

ALL THE LAND

A SERMON

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“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.” Revelation 14:20

SOME think that ministers never ought to meddle with such scriptures as these, and they think so because they hardly ever seem to profit by what is said upon such scriptures as these. But then we must remember that it is written that all Scripture is not only given by inspiration of God and is profitable; there is no part of the Bible that is really barren. And I do not think, therefore, if some parts which relate to our eternal welfare appear so ambiguous, that that is a reason why we should pay no attention to them, but rather reason that we should pray with someone of old, “Lord, open you my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law;” meaning the law of truth. And I must just assure you, before I enter upon the latter part of our subject, that if you think a feeling of curiosity, or mere past time, or mere trifling, has led me to these words, never was judgment more misled. I trust I feel too much of the weight and solemnity of my position to occupy your precious moments in mere speculations. I have to take up two main parts; the first is *the measurement*, 1600 furlongs; and the second is *the company of the Savior*, which is indicated by the horse bridles, implying the presence of horses, that is mystic horses, in connection with this wondrous victory.

First. First, then, we have to notice *the measurement*. I noticed last Lord’s day morning that perhaps some of the friends would send to me and give me their opinion of this. I did that, I confess, partly from a little curiosity, but it was serious curiosity. And one friend has sent and reminded me that Mr. Meade thinks that this measurement refers to the length of the Roman states, Peter’s promontory, as it is called, the Pope wearing to this day a Triple Crown, as expressive of his possession of these three states. I happen to be aware this is a view that some men take of the measurement, and I will not despise that idea, because many of the symbols have a kind of triple meaning; some of the symbols will bear a political, and ecclesiastical, and also a spiritual interpretation; and when they are put to these three different tests, the political or historical, relative to nations connected with the people of God, ecclesiastical in relation to the ecclesiastical harmonies that had existed, that have been exercised, the symbols will also stand that test; and when put to that which is spiritual, they will also stand that test. So that it does appear to me that

the great deficiency of most writers upon this book is tried tying the symbols down to one idea, as though the Word of God was capable in what it conveys in its symbols and similes of only one view, whereas most parts of the Word of God are like the wheels of Ezekiel, full of eyes, and look every way; so that when we have taken one aspect we may then take another, and then another. Another of our friends has sent me that the measurement here means the perfection of the Savior's victory, that it reaches to the uttermost vessel of mercy, shall reach to them all. Well, I thought, that's it; that is not exactly the way I shall come to it; but that is really it, and will really prove to be so, when we put it to the test. Before I enter upon the subject, I must just say that I was very pleased yesterday by a little present I received in a letter, and very pleased with the letter, and very pleased to find that one so young as 14 years of age was in this place brought savingly to know the truth. I must confess my mind was very much affected, and I felt a union of soul to that child, though I know not who it is; but I do bless the Lord for every sign and every symptom of his saving power among us, for this is the object we have in view, to gather up our fellow mortals into a saving knowledge of these eternal things. So that, altogether, these things are very pleasing. I will pass by several find fault letters I have received, for they are so weak in comparison to the others, the others seem to carry the sway, and were, at any rate, (if not numerically) in weight, they were in the majority, and so the minority must be neuter, and I will say nothing of the fault find ones, as I am receiving plenty of them generally; and unhappily, through my weakness, the find fault ones are sometimes in the majority, but this week they happen to be in the minority, and I insist upon it, as a matter of order, that the minority must be quiet; and so I rejoice in the majority on the side of that which is good.

I will now then notice that you are aware, of course, that a furlong is the eighth part of a mile, and consequently a thousand furlongs will be 125 miles; 600 furlongs will be 75 miles; put the two together and you get 200 miles. Now I suppose there is no topographical writer that would make the length of the land of Cana much more or more less than 200 miles. I think it is pretty evident then that the 1000 and 600 furlongs are intended to set before us the length of the promised land. Thus then, if we apply this measurement spiritually to the victory of Christ, which I shall this morning do, we shall see its meaning, but when I come to take, as I must hereafter do another view of the text, then, I shall apply this measurement altogether in another way. Now then, taking this 200 miles or 1600 furlongs, and the question is open to you all: you can all easily ascertain the length of that land which the Lord promised to his people, the 200 miles: then this victory in its extent conveys two ideas; first that the Savior gives his people all the land of promise; and then secondly, taking a metonymical view, which we very often find in the Bible: that is the container mentioned, but the contained meant: so here taking the second idea as it extends to the whole promised land, to give them the whole promised land; now it extends to all the vessels of mercy. First, then, a word as to the land of promise. Now you are aware that when the Israelites were brought into the land of Canaan, they, through giving way to the other gods, intermarrying with the heathen, and various causes, they never did possess, at least not for any length of time, the full land of promise; they were always coming short, always apostatizing, and through that tendency to backslide, for they were bent upon backsliding, and went back from the true God over to false gods; the consequence was, they not only came short of the promised land, but as we see, they ultimately lost the whole of it. Their victory through their apostacy fell short, but when we come to David's greater son, when we come to our spiritual Joshua, when we come to our spiritual David, when we come to the Captain of our salvation, come to the Lord Jesus Christ, here we have set before us the whole of the promised land; there is no coming short now, the Lord, as a wall of

