything dear to them on earth. At that expense they came out of this mystic Babylon; but they never repented it; for "whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it."

"For her sins have reached unto heaven." Oh, dear, dear! her sins have reached unto heaven. Where is the Virgin Mary, then, that she allows such a thing? More mediators they have than there are days in the year, and yet their sins reach to heaven. Now Jacob's ladder reached to heaven, but his sins never reached to heaven, because Christ was his mediator between him and God. Jacob saw the ladder reach heaven, but not one of his sins could reach there, because there was the interposition of the Messiah, who, in the fullness of time, should come and put an end to sin. When Peter came to Cornelius, he said to him, "Thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God;" a thing that was never said of a Babylonian yet, and never will be; a thing that was never said of an apostate spirit yet, and never will

be. Abel's prayer, not his sins, reached to heaven; the Publican's prayer, not his sins, reached to heaven. Ah, then, see the mighty difference; —her sins reached up to heaven. So the Jews of old, when they apostatised, as you read in 2 Chronicles xxviii., their sins reached unto heaven, because they got away from that substitutional service that was to make them pleasing in the sight of God. You have all been charmed more or less upon this point, where you read that Aaron was to burn incense while they trimmed the lamps; and we see the object was to keep the ill savor of the lamps from going into the holy of holies. And so Christ, by the fragrance of his name, the efficacy of his blood, and the excellency of his person, will not allow us to reach heaven with an ill savor. Hence one of old rejoiced, when he said, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." Look, then, at the two religions, the one lets your sins go up before God to accuse you; of the other religion, namely, the faith of Christ, what is there said?" He will not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perverseness in Israel."

Perhaps you will say, Well, we don't want to hear so much against Popery; and, say some, You have no right to speak against the Pope. Yes I have; why, he even takes money out of my pocket; the law of the land makes me give it. Why, how is that 1 Ireland would be a help to England, if it were not for the spirit of Antichrist that reigns in that land, and then we should not have to pay so much for taxes; so through the Pope we have to pay more taxes. We boast of being free from the Pope; why, we are paying taxes to his Holiness now from time to time. The Lord enable us to maintain our civil rights, but above all, to stand fast in the glorious liberty of the gospel of God. "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." No real child of God can ultimately receive of her plagues, but you may receive of them temporally. Remember Lot's wife. I believe she was a saved woman, but she did not come out with all her heart. Some people linger about, and look about. There is our friend Dr. Cumming; he has testified against Catholicism, and one of the worst things he has ever said in his life in relation to it was this, —that he hoped Cardinal Wiseman had gone to heaven. Why, on what ground can you hope that of a man dying in human tradition, in a bloodthirsty church, in damnable delusion? And God says he will send them strong delusion, too strong for any human power to undeceive; that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, persecuting and putting the saints to death. A man dying in that state, Satan hath the palace, his goods are in peace. If the Bible be true, such a spirit came from perdition, and must go to perdition. Do not let us trifle, let us be plain. "He that believeth not shall be damned." A man cannot believe in Popery, and believe in the gospel too; it is utterly impossible. You must be either one or the other; you may reckon yourself what you like, but the Savior says, " He that is not with me is against me."

"Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." Here is one of the most lovely and delightful contrasts between the two religions that we could wish to recognize; the fact is very beautiful, namely, while the sins of an apostate church reach to heaven, the sins of the true church cannot reach to heaven, because her mediator, her husband, paid the mighty debt she owed. "God hath remembered her iniquities." Do you not see this stands in direct contrast to the new covenant? "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." The Lord remembers the iniquities of the apostate church, because they hold nothing that can really blot out their sins, and if we do not hold that that blots out our sins, then they must still remain in the book of remembrance; but if we hold the precious truth of Christ's perfect mediation, then we hold that that blots our sins out, and gives us peace with God.

I ought perhaps to say just one more word about the treasures. Here are pearls, and gold, and silver. You must take none of these things literally; they must all be taken figuratively. Take their doctrines. If I am a Roman Catholic, I am sure to be saved; what a treasure that is! That is gold, that is a pearl of great price,

that is frankincense, that is fine linen; that is everything I could wish. Am I not making it plain that those things which in our eyes we know to be delusions, yet in the eyes of the Catholics they are gold, and pearls, and fine linen, and precious treasures? So you must take the merchandise here as you would in Proverbs iii., —the merchandise of wisdom; there you take it spiritually; so here you must take it mystically. All these temporal things must be understood to represent that which they think to be riches, and which they think to be real, when after all it is nothing but delusion.

I have only two or three things more to say about the judgment, and then the summing up of the whole; the summing up will show we have come by the right path. We are to view the first verse as expressive of the religion of the Son of God; then we are to view the command not to come out of the commercial world, but to come out of mystic Babylon in her delusions, —to come out of her altogether, and become one with the Lord Jesus Christ. Now there is a threefold view taken in relation to the judgment on this city; —first, the city; second, the riches; third, the solitude. "In one hour is thy judgment come;" there is the city: —" In one hour so great riches is come to naught;" there are the riches: —" In one hour is she made desolate;" there is the solitude. And what is the hour that John saw? I have often envied John. He was in the isle of Patmos, in a solitary position; but oh, how the heavens were opened to him! Here he saw the judgment day, and he likens that judgment to an hour. At that day, which is not yet arrived, one hour puts an end to this mystic Babylon; one hour puts an end to all her riches; one hour makes her as desolate as the rich man was desolate when he lifted up his eyes in hell.

I must not let these three points go without reminding you of the contrast. This city is to be brought to naught; but shall Zion ever be brought to naught?" They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, that cannot be removed, but abideth forever." Ye citizens of heaven, what has God done for you by bringing you out of delusion, and bringing you to know that salvation is entirely and exclusively by the grace of God in and by Christ Jesus? Her riches shall be brought to naught; but who shall bring our riches to naught, the riches that are in Christ Jesus? Can thieves rob us? can moth corrupt our riches there? can they pass away? Oh no; the richest robes, the richest joys, the richest delights, the richest pleasures, the richest honors, will remain untarnished, parallel with eternity itself, never to pass away. This mystic Babylon shall be in one hour made desolate; but shall Zion be ever made desolate? No. The Jerusalem that is above, shall that ever be made desolate? Read the latter parts of this book, and you will see. So then in one hour the mystic Babylon shall be deprived of all, and in that same hour the citizens of heaven will take full possession of their city, of their kingdom. "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

But you find great men, bondmen, freemen, sailors, men of all classes, standing afar off, and lamenting the destruction of this city; —standing afar off. Man, there was a time when you thought the nearer you were to the Pope the better. O'Connell, you know, set out to Rome to get the Pope's blessing before he died, and he died on the way, and they took his dead heart there afterwards. What, stand afar off, holding that your religion is the only religion that can save the soul, and that all must be damned that are not found in your city? Man, what is the matter? Matter, sir? The Pope is gone to hell, the priests are gone to hell, their traditions are gone to hell; their riches turn out to be hay, wood, straw, and stubble, consumed by the fire of God's almighty wrath; for strong is the Lord that judgeth her; and now we stand afar off. What will you do? We do not know what to do; we are afraid of her torments. Some that belong to that mystic Babylon have been the innocent victims of that religion, and that will make a difference; but the city itself, the main parts of that city, as they have shown no mercy to the saints, shall have judgment without mercy. Here then is the sudden destruction of mystic Babylon, in one hour; and people stand afar off. But will you that love Jesus stand afar off from your city at the last day? Oh no. When you and I meet in yonder cloud, with all his favored throng, what will be our language then?" We still have a strong city;

salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks;" the gates of glory shall be opened, and we shall enter in, and remain there forever; "for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." Our feet shall then stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

Now to show that I am right in all that I have said, at least as regards the main drift, I will read the last clause of the last verse but one, and the last verse. It is very striking. "Thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived." Don't you see that the merchants and the sorceries are put together here? Well, it cannot mean a literal merchant; —an honest British merchant, when he buys and sells, there is no sorcery about the man; there is nothing wrong about the man. Commerce is the proper business of man, the lawful and honorable business of man, appointed by the Lord himself, and you have a right, all of you, to look for his interposing hand on your behalf in your callings. Don't be afraid of asking him to be with you in your business, and to prosper and bless you. The merchants here, then, are the merchants I have described, —men trading in damnable delusions, trading in the bodies and souls of men, carrying on these sorceries. What is sorcery? Why, that that bewitches the mind. "Who hath bewitched you?" says the apostle. It is the same thing. Why, then, should these merchants and their sorceries be put together? Why, to explain it; —they trade in these things called sorceries. And now, to show that this is the mystic Babylon, let me read the last verse. "And in her," —in this mystic Babylon, not the literal, for John in the winding up takes a very wide range indeed, —" And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Is not that clear? John, therefore, in this summing up takes the range of the whole mystic Babylon, from the beginning of the world down to the end. "In her was found;" who found it? God did, and God will. Oh how different this from that Zion, that city of God, in which God shines forth the perfection of beauty. The Lord instruct us into these mysteries, that in the contrast of the two our gratitude to God may increase, that he has taught us better; and let us pray that he would make us useful in our day and generation, and that others may be brought also into a knowledge of the same blessed truths.

I ought to make one more remark; —it is said "the earth was lightened with his glory." But then at the same time, while the gospel shines all over England, it is only those that are born of God that can see it. "The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehendeth it not." Let us bless the Lord, then, that he has given us to see this light, and hereby drawn us to himself, that he may be our God and our portion forever. Amen and amen.

XXII. THE SONG OF THE SAINTS.

We have this evening to notice the nineteenth chapter; and there are five things before us: first, the anthem of victory; second, the marriage of the Lamb; third, the wars of the Lord of hosts; fourth, the delusion of the world; and fifth, the terrible destiny of all that are thus deluded.