fire around about, and the glory in the midst. Now relative to our eternal welfare, relative to the ultimate inheritance which the Lord has promised, point out if you can one foe which stood in the way of our possession of that kingdom which the Savior has not entirely conquered, and we shall see presently, when I come to that part, what he is at the end of these victories. I say, point out one foe, if you can which the Savior has not entirely conquered. Do you speak of your sin that stood in the way? Why, he has destroyed it, he has conquered it, and the sin of the people of God has no more power to appear before God against them than Samson's lion had power to roar against him again after that he was dead; the lion roared against Samson while it was alive, so sin unatoned for, sin in its unatoned state, for a sinner under the law, before he is acquainted with what Christ has done, his sin then as a roaring lion threatens his destruction: but when brought to see that Jesus has conquered it, taken the life out of it, that it is destroyed, that it is gone, and that this which so stood in our way of freedom he has entirely conquered, the warfare is accomplished, and then by that accomplished warfare, the mercy of God rules in to us in the shape of forgiveness; our iniquity is pardoned. And then it takes another form: you see there is a threefold form of the Lord's mercy to poor sinners there in the scripture to which I have just referred; the warfare is accomplished; and then comes mercy, in and by that warfare, iniquity is pardoned; then comes the double, "she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Then again Satan with all his wiles, he also is conquered. View Satan as the author especially of error, view him as an angel of light, view him in the vast variety of ways in which he deceives mortal men, yet the Word of God assures us he shall not deceive God's elect. What a wonderfully instructive doctrine is that of eternal election. When a sinner is brought down into the dust of humiliation before God, and asked, how can I be interested in Christ, how can the Lord love me, how can the Lord have mercy upon me, how can I hope to see his face with joy, how can I, the vilest of them all, hope to escape the wrath to come? And presently the gospel truth is revealed to such a one that those who are saved were chosen before the world was, and that that election is an election of grace; such a one will say, Well then, if that be the order of things, if the Lord loves because he would and if he chose because he would, if that be the ground upon which the Savior ministers eternal life, and he has said so; "You have given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him;" Ah then, I will cleave to this. When once this gospel is thus revealed to a poor sinner, he cleaves to it: he says, here is the victory. I see here this victory reaches the whole length, the whole extent of the promised land; I see the promise is yea and amen; I see that every foe is conquered; I see that sin and error are laid in an everlasting sleep, and they can never rise again. "The Egyptians which you see today, you shall see no more forever."

Then again tribulation: tribulation has made us rebel, at least it has me. I look back with shame to myself for those murmurings, and infidelities and misjudgments of which I have been the subject under various circumstances to which I have come; but what have these tribulations done? They have lowered me, I confess, in my own eyes; they had made me appear vile in my own estimation, they have made me abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes; they have laid me very low in the dust, they had made me stand amazed at the long-suffering and mercy of the blessed God; they had made me think very highly of that Savior that could lay down a life of infinite value for a worthless worm like me; and they have made me cling very close to that grace which alone can save me, and to that victory which alone is complete. Ah, this is not what Satan designed; he wanted our tribulations to cause us to apostatize, to cause us to hate God, to get us to curse God. Yes, Lord, just touch Job's property, just touch his person, he will curse you to your face; the original word there conveys the idea of repudiating, turning away, and giving up, and apostatizing,

and that is the meaning of Satan, that Job will give up his religion, he will give up his God, he will give up all those doctrines, he will give up his hope. Just touch him in his property, and touch him in his person, and he will give the whole up. But then in order that it should be proved that grace is stronger than tribulation, great as that tribulation was, it was needful that Job should be favored to go safe through it, in order to prove the devil to be a liar, and to prove God to be true; and so it was that all that he endured could not break down that perfection that Job had in Christ; it could not break down that integrity which the Holy Ghost had rooted in his heart; he could not destroy that godly fear which the Lord had placed before his eyes, it could not destroy that faith which he had in the Lord: so far from destroying it, it brought it ultimately into wondrous exercise, and enabled him to say, "Though he slay me, yet I will trust him." Here then, is a victory that gives us possession, that removes every impediment out of the way, sin, and death, and Satan, and fear, and troubles, as I observed last Lord's day morning; so that there is no coming short of any part of the promised land. Now in the first Adam all have sinned and come short of the glory of God but in Jesus Christ there is no coming short. There the apostle says, "Let us therefore fear least the promise being left *us*." You observe the word *us* is in italics, it is not in the original, and it would read in this way, "Let us therefore fear, least a promised being left," there is a promise left," of entering into his rest; any of you should seem to come short of it." Now the man that come short in his experience and consequently in his faith, is in a fair way to come short of heaven itself.