First, the anthem of victory. The Lord's people in all ages have been directed to what the Lord Jesus Christ should do, in the way of victory, and therefore this song has been sung ever since the Savior has been known. The Old Testament saints entered into the spirit thereof, and rejoiced therein. And we shall see in what way they obtained the victory. I will just read the verse: "After these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God." Here then we find a people that have realized salvation; and the reason they ascribe this salvation to the Lord is because they well know that that salvation is of the Lord; and therefore there is nothing hollow, nothing hypocritical, nothing insincere; there is nothing but what is solid and real in this ascribing

of salvation to the Lord. I do not know anything of which the Christian is more sure than this, that if he is saved the Lord alone can save him. And it is a wonderful mercy to know and feel this; for in looking through the Scriptures we do not find that any person ever brought to feel this, and acknowledge this, was lost. Therefore, this ascription of salvation is to show how they obtained the victory; they obtained the victory by salvation. "Salvation, and glory;" that of course means the glory that follows salvation. Hence the Old Testament saints coupled these two together; —"searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." You will at once perceive it would occupy all our time if I were to stop to notice this second part, —namely, the glory that follows salvation. Therefore, the Church is said to be a glorious Church, and glorious things are spoken of Zion. So then they ascribe salvation to God because it is of God; and they ascribe the glory to God because it is of him. "And honor, and power." You observe the word "power" is brought in, in this list of ascriptions, as the last; because unless the Lord go on still to maintain by his power what he hath done for us, all would come to naught. Therefore, it is said that our faith is to stand in the power of God; and again, "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." The people of God, then, are brought to know their need of God's salvation, to receive the testimony of that salvation, and to be drawn by the glory that follows that salvation, and to prize the honor that is by that salvation, and to rejoice that omnipotent and eternal power is on their side by that salvation. And these same people are brought to testify of the righteousness of God's judgments. "For true and righteous are his judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand." I think the best way to get at the righteousness of God's judgments is to look at his judgments in relation, first, to ourselves. Each Christian feels that if the Lord had cut him down, and banished him to eternal perdition, he would have dealt justly with him. Therefore if the Lord would have been just in cutting us down, instead of showing us mercy; if the Lord would have been just in leaving us where we were, and sentencing us to eternal perdition; if he would have been just in doing so, then if we are brought to confess this, it is no use after this confession of our own personal demerit, and of the justice of God in relation to ourselves, —it is no use after this confession to question the truthfulness or righteousness of God's judgments in relation to others. Hence it goes on here to lead our attention to what the enemies who shall be so dealt with by judgment have done; that they have shed the blood of his servants. But then there are thousands of exceptions to this rule. Saul of Tarsus had shed the blood of God's servants; and many had cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him," and sanctioned the crucifying of Christ; and many since that who have had a hand in putting the saints to death, have nevertheless afterwards been called by grace; so that these no doubt would readily confess that God would have been righteous in dealing with them as he dealt with the others. See, then, how clear is the sovereignty of grace here. And, indeed, the Christian is a man that cannot do without sovereignty. The Christian feels the force of the testimonies of God upon this matter. For instance, where the Lord says, "That ye may know that I the Lord put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel;" implying there is no difference unless he is pleased to make it. And the Christian feels the force of the twofold question of the apostle, "Who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received?" And those who are thus saved, and are brought to sanctify God in judgment, to exalt the Lord in judgment, these are God's witnesses that his judgments are true and righteous.

Now the first alleluia in this chapter we may call the ascriptive alleluia, wherein they ascribe salvation, glory, honor, and power to God, because God is all this to the people; he is our salvation, he is our glory, he is our honor, and he is our strength. "God is my strength," is a sentiment that has been felt by the saints in all ages. Then comes the executive alleluia, "And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." This judgment of course is not yet actually ministered. This second alleluia, therefore, is given just to show that the preceding judgments would be carried out. There is a tendency —I am sure there is —in old nature to think that God after all will not carry out some of the most terrible of his

judgments. We are a great many of us like the old nurse we read of. She had been nursing a man who was a Roman Catholic, and the priest was sent for, and the priest began to try to bring the man to confession, and said a great deal to him; and the poor old woman said, what certainly arose from nature, and what is just about the natural feeling of us all, that we cannot think after all that these judgments will really be carried out; she said, "Don't plague the man; he's more stupid than wicked, and God Almighty can never have the heart to damn such a poor stupid thing as that is." And so the priest went off, and so the matter ended. Therefore, this second alleluia is to show the reality of the judgments; that those judgments will be carried out; that there is a fiery lake, and that these threatenings cannot fail; that some are already in that lake, and that millions more are wending their way thereto. We live in a day when there is almost a universality of this softening the judgments of God down. I never could listen to any man upon that question unless that man himself could bear those judgments for me, and screen me against them; then I would listen to him. But the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way of escape; and the truth is as infallible on the one side as it is on the other: just so sure as "he that believeth shall be saved," just as sure, on the other hand, "he that believeth not shall be damned." This is what I apprehend is the meaning of this second alleluia: "Again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." What weighty and solemn affairs these are! but how, in the contrast, it endears the Savior, who hath delivered us from the wrath to come.

Then comes the third alleluia, which we may call the confirmative department, and in which they all joined. "And the four and twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia." Here is the confirmation. Would the Holy Ghost lead the people to confirm what would not take place? No. Therefore, do not let us dream for a moment that there is any way of escape from the judgment of the great God but Christ Jesus the Lord; and the Lord will bring all his people thus to approve his judgment, and to believe in the reality of his judgment, and to confirm the judgment at the last when he himself shall pass that judgment. It is very solemn to think, in connection with this judgment, of the dissolution of all human ties, —that wife and husband, parent and children, brothers and sisters, will be no more to each other in eternity than those that bore no relation except the common relationship of being the descendants of Adam and Eve. These ties will not at all affect the future world. Divines tell us how pleasing it will be to see our children there, our parents, our husbands and wives and brothers and sisters. All this is fleshly stuff; for though it may please the flesh, and seem very amusing, it is all delusion together; for all these things are to be dissolved; not a vestige of human sympathy is to be left; the sympathy then is to be exclusively with Christ, exclusively with the saints, let those saints have come from where they may. But that does not hinder our prayers for our children and for our relatives. This sentiment I am now advancing, which is perfectly scriptural, does not hinder our delighting at the present in the thought of their being there; yet those of our relatives that shall be there will be no more to us there than others; all will be equal, and shall know as they are known. If this were not true that I am now stating, that all human sympathies will be completely annihilated, how could all these living creatures, how could all the saints, say Amen to the eternal sentence? "Alleluia, Amen." Why, if the dissolution and annihilation of human sympathies were not complete, heaven itself could not be happy. Take Adam and Eve, supposing they are in heaven, and yet to see countless millions of their offspring in hell; why, if they carried their natural sympathies with them into heaven, it could be no heaven to them. Take Abraham, —he sees countless thousands of his posterity in hell; but if he retained his human sympathies there, there would be no happiness in heaven. Does Abraham in his converse with the rich man in hell show any sympathy with him? Not the slightest. Abraham does not show himself the least put out when he tells the rich man that there is a great gulf fixed, and that there can be no passing and repassing. I am quite sure of this, —there is no language, there is no simile, there is no means we have within the range of our power, —no, not in the Bible itself, —that can adequately set forth the terribleness of the eternal wrath and judgments of the great God. "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living

God." Oh, then, contrast with this God's salvation, his glory, and honor, and power. With him on our side the apostle might well say that he hath delivered us from so great a death.

Now this anthem, you will perceive, is contained in the Old Testament; and I have thought for years that this very anthem, to which we have attended for a few moments, is taken from Psalm cxlix. In that psalm you have the saints in a very similar position. It there says, "Let the saints be joyful in glory;" that is, in the glory here spoken of, in the glory of Christ; "let them sing aloud upon their beds." The word "beds" there conveys a very bad idea of the original. I wish they had given us the word "divans/" because it is a kind of banqueting idea, and the people are represented as glorying in Christ; as being in the banqueting-house, and glorying there, and, as it were, luxuriating there in the blessings of God's everlasting love. Then it goes on, "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand." There cannot be such high praises in the mouths of any as in the mouths of the saints of God. And the two-edged sword in their hand, you all know what that is; it is explained to be the word of God. "To execute vengeance upon the heathen," —that is, testimonially so, which they do, —"and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written; this honor have all his saints." Our divines say; Oh, that will be the case by and by. Why; it has been the case always. What, say you, binding their kings with chains? Yes every Christian does this. Joseph could bind Pharaoh; Daniel could bind Nebuchadnezzar, that is, testimonially: and God limited these kings; they could go so far and no farther. That is what I understand by it. The saints of God stand in this position; they know the truth of God, they wield the sword of the Spirit, and they testimonially bind kings and nobles, and everything that is hostile to them, singing as they pass along, to the provocation of the adversary, to the good of their own souls, and to the glory of God, —

"Not a single shaft can hit.
Till the God of love see fit."

Now in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters you have the ravages which the adversary had wrought, which this hostile power had wrought; and you would think, when looking at the ravages which that Romish power had wrought, that there was hardly a Christian left. But so far from that being the case, this very chapter opens with saying, "After these things I heard a great voice of much people." It is one mercy, friends, that the Lord will have his own.

The next part we have to attend to is the marriage of the Lamb; and that is such a delightful, soothing, exulting, and glorious theme, that there is a special command given to the people concerning it; and that command is most mightily, most readily, most eloquently, and most gloriously obeyed. "And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great." It is something, you see, that the little ones are to join in as well as the stronger ones. But just see with what willingness, with what eagerness, with what delight, the people to whom this command was given obeyed it. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." If the Lord God Almighty did not reign, his Son never would have been married; if the Lord God Almighty did not reign, there never would have been a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. See, then, the eloquence with which they answered, "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings." Oh, there is nothing under the heavens will so set the people of God alive as that eternal oneness which the Lord has formed between them and himself by Christ Jesus the Lord; it is everything, because in that oneness, whatever he is, that they are; and it is all summed up in Jeremiah in a very few words, — "This is the name wherewith she shall be called, Jehovah our Righteousness."

Almost the whole of Solomon's Song is taken up with this same delightful subject. Now this is not something that followed the things contained in the preceding chapters; this is something simultaneous with them. There has been no age in which the people of God have not been made acquainted with that eternal unity subsisting between Christ and the church. Then it is added, "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Now people want to persuade us this still stands in the future. For my part, I hold it to be nothing else but a representation of the gospel dispensation, including the idea, of course, of the people being brought into the knowledge of God's counsels, and united to Christ. In entire accordance with this, you read in Matthew xxii. that the king made a marriage for his son, the same simile setting forth the same circumstances.

But we will read on, before we go to the Old Testament. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Now this represents, of course, sanctification, justification, and consecration to God; and when we go back to the seventh chapter, we see how it is that poor sinners (for that is what is meant, after all) thus appear before God in this perfection of purity; for the fine linen, clean and white, is here said to be the righteousness of saints, —that is, the righteousness of Christ imputed to them and given to them. It is expressive of that perfection of purity and of righteousness they have in oneness with Christ. Hence in the seventh chapter it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." For myself I see nothing difficult here. Take this to be expressive of the Lord Jesus Christ, then, as the bridegroom, and the church as the bride. And when the Savior said, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," what was that gospel? Why, a proclamation of the fact that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth;" a proclamation of the fact that "great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh;" a proclamation of the fact that the Savior passed by the nature of angels, and took upon him the seed of Abraham. What was it but a proclamation of the fact that "it behoved him to be made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Therefore, this marriage commenced when the gospel dispensation commenced. I have often admired the command to the Gentile churches (for so it appears to me) in Solomon's Song, —"Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon," that is, Christ Jesus, "with the crown" —the matrimonial crown; and why is he said to be crowned as the Husband? Because he wins the affection of the bride, and he wins the person of the bride, and he hath redeemed the person of the bride, and he hath taken to himself the person of the bride: —"He that hath the bride is the bridegroom." "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him;" I take the mother there to mean the Old Testament church; and we all know the kind of crown that the Old Testament church put upon the Savior's head; —that the Old Testament church well knew that he would accomplish the warfare. In a word, where is there a scripture even of the New Testament more clear upon this achievement of the dear Savior than that in Isaiah liv.? —"Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." And what is all that fifty-fourth chapter, as Dr. Hawker used to say —I perhaps should hardly have ventured to speak in such a familiar way — what is all that fifty-fourth chapter but a love-letter from the Lamb to his bride? Here, then, being thus arrayed in fine linen is expressive of that eternal perfection which we have by Christ Jesus. And I desire to glory in it more and more; there is something so sweet in the thought of standing sinless before God, righteous before God, accepted before God, approved of God. "He will not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perverseness in Israel." Is it any wonder, therefore, that there should be a command given that the Lord in this matter should be so greatly praised? and is it any wonder that the praises of the saints should be represented as the rolling forth of many waters, that they should be represented as mighty thunderings, which will roll on to all eternity? For if anything will make the heart

bound with joy, if anything will make the soul like the chariots of Amminadab, if anything will make the soul to have, as it were, feet like hinds' feet, and to leap over walls, and run through troops, it is the representation of this eternal perfection in Christ, and indissoluble unity with him, never to be severed or dissolved.

Now the Lamb's wife is said to make herself ready, because she is taught by the Lord to do so. She is arrayed in the garments of salvation, she is covered with the robe of righteousness, and she takes the oil of truth in her lamp, and that oil of truth can never be exhausted. All false professions and false doctrines will be extinguished and go out just at the time you most need the light. So the foolish virgins had no truth; their lamps went out; they had human traditions and human doctrines, but those human traditions and doctrines left them in the dark. But if we have the oil of truth, the promise of God, and faith in that, let the hour come where, or when, or how it may; — it matters not at all whether you die by a long or a short illness, whether you die raving mad or in your senses; whether you die suddenly or have seven years' consumption, and employ a hundred and fifty doctors, —it matters not at all; at all times one with Christ, at all times ready in reality; our feeling ourselves ready I grant is quite another thing. But it is said of the wise virgins that they were ready, and went in with the bridegroom; —they did nothing without him; the others had been doing without him, the same as people do now; —they can do everything themselves; whereas the Christian feels he can do nothing without Christ; —"Without me ye can do nothing." Therefore they were accustomed to be with him, and having been with him they went in with him. And so how do you expect to go to heaven at last? With Christ Jesus and by him; he is all and in all, and will be forever.

"And he says unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he says unto me, These are the true sayings of God;" these are sayings that will last forever.

Let us now see if we can get a scripture in the Old Testament that will take up all these items. First you have here the command, and you have the praises eloquently and voluntarily rolled forth; then you have the marriage of the Lamb, and you have the blessedness of those that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Go to Isaiah lxii, and you get it all predicted, just as it is here. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." What do you get at the beginning of this chapter? Why, "salvation, glory, honor, and power." And what do you get at the beginning of Isaiah lxii.? You get the same thing, —salvation and Christ's righteousness. "And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory; and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name;" and this new name is derived from the priesthood of Christ, this new name is derived from salvation. You recollect in Numbers vi., when the Lord had accepted the Nazarite vow, and pronounced the blessing, his command. was to the priest to put his name upon the children of Israel, to denote that we get our new name by the priesthood and salvation of Christ; that we get our new name, if I may say so without lowering the dignity of the subject, as the wife gets her new name —by being married. So in Jeremiah, "This is the name wherewith she" —the church —"shall be called, The Lord our righteousness." "Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God;" so that none are to pluck them out of the hand of the Lord. And now comes the new name; there is the old name and there is the new name. "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken," —that is the old name, — "neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate" — that again is the old name; "but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah," —that is the new name; "and thy land Beulah," —that is the new name; "for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." Why, these are precisely the same truths that are contained in this chapter.

Now just mark something else. It says in this chapter, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." But I think I will notice the last clause first, "These are the true sayings of God." Well, say you, are not all his sayings true sayings? Yes, but these are the true sayings of God in some especial manner, after some especial order. Let us try and ascertain the meaning. There is nothing like keeping to the Bible, that will make us wise for eternity, and that is the best of all wisdom. "These are the true sayings of God," it says here, in relation to this marriage. I should think that must refer to something in the Old Testament of a very peculiar kind. I am quite aware that the Scriptures somewhere call that true that does not stand in contrast to that that is false, but calls that true in contrast to that which is temporal; hence the true riches, in contrast to temporal riches; and hence the truth generally means gospel truth, in contrast to that ceremonial covenant, or that body of truth, that has passed away. But these are the true sayings. "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb;" —these are the true sayings. Isaiah lxii., —there I get the true sayings. "The Lord hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength, Surely I will no more give thy corn to be meat for thine enemies; and the sons of the stranger shall not drink thy wine, for the which thou hast labored; but they that have gathered it shall eat it, and praise the Lord; and they that have brought it together shall drink it in the courts of my holiness." Now there is a true saying. You see he hath sworn by his right hand, and by the arm of his strength; so that his hand must fail and his omnipotency must fail before the Christian can be spiritually starved. Who ever heard of the righteous spiritually begging bread? Thousands have begged bread temporally, but no righteous man ever begged bread spiritually yet, or ever will. Now it says here, "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." I should think so, for all the provisions of that divine and eternal feast are secured to them by the sworn promise of the great God. It seems in Jeremiah that the Lord had given the corn to be meat for the enemies; it seems the sons of the stranger had drunk the wine for which they had labored; you read of the enemy robbing the threshing-floors, and they very often ran away with the harvest and with the vintage of the old covenant people; —on the ground of the people's apostasy the Lord suffered their provision to go, and they came into famine. But Jesus Christ is our provision, and who can run away with him? The promises of God are our provision, and who can run away with them? The wine of the eternal kingdom is that that cheers our hearts, and who can run away with that? We cannot lose it, it cannot be taken away. What the Savior says upon another point will apply here; —here it is, that no thief can break through nor steal, no moth can corrupt. "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." "Whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Now when John saw all this, he was so delighted, so charmed, so carried away, that he forgot himself, and fell down to worship the angel: —"I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." This is one of his brethren, a glorified brother; and what does he possess? Oh, he says, I have the testimony of Jesus. So have I. He came into the world to save sinners, —I have that testimony; and he came to confirm the new covenant, and to do his Father's will; —I have the testimony of Jesus; —so have we. Well, then, if that brother was to come down here, we should agree very well; and if we were to go up there, we should agree very well; —he will not change, and we shall not change, and Jesus will not change, and the gospel will not change, and our God will not change; and so it will go shining on to endless ages. "Worship God " —that is, by Christ Jesus; "for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." So it is; for we never can find any life, or any spirit, or any spirituality, in any prophecy where Jesus Christ is not. When people tell me the Jews are going to Canaan, and the Turks are going I don't know where I'm sure, and that we are to have this, and that, and the other, it is all dead to me. Jesus is the spirit, he is the life. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." What is the spirit and life of that text? Jesus Christ. What is the spirit and life of the typical priesthood? Jesus Christ. What is the spirit and life of the typical royalty? Jesus Christ. What is the spirit and life of the ancient

temple, the land of Canaan, the city of Jerusalem? He is the spirit and life of it all. And what is the spirit and life of the people.? Jesus Christ; —he is the life of everything that is heavenly.

Now John goes back again to the beginning of the gospel dispensation. This book is ranged, as I have before said, in columns, side by side, not chronologically, but the subjects are ranged side by side. "He saw heaven opened." That does not mean the heaven of glory, but the heavenly dispensation; and you may depend upon it John saw it shut too. What does the Savior say? "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! ye shut up the kingdom of heaven." How so? By setting aside that which is essential to open it; and what is essential to open it? Why, if I may have one little bit of good out of old dame Church's basket, old dame Church says that Jesus Christ hath opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers —that he is essential. But the scribes and Pharisees set that aside that opened the kingdom of heaven to poor sinners; and the Savior said, "Ye enter not in yourselves, and ye suffer not them that are entering to go in;" that is, as far as their laws and ecclesiastical authority could stop them; but when God brings a man in, none can stop the man from entering in. Then the Savior appears here on a white horse. Now the Savior never rode on a white horse, nor a black horse, nor a red horse, nor any other horse literally; it is true he did ride upon an ass in this world; you must therefore take this language as a figurative way of setting forth the triumphant march of the dear Savior through time by the power of the gospel, and bringing one and another to know his name, as in Psalm xlv., —"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the king's enemies." "Behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew, but he himself;" and what is this but a declaration of his eternal Deity? None but God can know God. He himself alone could know that name; he knew the weightiness of his name, the greatness of his name. "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood," expressive of the wars through which he had come in his humiliation; and his name is called "The Word of God;" and that is a name that no one but himself knows. "In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God; and the Word was God." So that the name of his Deity will ever remain to us an infinite ocean of glory; the name of his Deity will ever remain to us fathomless, measureless, an eternal and a glorious ocean. "And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." This must not be taken literally, nor does it mean the heaven of glory, but the heavenly dispensation; and their following him upon white horses is expressive of their purity, and expressive of the great fact that they are carried victoriously along. What a defiant power there is in the mediatorial and eternal perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ!

I need not dwell upon the sharp sword that goes out of his mouth, that he should smite the nations; that you know to be his blessed word; and he has smitten the nations with his word; and every minister every time he preaches desires that every sinner in the place may be smitten with God's word, —may be smitten with a conviction of what he is as a sinner, and be led to seek God's eternal mercy. "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords;" —there is his eternal Deity. We know that he is God, but to comprehend infinity is what we shall never desire to do. We glory in our religion because it is an infinite mystery. The Eternal Three are an infinite mystery, a glorious mystery; we delight in the grandeur and greatness thereof.

Then here is something apparently very ambiguous; — here is an angel standing in the sun, not the sun literally, but spiritually. The angel, of course, means a minister; and that is his place, —to stand in the sunlight of Christ Jesus, and as a star reflect the same upon the minds of men. And he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God, that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and

bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." Is not this a very strange thing, that these fowls of the air should be called together to eat the flesh of kings, and captains, and mighty men, and bondmen and freemen —all classes of men? and that in connection with that kings and armies should be gathered together against Christ? What connection can there be between these fowls thus living upon the flesh of all men, and kings and armies gathered together against Christ? In the second verse of the preceding chapter we read that the mystic Babylon is fallen, and is become "a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Who are these fowls that feed upon all flesh —from the highest to the lowest — birds of prey? Literally you can understand it very easily. "Where so ever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together;" —that means the Jewish church was the dead carcass, and the Romans were the eagles that were gathered together to prey upon that dead carcass. But that is not the meaning here; it must be taken spiritually; and the fowls of the heavens are those servants of the devil that prey upon men of all grades and classes, —"eat their flesh." How is that? There is a fleshly religion, a sensuous religion, which lays hold of the flesh; and thousands and thousands of these fowls of the air —call them priests if you like —have been maintained by the fleshly offerings, the fleshly affections, and the fleshly delusions of all classes in bygone times, and of the people now in some countries. I therefore take the fowls of the air, to speak plainly, to mean the priests of a false religion, and that their eating the flesh means that they are maintained in the fleshly, not in the spiritual sense; there is no spirituality in them, but they are maintained in their fleshly religion by all grades, from the highest to the lowest. And then these fowls of the air, these priests, gather kings and armies together against him that sat on the horse. Go back to Persia, go back to Rome pagan, go from there to the valleys of Piedmont, go from there to the Bastille of France, go from there to the Inquisition of Spain, go from there to the Tower of London, to the Smithfield of London; if you are at all acquainted with the historical circumstances that have taken place in all those and many other places, there you see these birds of prey have made victims of kings, mighty men, captains, humble men, men of all grades, made victims of them for their infernal purposes, to carry out their damnable religion, and so delude the people as to bring them into active hostility against God's truth, and subject them to that judgment with which the chapter closes.

XXIII. THE GOSPEL DISPENSATION.

We come this evening to the twentieth chapter, in which we have what is called the thousand years' reign of the saints; but with the chronograms in this book I shall not meddle, reserving that for next Wednesday evening, which will be my last lecture upon the book. That this twentieth chapter means the whole of the gospel dispensation, from the beginning to the end thereof, for we have at the end of this chapter the judgment day, —if you find nothing in this chapter but that which you find in the gospel dispensation, should you not think the chapter is intended to represent that dispensation to which it so precisely answers? If therefore we examine the chapter, we shall find that it contains nothing which we do not find in the gospel dispensation; and if this be the case, then certainly the one represents the other. With that view I shall deal with the chapter this evening; and it presents itself in a threefold form. Here is, first, the limitation of the enemy; secondly, the enthronement and reign of the saints; thirdly, the ultimate judgment.

First, the limitation of the enemy: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him

up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that he must be loosed a little season." Here we have an account, together with some other things in the chapter, of the limitation of the enemy.

Now the angel coming down from heaven is of course the angel of the new covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ coming down by the gospel, and his having a key is expressive of authority. You find the same in the first chapter of this book, — "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death." Satan is here said to be cast into the bottomless pit. This does not mean hell. We usually speak of hell as the bottomless pit, but this is not the meaning here. The original word "abyss" is sometimes translated "deep," as when the devils were cast out, they besought the Savior not to send them into the deep, the abyss; the same word. The abyss, here called the bottomless pit, into which the adversary is cast, is nothing else but this world, as we can easily prove presently; and the meaning is substantially the same as in the twelfth chapter, where you read that Satan was cast out, and there was place found for him no more in heaven.

Then it is said that this angel had a "great chain in his hand." We must not take that literally, but figuratively. Satan cares naught for material chains or material fetters; he cares naught for gates of brass or bars of iron. Go to Mark v., and you will find the poor Gadarene possessed with a legion of devils, and he was bound with chains and with fetters, but he snapped them asunder, he cared naught for them. You must not, therefore, take this chain literally, you must take it figuratively, to represent, shall I call it, the statute of limitation put upon the adversary by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor must we understand this limitation to mean that the adversary had no room to move; the length of the chain God alone knows; for Peter says, "Your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." And therefore the length of this chain we do not know; we see what he has done, and we see in a measure what he is still doing.

Now we read in Jude, "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness." You would think from that they were so confined they had no power to go about; but notwithstanding their being reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, yet they had power to go about. If therefore you take their being reserved in everlasting chains to mean that they had no power to go about, how is it that a legion possessed the Gadarene? and how is it that when this legion left the Gadarene they entered into the herd of swine, and the swine ran down a steep place, and were all choked in the sea? Does not that scripture then show us that while Satan is bound, and while fallen angels are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, that is, under despair, unto the last day, Satan's being here bound does not mean that he is unable to move? for he goes about still seeking whom he may devour. Take, then, this view of the matter, that Satan is thus limited, and he is limited, too, in the several characters in which he is here represented.

It is said of this angel that "he laid hold on the dragon." Now we must not take that as a material dragon, but we must take it to mean the great enemy of our souls; he is called the dragon because of his tyranny. But then Christ holds Satan, in that character, in his hand; therefore, you may still go on and sing, —

"Not a single shaft can hit
Till the God of love see fit."

Christ has conquered the enemy in his tyranny, and cast him out, as we shall presently have more particularly to observe. Then it is added "that old serpent;" there he is in his deceptiveness, but he cannot deceive God, — "that old serpent, which is the devil;" the word "devil" means a destroyer, and so Satan has destroyed us as we stand in the first Adam, but he cannot touch us in the last Adam, for there is place found no more for him in heaven; he got into the Jewish heavens, but he cannot get into the Christian

heavens; there we abide, and the wicked one touches us not. And not only the dragon, the serpent, the devil, but "Satan," an adversary; but that adversary is conquered by the Savior.

And it is said he "cast him into the bottomless pit." As I have said before, the original word is "abyss." I believe that the abyss here refers to those deep schemes and plans of the adversary by which he carries on his work. Oh, what a depth is Popery! and Puseyism, that began like a mere puddle; —why, Popery and Puseyism are joining, and Puseyism is trying to rise into connection with the ocean of Catholicism. These deep systems hold millions of our fellow-creatures in darkness, and Satan is in these deeps. But however deep these deeps may be, our God is deeper. "O God, thy thoughts are very deep," deeper than the thoughts of the adversary, infinitely so. So, then, Satan is cast into that abyss. And what is this Ecumenical Council now sitting at Rome? Why, a synagogue of Satan, a place where the wise of this world have met together to see what schemes they can devise by which to carry on their system, by which to deceive the souls of men, and to exalt one class to the entire prostration of the other. As soon as you join the Romish Church you lose your individuality; from that moment you dare not think for yourself, you dare not speak for yourself, you dare not be an individual; you are merely a drop in the ocean of Popery, in that abyss, and you must be content to be carried just where they like to carry you. Thus, then, I take the angel to mean Jesus Christ, when he came to earth, and especially when the glorious gospel of God began to be preached, and I take the meaning here to be the same in substance as two scriptures I will mention. Isa. xxvii., "In that day the Lord with his sore and great and strong sword;" —now we must not take the sword literally; leviathan would laugh at a literal sword; leviathan would turn mere creature darts into stubble; he would laugh at the mere shaking of a creature spear; but the sword there is God's eternal truth, God's blessed word; and that is the sword by which the apostles threw Satan down as lightning from the heavens. "The Lord, with his sore and great and strong sword, shall punish leviathan the piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent; and he shall slay the dragon that is in the sea."

You cannot take that last clause literally; Satan is not slain as to being, yet it there says, "He shall slay the dragon," which simply means as to his power. And in Hebrews ii. you find similar language used, where the apostle says, "That through death he" —Christ Jesus — "might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." There I apprehend it simply means that Jesus Christ should by his death take away sin, and bring in righteousness, and destroy the adversary's power legally to lay anything before God to our charge. The Savior having thus put away sin, and brought in eternal righteousness, and we being brought to receive Jesus Christ, Satan has hereby lost his power, because he cannot substantiate anything before God against them that thus receive Christ Jesus the Lord. There was no sort of power by which Satan could have overcome Adam and Eve if he had not got them to sin; that's the way he overcame them; he got them to apostatise from God's order of things, and then, when he got them to do this, he gained the mastery.

Now in Isaiah it says, "In that day," at the same time that Christ should achieve this, "sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine;" that you must not take literally, of course, but spiritually. "I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." Then again you will find the dear Savior use very similar language in relation to casting the enemy out; for let me just tell you if the enemy were not bound, none of us could ever have been unbound. Therefore, you find the dear Savior compares the soul to a palace, and that Satan has possession of the soul; the strong man, Satan, has possession of the soul; but when a stronger than he shall come —and the disciples learnt who the stronger was; they commanded the devil to go out, but the devil cared naught for them, they could not cast him out; but when the stronger man, Christ Jesus, came, then the adversary was cast out. And just so it is that the Savior says, "When the stronger man shall come, he shall bind the strong man, spoil his goods, and take possession of the palace." Thus, then, the adversary is so cast down, that he cannot touch the people of

God as they stand in God's love, in God's choice, in God's Christ, in God's kingdom. Touch us in our body and circumstances he may and does, touch us in our life he does, touch us in our death he may, but he cannot touch us as we stand in Christ Jesus.

"And he cast him into the abyss," as it should be read, "and shut him up," that is, limited him, "and set a seal upon him," so that wherever he went he might be known. And you may see him everywhere pretty well. I should reckon it comparatively bearable to see him in the profane world, if we saw him nowhere else; but we very often see him in the pulpit, and we very often see him in the pew, and we know him by the seal that is set upon him. There is a twofold inscription on the seal, —"Liar, murderer," those are the two; and a false doctrine always inspires the mind with enmity. Therefore, whenever you meet with a man preaching a doctrine that inspires the mind with enmity against God's grace, God's Christ, God's salvation, against those great essentials of the everlasting gospel without which we cannot be saved, there you may see the mark of the beast, there you may see the seal of Satan, there you may recognize his presence, although under a great deal of pretension to holiness and goodness.

Then it is said "that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season." Now I hold that this chapter is a representation of the gospel dispensation, and that the thousand years are to be understood mystically, beginning when this dispensation began; that will be our business to prove when we come to the chronograms of this chapter; and holding this, I must now make some admissions.

People have said to me, You talk about Satan being bound, —why, say they, when he shall be bound no one will be deceived; because it says that "he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled;" therefore, say they, as he does still deceive the nations, it must be clear that the thousand years have not yet commenced; for when the thousand years shall commence, the enemy shall no more deceive the nations. He does deceive them, and they are still under deception; therefore, say they, it is clear beyond all dispute that the thousand years have not yet commenced; and, say they, how you can be so foolish as to suppose they have commenced we cannot make out. Well, then, friends, if you will listen patiently for two or three minutes, we will just look into this matter. First, then, it is clear that the adversary up to the present time has, as far as he has been permitted, deceived the nations of the earth; that the adversary is still carrying on delusions and deceptions; there can be no doubt whatever about that. Every one of us by nature is deceived; there is not one soul under the heavens while in a state of nature that is not in a state of delusion and deception, and nothing but regenerating grace can bring us out of this deception. Therefore I freely admit thus publicly that Satan hath deceived the nations, that he doth deceive the nations, and that I believe he will deceive the nations to the end of time. Well, say you, it here says that he shall deceive the nations no more; so that if this thousand years had commenced, his deceptions would cease; but his delusions have not ceased, therefore the thousand years have not commenced. Now that looks very well by itself; but it is one of the most dangerous things possible to take an isolated scripture and base your theory upon it, and draw your conclusions without seeing what other scriptures say upon the same subject.

Now suppose, after what I have said, it should turn out beyond all dispute, suppose it should be clear beyond the possibility of contradiction, that Satan carries on deception during the whole of this thousand years; what should you say then? Well, say you, I should be at a loss; —he is not to deceive the nations any more, and yet you say he carries on his deceptions during the whole of this thousand years. Ah, why are these scriptures difficult with us? Because we pay so little attention to them. If we were half as attentive to God's blessed word in its variety of meanings as we are to the little fid-fads of life, we should

know more of the Holy Scriptures, and it would be a greater pleasure for ministers to preach, because then without any difficulty they could carry their hearers with them.

Now I have said that while Satan doth deceive, this chapter says he shall not deceive the nations anymore; but this same chapter will show us that he carries on deceptions during the whole of this thousand years; therefore, how are we to understand it? That he carries on deceptions during the whole of this thousand years the seventh and eighth verses of this chapter will prove: — "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison," that is, his coast shall be enlarged, his limits shall be enlarged, he shall be let out for a little season; that we will deal with presently. "And shall go out to deceive the nations which are," during this thousand years, "in the four quarters of the earth," that is, east, west, north, and south, that is, all over the world, —"Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle; the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." Thus then you get during this thousand years Gog and Magog, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea; and if these countless millions were not under Satanic deception, could they be marshalled so readily together to do Satanic work? If these persons were not in a state of delusion and darkness, could they at Satan's call become warriors against God, and aim to shed the blood of his saints? If Judas had possessed grace in his heart, Satan never could have taken possession of that heart; if Judas had not been a deluded man, he could not have been the ready tool of the devil; and if the chief priests, and Pharisees, and Pilate, and all the rest of them had not been under the direst delusion, they could not have done as they did. I may just say that this Gog and Magog are taken from Ezekiel xxxviii. and xxxix., and the same characters are there intended that are intended here. It is a mystic name for all the enemies of the cross of Christ and of the truth of God. Now etymology is not always safe, but I may just observe that Cruden, who in most respects is rather a safe guide upon the meaning of Scripture words, says that the words Gog and Magog signify "a covering." If that be the right meaning, how expressive it is of the adversary! The Pope, under the cover of pretended holiness; Popery, under the cover of pretended divine authority, under the cover of the Lord's name; and the priests, under the cover of sheep's clothing, for they clothe themselves in the name of the Lord, —carry on their murderous and diabolical counsels as far as they can, for inwardly they are ravening wolves, or they would not have done as they have done.

And now where is your universal conversion? where is your personal reign on earth? where is your tranquility during this thousand years? Why, here is a number that is as the sand of the sea. Now just look at it, —is not this a solemn fact at present? Here we are in a world of, it is supposed, about twelve hundred millions of inhabitants and but a mere fraction of them know the truth; yea, it is only a very small portion of them that even profess the Christian name, in comparison of the main bulk; and then if we deduct from them all mere professors, and have nothing left but real possessors, do we not live in a day when the Savior's words are still true, that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it?" So then, in Oriental language, is there not a number now like the sand of the sea that are enemies to God? And these are all over the world, in the four quarters of the world, during this thousand years.

Now according to my way of thinking, the thousand years commenced when the gospel dispensation commenced. There have been enemies ever since, there are enemies now, and will be to the end of time; and nothing will ever fill this old earth with the knowledge of the Lord. The earth that is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord is the new earth; the earth that is to be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea, is that new earth, that, holy mountain where the Lord shall dwell, and where he shall be known by all the inhabitants thereof, from the least to the greatest.

Do you not think we have got into a little bit of a dilemma here? First, he shall deceive the nations no more, and therefore the thousand years are not commenced, because he does deceive the nations. Secondly, it turns out when we examine this thousand years, that here is a number that no man can number, as the sand of the sea, during this thousand years, all deceived, and ready at any moment to be marshalled by the adversary against the saints of God. There it is; I suppose I must not leave it there. I am not sure I have the meaning; I promised at the outset to tell you what I thought was the meaning, but you must think and judge for yourselves. Here is the testimony that he should not deceive the nations any more. Now the great point is to get at the sense. As we so often say, the sense of a word does not always lie in the sound of it, nor always in the letters of which the word is composed; we must get at the sense of it. What is the meaning? To my mind the meaning is as clear and at the same time as solemn as anything well can be. Now if the enemy hath deceived, if he doth deceive, and if during this thousand years he deceives, and yet the chapter says he shall not deceive the nations any more until the thousand years are expired, and then he shall deceive them again, what is the meaning? The meaning must be that it is some special deception, that it is some kind of deception that differs from the ordinary deceptions of Satan. There are the ordinary deceiving's of Satan, and there are his especial deceiving's; and I should imagine —and by examining the matter I find I am borne out in the idea, —I should imagine there are some circumstances that have preceded this dispensation wherein Satan deceived the nations in some especial manner that should be a type of the deception here referred to. Now what is the kind of deception here referred to? That I will come to presently, after I have just reminded you that the greatest deception that ever Satan carried out, and the most analogous to this, —there are others, but I will fasten upon that one, —the greatest deception that ever Satan practiced, and that ever he carried out, was that of crucifying Christ. Look at the prophecy of Caiaphas —that prophecy being by virtue of his office, not by virtue of the Holy Ghost, —and what did the people do? Caiaphas's idea was that Jesus Christ was so offensive to God, that if they would but get rid of this Jesus Christ and crucify him, then the scattered tribes, whom Caiaphas there calls the children of God, would be gathered together. "Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people." Caiaphas did not mean that he should die substitutionally, Caiaphas did not mean that he should die for sinners, but that he should be put to death to get him out of the way, because he was offensive to God. Now imagine to yourselves Jesus Christ's miracles, and Jesus Christ's ministry; —what did the people do? Ran away from it, hated it, despised it. But when Caiaphas comes forward with the vilest plan of deception and lies, all the people believed it directly. All the Savior said and all he did were despised. Just so it is now, where the real, living truth is, there are but few to believe it; but bring some feasible and enormous lie, the greater the lie the more ready are people to believe it. Why, if Popery were not such a huge lie as it is, very few people would believe it. It is the hugeness of the lie, the greatness of the deception, that leads men to believe it. Were nations ever so deceived as were the Jewish and the Roman nations of that day? The Savior might well say, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Now Satan shall never do the like again until the end of the gospel dispensation; he never has since, and he will never do the like again. What did that deception do? It brought the most awful destruction upon the Jewish nation, by a series and variety of miseries never before endured by any nation under the heavens; also it brought upon pagan Rome such miseries, that Gibbon in his history says that a moiety of the people of the Roman empire were destroyed. Thus Satan so deceived them as to bring swift destruction upon those nations. Now he has never done that since, but he will by and by. He is not able so to deceive nations now as to bring swift destruction upon them. The Bible is still revered, and is translated into a great many languages; and our American friends are working hard to circulate the Holy Scriptures in that great country that is fast becoming the tower and bulwark of Christian liberty. America is that that the Pope dreads more than he does England: and our own Dr. Manning is the vilest of all the priests that are at Rome now; he is the worst among them all, — with a great hope that he shall convert England, but he never will; and if they did, we would be off to our cousins in America, and turn round and laugh at them. Bless the Lord, the Bible is still going on, and

Satan will not be able so to deceive the nations as to bring swift destruction upon them until the end of this dispensation. Thus, then, I take the deception here not to mean the ordinary deceptions of Satan, because it is clear he has carried on his ordinary deceptions, does carry them on now, and carries them on during this thousand years. Here is the Gog and Magog, a number no man can number.

Now I will just, to avoid tediousness, look at his ultimate deception. He marshals this Gog and Magog together. As I have said before, if they had not been under the ordinary delusions of Satan, they would not have been prepared for his extraordinary delusions. You know what one of old said when the prophet told him what he should do. Why, the cruelties that Hazael should thus perpetrate went so far beyond the customary cruelties even of kings, that he said, "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" Yes, all the time you are under Satan's ordinary delusions, you are thereby prepared to be enlisted in the worst part of his service, and to become a deadly enemy practically to the saints of God. But it does appear that the enemy shall never hurt the people of God again. When he appears again, what shall the deception be? Why, it shall be this; he shall marshal the enemy against the camp of the saints, and the beloved city, and he shall make sure that he will be able to conquer and to manage them. Here is his extraordinary deception, which he shall not be able to carry out. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth," not this earth we inhabit, but the new earth. We read of a new heaven and a new earth, not material, but spiritual, and we shall possess the new earth and the new heavens forever. Therefore, the meaning simply is that they compassed the Church of God about. "The camp of the saints," —it first represents them as dwellers, and secondly represents them in conflict, — "the camp of the saints, and the beloved city." And now mark, — "And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them;" —not devoured them from being; it does not mean that, because then the following words could not be true, —but devoured them as to their power. Come, then, do not let us be afraid of the Pope, with a few priests, a few frogs hopping about the land; their day is gone; the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. And while Satan did so deceive the Jewish and Roman nations as to bring swift destruction upon them, he shall not repeat his extraordinary deceptions until just before the end of the world.

"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." A little close reading here will show you that Satan is not at the judgment seat; that is to say, he is already defeated, he is already cast into the lake of fire. Just now he was cast into the abyss, —into the deeps of the plans of this world; now, ultimately, he is cast into the lake of fire, —that is, hell. First, then, we have Satan limited, and it is our mercy that he is so; here we have comfort, and can rejoice: secondly, we have the fact that he shall never so deceive the nations in that extraordinary way so as to bring swift destruction upon them until just before the judgment day. I tremble while I speak of these matters. It does appear to me that so far from there being what is called universal conversion, the tremendous question will then remain to be answered, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith upon the earth?" Here we have a number at the last which no man can number, whom Satan so deceives as to bring swift destruction upon himself and them too, while the saints appear to be but few.

I now notice the enthronement of the saints. "I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Now what does the Savior say about these thrones in Matthew xix.? It applies to the apostles first, and then to all the people of God. "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration" —that is, in Christ's resurrection state, —"when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Here you read that "judgment was given unto them." That means two

things. First, that judgment was given in their favor; and so judgment always has been and ever will be given in favor of him that believeth. "He that believeth shall be saved." "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Thus judgment is given in their favor. Then, secondly, judgment being given to them means that it is given to them to judge. So the apostles could judge between truth and error, and the Christian can judge between truth and error. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are spiritually discerned; but he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged by no man."

Here, then, these thrones mean, in the first place, spiritual thrones, places of spiritual dignity; not political dignity, not Canterbury, not Rome, not a seat in the House of Lords; but it means spiritual thrones, spiritual dignities, those dignities described by the apostle when he says, "He hath raised us up, and caused us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." These are the thrones. Then again it is said they "reigned with Christ a thousand years." The Holy Ghost is not here speaking of Christ's eternal reign, but of his time reign. When we come to the chronograms of this book, we shall show that the thousand years here refer not to Christ's eternal reign, but to his time reign, and I shall bring forward several scriptures to show that the Old Testament very frequently distinguishes between the time reign of Christ and his eternal reign. Therefore the reigning a thousand years means that there was a succession of Christians that reigned for a thousand years. But then some hold that this thousand years is a glorious time in which the martyrs are to be rewarded, and therefore they would so read this verse as to make out that none but the martyrs reigned during this mystic thousand years. Well, we will just try that too. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast."

Now that little word "which" would make it appear that none but the martyrs reigned during this thousand years. Well, I looked today at two or three other translations; I thought, I won't trust myself about it. I looked at the American Bible Union Society's translation, —how they rendered it; and then I looked at another translation, and then at another, and I found that two rendered it thus, —instead of saying "which had not worshipped the beast," they render it, "and whosoever had not worshipped the beast." Oh, I said, there it is; here are two classes of people; —here are the martyrs, and here are those who are not martyrs, that have "not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands." I get therefore here two classes of people, namely, martyrs, and those who are not actually martyrs, yet they had not worshipped the beast, neither his image.

Now is it not just so with the gospel dispensation? Have we not had thousands of martyrs, and have we not thousands that are not martyrs? As I have said, two of the translations render it "and whosoever," and the American Bible Union version reads it "and those," showing there were two classes, —that they were not all martyrs, yet they had not worshipped the beast. The beast, as I have said before, means a spirit of tyranny in the people, —the people upholding the Pope; so that that spirit that would put down everything in order to keep Popery up, all the people that are involved in that spirit constitute the beast. And of course the image of the beast is the Pope, the representative of the beast. And to receive his mark in the hand is to subscribe to his religion; and upon the forehead is openly to profess it. There are some would rather have the mark in the hand, because they do not want everybody to know they are Papists; and others do not care, so they have the mark upon the forehead. So here are some that were actually martyrs, some that were not martyrs; but those that were not martyrs would not worship the beast. Well, let us come to ourselves. There are about a hundred and eighty millions, I believe, of Roman Catholics in the world. Well, that is a large number, and yet we little few here would not worship the beast, we would not bow to it, we would not own it. And as to the image, the Pope, we wish him personally no harm, but

I would rather worship the devil myself, if I must worship one of them; I should have the original then. And as to receiving his mark upon my forehead or in my hand, why, I am consecrated to Christ by the Spirit of God, by a covenant ordered in all things and sure, so I have no room for anything else; God fills up every nook, every corner; God is all and in all. So then if we are not martyrs, we have the martyr's spirit.

Thus, then, they lived and "reigned with Christ a thousand years," or during the whole of this gospel dispensation, that is, there was a continued succession of true Christians. "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection." I shall have no time to touch upon the last part this evening. "The rest of the dead lived not again." It is lamentable that such a simple scripture as that should puzzle any of us. Do not you see that we all died in Adam? Certainly. Then those who are regenerated, — what is regeneration? Why, the resurrection of the soul from the dead, and that is the first resurrection, and the next will be the resurrection of your body. And then again, Christ's resurrection also is called the first resurrection. So that "blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection;" blessed and holy is he that is regenerated; blessed and holy is he that hath part in the resurrection of Christ;" on such the second death hath no power." But the rest lived not again until the judgment day; that is to say, they died in Adam, they live dead in sin, they die dead in sin; not redeemed, therefore lived not again until the last day; then they shall be raised up for the first time to see their fearful condition; they shall be raised up for the first time to recognize the tremendous wrath under which they are, and the terrible state they are in. It is true when they depart the soul enters into hell, but there is a life of eternal misery before them to be commenced at the last great day.

Thus the adversary is limited; thus the deceptions here referred to appear to me to be those special deceptions to which I have referred; and that he should not carry out any such deceptions after the crucifixion of Christ until the end of time, when he shall, as this chapter shows, be stopped in the very center thereof. Then you have the enthronement of the saints, the reign of the saints, and they shall be kings and priests, generation after generation, while this thousand years or gospel dispensation shall last.

You have then, at the end of the chapter, which I will not attempt to meddle with now, the last great day. I will say only two things in conclusion. You will find at the end of this chapter what you will find in other scriptures, that the just and the unjust are raised from the dead at the same resurrection. Christ's people rise first, but the others rise immediately afterwards; so that they shall be placed, as it were, in juxtaposition, face to face. And then also, if they be raised at the same time, what becomes of the doctrine that some hold, —that the resurrection is at the beginning of this thousand years? There is no account of any resurrection at the beginning of this thousand years; but at the end of the thousand years, the end of mundane time, the end of this dispensation, there is the resurrection both of the just and the unjust. As says the Savior, the resurrection is to be at the last day.

XXIV. TWENTIETH CHAPTER OK REVELATION.

We have, in conclusion, this evening again to notice the twentieth chapter. And the reasons why I believe this thousand years represents the gospel dispensation from its beginning to its end may be summed up in two: first, because there is nothing found in this twentieth chapter which is not found in the gospel dispensation; and secondly, because it is one of the usages of Scripture to speak definitely and figuratively of indefinite periods, which shall be the second point we will work out.

I hold, then, that this thousand years must be understood not literally, but figuratively; and the first reason is that there is nothing in this chapter which is not found in the gospel dispensation. I will just mention three theories upon this chapter before I come to my own. Some of the learned hold that the thousand years here mentioned meant a very short period indeed, that it simply meant the apostolic age; —that "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day;" therefore they believe that it meant the apostolic age; and that at the end of the apostolic age, Satan, by the agency of Rome pagan, was let loose for a little season. This is one of the theories. But then, at the end of this chapter, you have the judgment day, the final judgment, and certainly no resurrection or judgment took place at the end of the power of Rome pagan; therefore, we may dismiss that theory without any more remark. The next theory is that this thousand years represents a very happy state of things on earth, when Christ will come on earth, and reign personally, and that all Christians, or good people, will at the beginning of this thousand years be raised from the dead, and will reign with Christ during this thousand years. That we shall put to the test presently. Then there are some that hold that only the martyrs will be raised from the dead at the beginning of this thousand years, and that they are to have this thousand years on the earth with Christ as a kind of extra reward for their extra sufferings; just as though they would be rewarded more by being on earth than they would by being in heaven; just as though Jesus Christ was coming to the earth to be more glorious on the earth than he is in heaven. But then, unfortunately for this theory so far, you find here are two classes of persons spoken of, —the martyrs, and those who were not martyrs, and had not worshipped the beast, nor his image, nor received his mark. So that here you get, then, in the beginning of this chapter, all the people of God, —those who were martyrs, and those who were not martyrs; and do not we find just this in the gospel dispensation? Have not thousands been martyrs, and have there not been thousands of Christians that have not been martyrs? But does this chapter in the beginning of it say anything about the resurrection from the dead? I think not. You read here of Satan being bound, you read of the enthronement and the reign of the people of God, and you read that they lived and reigned with Christ during this thousand years, this mystic period; but the rest of the dead lived not again, which we explained in the last Lecture, showing that all died in Adam; and when the Lord's people are regenerated, Christ is as much the resurrection of the soul as he shall at the last be the resurrection of the body; and yet they say that all the saints will be raised at the beginning of this thousand years, —just contrary to the testimony of the Savior, who no less than four times in the sixth of John says of his people that they shall be raised up at the Last day. Now just mark one thing upon this theory, —that at the beginning of this thousand years John does not say a word about the body, but speaks only of the soul. "I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and of those which had not worshipped the beast." He looks only at the souls, and he says of these souls that thus lived and reigned with Christ that "this is the first resurrection;" and what is this but regeneration? And "blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection;" that is, in regeneration. What does the apostle Paul say? "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." There is therefore nothing in the beginning of this chapter about the resurrection of the body; but at the end of this chapter you read that "death and hell" —the marginal reading is there perhaps preferable, —"death and the grave" —delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works." And it is said, "the books were opened," meaning of course the several books of the Bible; and they all stood before God, and were judged out of those books that were opened. But then in addition to this here is another book: —"And another book" —the book of life is of course the gospel of God —"was opened, which is the book of life." Here you see, then, you have the ungodly raised from the dead, and you have the godly, and the book of life is brought forward, to attest and to show who they are that shall enter into eternal glory. But again I say, what is the book of life? Well, you may, for the sake of explanation, substitute a word or two for the word "life," and that would give you an idea of what is meant by the book of life. Take, for instance, the

word "faith;" —"he that believeth hath everlasting life;" that man therefore proves by his faith that his name is in the book of life. So that the Lamb's book of life is the book of faith; it is a book containing the names, and destiny, and privilege of all believers. Then, again, there is the love of the truth; all are to be damned that receive not the love of the truth. So the book of life is the book of truth, of new-covenant truth, of eternal truth; the ministration of the Spirit being thus life. And "whosoever was not found written in the book of life," the book of faith, whosoever was not a believer, whosoever was not found in the love of the truth —and mind, the word "truth," when used in the gospel sense, stands in contrast both to the law and to the old covenant; —whosoever did not die in the faith, in the love of the truth, "was cast into the lake of fire." When I look, then, at the fact that no general judgment took place at the end of the pagan power, I cannot believe the thousand years terminated then. When I look also at the fact that there is but one resurrection spoken of, —I mean of the body, —being the final resurrection at the end of this chapter; that here you get at the end of this chapter the resurrection of the lost and the resurrection of the saved; —when I look at this, and then look at the fact that there are during this thousand years Gog and Magog, a number that is as the sand of the sea, I cannot believe that this thousand years means a future state of happiness on earth; I cannot believe that this thousand years means anything more than what we have already got. The world will go on just as it is to the end of time; the only difference may be that which we pray for; —that there may be more outpouring of the Holy Spirit, that there may be more power attending the word, that larger numbers may be brought to know the Lord. But there will never be, while the world stands, another dispensation; so that this millennium is a mere myth, a mere delusion, a mere nothing. First, then, it cannot mean the apostolic age, because there was no general judgment at the end of that age; secondly, it cannot mean the resurrection of the saved at the beginning of the thousand years, and the resurrection at the end of the thousand years of the others; because there is nothing said in the beginning of this chapter about the resurrection of the body, but there is something said at the end of this chapter of death and the grave giving up the dead; at the end of this chapter you get the books by which the lost are to be judged, and the book by which the saved are to be judged. Where, then, is your wonderful earthly millennium?

The third theory is this, and it makes a nearer approach, perhaps, to the truth than either of those I have named; — the next theory that some of the learned hold is this, that this thousand years must be taken a day for a year, and then it will mean three hundred and sixty-five thousand years. And there is one learned man —Dr. Cumming —I can't say whether he is coming over to my way of thinking, —I can't say how that may be, but the good Doctor thinks that it ought to be taken in that way, —three hundred and sixty-five thousand years; and the good Doctor, to favor us with a good long prospect, says that he thinks this thousand years, this three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, taking a day for a year, commenced at the Reformation, rather more than three hundred years ago; so that really some of you may take courage for the next generation; if it means three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, why, the New Testament dispensation, according to that doctrine, is hardly born yet; it has hardly got out of its long clothes yet, it can hardly run alone yet; it is quite a little infant. Only think of it, we are not yet two thousand years old, and we have nearly three hundred and sixty-five thousand years left. Well, I will say that the Doctor is not out as to this kind of usage in Scripture; for the Scripture does sometimes speak in that way, putting a day for a year. I will give two instances; because I have not said anything, nor am I going to do, against learned men in my humble lectures upon this book, for hardly one among them all has written upon this book without doing some good. I admire Scripture industry. I would rather see a man commit a few blunders than see him stand aloof from God's word, and have no zeal or care for it. Now, looking at this three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, I say, what a state of infancy we are in, in comparison of the little time that is past! Therefore, I say, the Doctor has adopted in this matter one of the usages of Scripture. In Numbers xiv. there were, as you are aware, twelve men, and ten of them were false witnesses; they were forty days searching the land, and they brought an evil, report of it. The Israelites had then been in the

wilderness about two years, and thought they were immediately to enter the land; but when these men brought this evil report, the Lord said that the Israelites should wander in the wilderness forty years; that is, thirty-eight years more; —forty years, "after the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year." Thus you see the forty days during which they were searching out the land are made to represent the forty years in which they should wander in the wilderness. So you see the Doctor and I are right enough here, —that Scripture sometimes takes a day to represent a year. Then, again, in Ezekiel iv., the prophet was to lie on his left side, and so on, forty days, to represent so many years. So, then, it is one of the usages of Scripture. But then, if we adopt this theory, that this thousand years does mean this dispensation, it would, according to the good Doctor's opinion, give us to know when the world will be at an end; and how does that accord with that scripture which says, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power"? So, then, none of these theories will stand good when tested by the word of the Lord; and there is found in this chapter what is found in the gospel dispensation; I therefore take the thousand years to represent the whole of the gospel dispensation. You will observe that this thousand years, taking a day for a year, making three hundred and sixty-five thousand years, is a very expansible sort of number, —that we should not be inclined to think the world may stand much longer than that; it may stand as long, —we cannot say. But we will go to the other reason.

The next reason why I believe the thousand years to mean the whole of the gospel dispensation is because the Holy Scriptures in the Old Testament and in the New Testament draw a line of distinction between the literal and the figurative. You must watch me very carefully here, because herein will lie the chief explanation of this thousand years. The Scriptures in the Old and New Testaments, and more especially in the Book of Revelation, distinguish, I say, between the literal and the figurative. Let us first go to the Old Testament. When the Lord would speak of the Jewish dispensation by the term "generations," he speaks thus, — "their generations," "your generations," but never "all generations." For instance, take Genesis xvii.: When the Lord instituted circumcision, that was to be a sign to them "all their generations." Now we shall show presently, beyond all dispute, where their generations terminated, and that forever. When the Lord instituted the pass-over, he said, "This shall be a feast unto you throughout all your generations." And when he instituted the Sabbath, or rather when he renewed the Sabbath, he said, "It shall be a sign between me and you unto all your generations." And when he speaks of the priesthood, he says, "It shall be an everlasting priesthood," and then limits the "everlasting" by saying, "Unto all your generations." And where did the generations of the Jews terminate? We get the answer in the first chapter of Matthew. When the Evangelist traces up the generations and the genealogy, is there the least sign or shadow of any one person being added to the generations of the Jews after Christ? He is the end, he is the last. The Evangelist goes on generation after generation, generation after generation. Presently he comes to Jesus Christ; there the genealogy stops; there is not another person added. Why not? Because that is the final end of the organization of the Jewish nation; that is the final end of the genealogy of the Jewish nation; their register is lost, and lost forever; they will never recover their literal, national register or generations. When the Lord therefore speaks of limited things, he says, "your generations." But now mark the distinction. When the Lord steps out of this old covenant into eternal things, then mark the difference of his language. When he views Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the spiritual fathers of Jews and of Gentiles, as the spiritual fathers of all believers —for" all that be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham," —he does not then say, "their generations," or "your generations," but he speaks unlimitedly. It stands thus: "I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; this is my name and this is my memorial unto all generations." Thus you see the distinction. When the Lord speaks of the Jewish dispensation, it is, "their generations," and we see the termination of their generations in the birth of Christ; but when he speaks of eternal things, then it is, "unto all generations." Then again, in Deuteronomy vii., "He keepeth mercy unto a thousand generations," —called in this chapter a thousand years. Then again, in Psalm cv. 8, —"He

hath remembered his covenant forever, the word which he commanded to a thousand generations." If you take forty years to a generation, that thousand generations would mean forty thousand years; but the best way is to take them as mystical periods, which the Lord alone knows the duration of. Thus then I think it is clear that there are scriptures which speak of indefinite periods in definite language; the language is definite, but the meaning is indefinite; for who can tell the duration of "all generations"? who can tell the duration of the "thousand generations"? Who can tell the duration of the "thousand years"? Is it not a mystic period, which the Lord keeps to himself? But the Lord is careful to distinguish between the literal and the figurative. Now I come to Daniel ix. In that chapter you read that Daniel learned by books that the seventy years' captivity were now about to expire. There is a literal captivity, and therefore a literal seventy years. You take that seventy years literally, because it is a literal captivity. But if we go back to his eighth chapter, and then go on to his ninth chapter, and then to his last chapter, then we shall see periods that we must take not literally, but mystically. Go back to the eighth chapter: "How long shall be the vision concerning the daily sacrifice, and the transgression of desolation?" and it is answered, "Unto two thousand and three hundred days;" that is, how long will it be from Daniel's time down to the coming of Christ? Why, two thousand three hundred days. You cannot take that literally, you must take it figuratively, to mean that period the length of which no one knew until the time itself arrived. "Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." But in the preceding verse there is desolation spoken of; so that this desolation and consecration were to go side by side. And was it not so, that while judgment after judgment was descending upon the Jewish nation, Jesus Christ was consecrating one and another to himself, building up a new and spiritual sanctuary? Then was the sanctuary cleansed. Here it is side by side. So that this two thousand and three hundred days you must take figuratively; you cannot take it otherwise. Then go to Daniel ix.; there you get the seventy weeks, which, taking a day for a year, means four hundred and ninety years. But that cannot be taken literally, for it was more than five hundred years from Daniel's time to the coming of Christ. "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people." You cannot take that seventy weeks literally, for that would not be nearly long enough; and if you take a day for a year, that will not do. And what will you say when I tell you that the Lord Jesus Christ himself as man did not know the length of that mystic period? We will prove that presently. Now "seventy weeks are determined upon thy people;" and what is to be done when this period comes, the exact time of which is known to none but God himself? Why, that which we are always touching upon. Oh, is there a sweeter scripture in all the Bible? The Messiah before the termination of this mystic period is to be cut off. What is he to do? Why, "to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy;" that is, to confirm the promise made to the fathers, to confirm prophecy, to confirm all the visions of the patriarchs; and did not Jesus Christ do so? "and to anoint the most Holy;" he himself is the most holy, and his people also are the most holy; for there is no people in existence so holy as the saints. Angels do not equal in holiness the saints, because Christ is not the holiness of angels, not in the way that he is the holiness of saints. Therefore, you are to "build up yourselves in your most holy faith." Oh, believer, thine holiness is the holiness of God; thy righteousness is the righteousness of God; thy standing is by the eternal power of God.

Now within this mystic period of seventy weeks this great work was to be accomplished, and Jerusalem was to be destroyed. That is a chronogram (a note of time) that must be taken, not literally, but mystically. And the Savior, in Mark xiii. 32, when referring to the destruction of Jerusalem, says, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Mind, the Savior is not there speaking of the final judgment, he is not speaking there of that judgment that you read of at the end of Matthew xxv., nor the judgment you read of at the end of this chapter; he is there speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem. Men undertake to prophesy, and yet the Savior himself as man did not know the exact length of that mystic period. That is a remarkable thing, is it not? We should not dare to have said such a thing, if he himself had not said it: "Neither the Son, but the Father." Why, if

that seventy weeks are to be taken, a day for a year, four hundred and ninety years, the Savior might easily have reckoned that up, and have said, it will terminate so and so; but no, it is a mystic period; and though Jerusalem's destruction was then only forty years distant, the exact hour was not yet revealed to the Son of God. "It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power." Some will say, What is the good of times and seasons, then? Why, it just shows that God has times and seasons within himself, within the limits of which both his mercies and his judgments shall be carried out; and that we therefore are to trust him in these matters. He has not told you when you shall die. He has told you the fact that you shall die, but he has not told you when, and you do not want to know, do you? I am sure I have no desire to know when I shall die; and if it is the Lord's will I should not know, I think it is best so; his ways are always the best, if we could always think so, no question whatever of that. Now we go to the last chapter of Daniel, and there you get two more mystic chronograms. "From the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." You cannot take that literally, you must take it mystically. Now when was the sacrifice taken away, the Jewish sacrifice? Define when Christ died; for when Christ died, he took the legal force of the Jewish sacrifice away; the Jewish sacrifice lost its right to be offered the moment Christ died; the Jewish priest lost his office, the Jewish royalty faded and died. Then the sacrifice legally was taken away, "and the abomination that maketh desolate set up." What a wonderful deal of conjecture there has been as to what this abomination of desolation set up could be. Some say, Well, it was a great image set up before the temple; others say it was the Roman armies; some one thing and some another; whereas the plain, simple Christian comes in and says, I know what the abomination that maketh desolate was; and I know when it was set up. What was it? The Jews set up a law that Christ must be put to death; the Jews set up a law that if any man confessed him, he should be put out of the synagogue; and if the law that sets Christ aside be not an abomination, I know not what an abomination is; if a human law that sets the truth of God and the people of God aside be not an abominable law, I know not what is; there is no term we can use too strong to deprecate so vile a law. It "maketh desolate;" —of course it does. If you take Christ away, there is nothing desolates a man so much as that. Take Christ away from this pulpit, take him away from the pews, what a poor, miserable, desolate concern we should be. But let the dear Redeemer come in, then desolation goes out. poverty goes out, wretchedness goes out. And what was the result of this law? The result was God gave them up to that law; the Romans came in, and desolation in every sense of the word went on. There is the chronogram; it is to be 1,290 days; that is the period that this abomination was to continue. It was set up in the Savior's day, and from the Savior's day to the destruction of Jerusalem that is called 1,290 days; —from the time the law was set up.

Now comes the fourth chronogram. "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." That is just forty-five days more than the 1,290 days; and there is a blessing to the man that waits and comes to the longer period. The shorter period represents the period of tribulation; the longer period represents the period of endurance. If the trouble overcome you, and you are a stony-ground hearer, go off before the trouble ends, then you do not get the blessing; but if you endure trouble after trouble, overcome the shorter period of tribulation, and come to the longer chronogram of consolation, then you will be a victor. Now Daniel, as we see from his ninth chapter, was a firm believer in the infallible certainties of the new covenant, and if he had been living in that period of tribulation, from the time of the Savior's death to Jerusalem's destruction, he would have been a victor, not a victim; he would have waited, and have overcome all the troubles; therefore the Lord says to Daniel, Now, Daniel, if you were alive at this time, I know what you would be; and so I will deal with you as though you were actually there; and therefore "go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." Daniel had already been a victor, he was more than a conqueror now, and would be to the end. Thus, then, these chronograms must be understood not literally, but figuratively.

We now come to this book especially. There is no book in the Bible perhaps so exclusively figurative, or almost so, as the Book of Revelation. I think it is Matthew Henry, or some writer somewhere, who says that the key often hangs over the door, if we could but see it; and in the very beginning of this book we have a kind of warning. There you have seven golden candlesticks, and seven stars. Well, what a number of conjectures there would have been upon those seven candlesticks and seven stars if the Lord had not settled the matter; —that the seven stars are seven angels; that is a better name than some of us get from men; but if the Lord calls us stars and makes us stars, why, we do not mind. And the churches are golden candlesticks, pure gold; a very much better name than we get from some people; true churches have generally had a very evil name among men. The beginning of the book, then, shows us that we must understand it figuratively. Where learned men have been wrong is in taking certain events as explanations of this book, whereas the prophets themselves, the Scriptures themselves, are the best explanation.

Now we will come to the chronograms of this book—the notes of time. Are the chronograms of this Book of the Revelation to be understood literally or figuratively? That is the question. You read in the second chapter: —"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison" —as one says, not into hell, but only into prison, —"that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." Now would you take that ten days literally? You cannot do so. I know some have said that refers to the ten great persecutions of Rome pagan. Well, but then those ten persecutions, from the first Emperor, Nero, down to the last, ranged over about 220 years. Where are your ten days, then, if you take them literally? But if you take the ten days to mean a limited period, you may get comfort from it. Whatever your trouble may be, there is a limit to it; it must end. I am never under the tunnel of trouble but I am always looking out for the end; and when I can see a little light at the other end, I am glad enough, for I know I shall then soon be out again in the sunshine. Well, then, say you, there is another tunnel. I don't care, if I get through it as well as I did through the last. "They feared as they entered the cloud." You generally find in a railway train, however much people have been chattering, as soon as they enter a tunnel there is not a word to be heard, —the conversation is stopped all at once; you would think they were all dead. So it is with us, —we can chatter. We shall have no trouble. Oh yes, all things work together for good; we can chatter, and go on. But when the Lord brings us into the tunnel of trouble, brings us into the dark, we don't say much then. So "thou shalt have tribulation ten days."

Now there are, if I recollect rightly, but three more chronograms in all the book. We come to the eleventh chapter, and we read there that the holy city was to be trodden under foot forty and two months; and then we read also that the enemy had power to continue forty and two months; and then also in the twelfth chapter we read that the church went into the wilderness twelve hundred and sixty days. Now you are all aware that the forty and two months and the twelve hundred and sixty days are one and the same period. Now let me bring our prophets, just to show what mistakes they have made. What is the general opinion of the divines of the last generation? — even that wonderful man of God, Huntington, — he tumbled into this millenarian bog, and ran here and there, and I don't know where. They have taken away half the Bible pretty well to build up their millennium, but we want all these materials for better purposes, so we must get them back again. What is their opinion of the 1,260 days in which the city of God is to be trodden under foot, and the two witnesses are to prophesy in sackcloth? —what is their theory? Their theory is this; —that period commenced, they say, when the seventh century commenced; and as that period of 1,260 days, taking a day for a year, commenced with the commencement of the seventh century, then if you add the 600 years that had then gone by, that will make 1,860; so that 1,260 years from the beginning of the seventh century brings us to 1860, which is ten years ago. And what did these divines say? That's the year in which Popery is to fall, that's the year in which the enemy is to be conquered, that's the year in which it is to be all overturned together. And they have taken hold of all

sorts of little events, of little circumstances, to show some signs of its fulfilment. Then some, being rather shaky about this, did what no true prophet ever did yet; they said, Well, I will tell you what I think we had better do; I have heard of ladies taking ten years off their age, but we will put ten years on, and we think that the period might be considered to begin ten years after the seventh century began, and so it will end in 1870. Now we are in 1870; and a lady in a book-shop said to me the other day, "Ah, sir, this is to be a wonderful year; you know, sir, the 1,260 days are ended this year; —wonderful events, sir." "Oh," I said, "where do you get that from?" "Oh," she said, "from Dr. Cumming." "Do you, indeed?" I said; "and where do you think the Doctor gets it from?" "I don't know," she said; "Nor I either," said I. But of course this Ecumenical Council at Rome will be reckoned a great event. Why, a parcel of old women twaddling there! —just of as much importance as a few old women at a wash-tub, enjoying a drop of gin. I hold their squabbles and their twaddles (of course) in infinite contempt, and laugh at the whole. Where, then, is the fulfilment of your prediction? All these prophecies by learned men have fallen to the ground. And some have prophesied when earthquakes were to take place. Oh, there is an earthquake prophesied in the Book of Revelation, say they, to take place at such and such a time. I recollect a great many years ago many people were alarmed, and some friends of mine in the country wrote to me to say, There is a prophecy that a certain earthquake spoken of in the Book of Revelation is to occur at such a time in London; will you come down here? I wrote back to say an earthquake would be a very inconvenient thing to us Londoners, and so it was put off *sine die*. I thanked them for their kindness, but stopped on solid ground; for I thought old London was perfectly safe. I could go on to show numbers of such predictions. When the Russian war broke out, there was a book published with all sorts of predictions. Now is the beginning of the Apocalyptic mystery; now is this, that, and the other going to take place; and our good editor of the vessel, always ready to do a service, puffed it up, and brushed it up, and polished it up, and pushed it up, and the kite did fly a pretty broad way, and a great deal of money was obtained by the flying of this kite; —the writer of the book got money, but nobody realized the fulfilment of the prophecy. So that all these prophecies, taking these periods literally, have fallen to the ground. But take the forty and two months, or 1,260 days, mystically, to mean a period beginning with the commencement of the gospel dispensation, and reaching down to the end of that dispensation, a period known to none but the Lord himself, and then you cannot prove to be a false prophet; then you will admit, as you ought to do, that there are times and seasons which God hath kept in his own power.

Then, again, the three days and a half that the witnesses were to be slain, you cannot take that literally. You ask these ministers present, —Well, brethren, are you ever knocked down, and the devil rejoicing over you for three days and a half on the stretch? Ah, say they, for three weeks and a half on the stretch I sometimes think I shall never get up again; but I do, somehow or another. How do you get up? The Spirit of life comes in, and I ascend, as it were, up to heaven in a cloud —the cloud of witnesses; the prophets and apostles are the cloud, and they bear me up; I can go up then, as it were, by a whirlwind into heaven, and can preach the truth in a more heavenly and powerful way than I have done for a long time before. I dare say some of you say to yourselves sometimes, Our minister is very high this morning, or very high to-night. So would you if you had been killed, I can tell you. It is the business of Satan to slay, and the business of the Lord to keep us alive; and the Lord is stronger than Satan; — we shall live, and not die.

Now, coming to the thousand years; —you do see, do you not, that these chronograms, or notes of time, cannot be taken literally, but that they must be taken figuratively? When you take these two things into consideration, then —that this twentieth chapter contains nothing which we do not find in the gospel dispensation; when you take into consideration the fact that all the chronograms I have named must be taken figuratively; I just ask this one question, —If the ten days, the forty and two months, the three days and a half, and the 1,260 days, are all to be taken figuratively, why is it you deviate from that custom, and as soon as you come to the thousand years you take that differently from all the chronograms of the

book? Therefore, as the other chronograms are taken figuratively, the thousand years must be taken figuratively, to denote, as I believe it does, the gospel dispensation, a period that is comprehended by the Lord alone.

Then the next chapter begins with a new heaven and a new earth. The next chapter does not mean another dispensation after this. As I have said several times in these lectures, the subjects of this book are ranged in columns side by side; so that when John, at the end of this twentieth chapter, gets down to the judgment-day, he then goes back again to the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, speaks of the Jewish heavens as passed away, of the Christian heavens as being established; and there is no more sea, to denote there is no more breach between God and man; that there is no more trouble, no more wrath; so that there being no more sea must also be taken in the figurative sense; so that the new heavens and the new earth mean simply the gospel dispensation stretching on to eternal glory; so that we still look for the new heavens and the new earth in their ultimate glory. "Then it goes on to speak of God dwelling with man, and the city that came down from heaven, and so it goes on down to the end of the book.

Thus, then, I think, if you take these two things into consideration, that the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation contains nothing which is not found in the Christian dispensation; and in the next place that all the chronograms I have noticed in the Old and New Testament must be understood figuratively; and if you look at the fact that the prophecies of every one who has attempted to fix the times and the seasons, which are known only to God, have fallen to the ground, I think you will see that I am right in the conclusion at which I have arrived. This may not appear of great importance to some, but as you go on, you will feel the importance of understanding things spiritually; and there is a great pleasure in the spiritual meaning of these scriptures, and in being favored to understand them aright. If therefore the thousand years be taken literally, we must take it differently from every other chronogram in the book; and I see no reason why it should be taken differently. Let us then take it figuratively, to denote a period known to none but the Lord; for though we may look back to the time when the dispensation commenced, we cannot tell when it will end; for "of that day and that hour knoweth no man."

THE END