Perhaps you will say, what do you mean by coming short in experience. Why, if you are not sinner enough, if you are not poor enough, if you are not helpless enough, if you are not needy enough to feel your need of that completeness of this victory, this victory in its extent, then your experience is deficient. I am more, 10 times more concerned in some respects about your downward experience than I am about your upward experience. I like to see people well tried; I like myself to see a sinner broken down and made to feel his helplessness; and then such a one will not come short in his faith. When the victory of Christ is presented in the order of it, such a one will say, "That is it; that is it." I see there that if Jesus Christ has conquered everything, then we can see the inheritance is safe, then I can see the freedom is entire, then I can see the gospel is sure, I can see the beauty of these declarations which relate to the immutability of the everlasting God.

After these few remarks I will now notice what is said of the Savior in this victory, or in what form he appears at the end of this victory; because every word of the Lord is pure and has its meaning. You observe that the Savior in maintaining this victory is set forth as having gone out of his mouth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite nations; and he shall smite them with a rod of iron. Now this sharp sword we know to mean his word "the word of the Lord is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword." And it is a mercy to be smitten with this sword. He shall smite nations. When the word of the Lord smites a man, and in enters into his very soul, dividing asunder soul and spirit, entering into the joints and marrow as is a discerner of the heart, and lays open that man's condition in the way the apostle describes; he says "When the law entered, sin revived, and I died;" God laid open to Saul himself the conspicuousness of his heart: why he says instead of my being before God a righteous man, a holy man, a good man as though he should say, why, if I search the creation roundabout I cannot find a devil more like the devil I am, instead of being like God. He of course had no idea that this was his real condition. This is what I understand by the Savior thus smiting the nations. Then he shall rule them with a rod of iron, I understand that to mean mercy also; he shall break them to pieces as a potter's vessel. And is it not so? I look back at the time when I worked thoroughly hard; and what I am going to say now I am not going to lay

down as a role for others to go by; but when I could not carry my resolutions out, and keep my thoughts, and words, and acts, in entire accordance with the demands of my conscience, and what I thought was right, what was the result? Why, I almost swore to the Almighty; yes, I had some of the most awful oaths in my mind against him; and so far from bettering it, I made it 10 times worse; I cursed my very existence, and I know that my heart cursed God; I know it did. I hated God, I hated religion. What, say you, so bad is that? Yes. What did you do then? I could not get away from it. What was this? This was the rod of iron breaking me to pieces; this was the rod of iron of the law bringing me down; as fast as I began to build up a little holiness, a little righteousness, the law came like a rod of iron, and broke it all to pieces; and so I became a poor broken vessel, a poor helpless creature, beaten all to pieces. This is the way the Savior deals with his people. And then when he has thus brought them down, when he sees there is no strength, then he will repent himself concerning his servants, change his dealings, and deal gently with them. This perhaps may be rather digressive; but the point I am aiming at is this: now it is said of the Lord Jesus Christ in Revelation 19 at the end of his victory, but he has on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.

He did no sin; that I apprehend to be the meaning; he set out as King of kings, and Lord of lords, and he ended as King of kings and Lord of lords; so that when he came to the end and looked back, he had lost nothing; there he was as holy, as righteous, as sound as ever, as incorruptible as ever. And so, to indicate the same, at the end of the victory which he wrought, on his vesture, I take the vesture there to be a symbol of character; he had on his vesture a name written, not a stain upon his character; his reputation unblemished; the lamb without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. You cannot say the same of any other person that ever lived; for there is not a just man, never was and never will be upon the earth, that does good and sins not. But this wonderful Person is the same at the end as he was in the beginning. And remember, his perfection of character was not for himself, because it refers to his practical character there; not merely to his abstract character as God man, but to his practical character; there is a perfection of practical character; and it is in that perfection that we are to appear. I know from the word of God, as well as from observation, that it is the lot of some to be in bondage through fear of death all their days; but I am sure where that is the case there is no clear revelation of the perfection of Christ's practical character, that righteousness being imputed to us. Why, my hearer, we have nothing to fear except we are afraid of God's love, that that will hurt us; except we are afraid of God's mercy; except we are afraid of God's boundless compassion; except we are afraid of his tenderness who has said, "He that touches you touches the apple of his eye;" except we are afraid of the perfection that is in Christ; except we are afraid that the Spirit of God will hurt us; except we are afraid that God's everlasting love to us will do us some harm; there is nothing to fear. It is this apprehension of things of which I am now speaking that made good old Simon so willing to depart in peace; for he had seen God's salvation. Then notice, this perfection or this dignity was written not only on his vesture, but it was also written on his thigh. Now the thigh was the place of the sword, where the warrior carried his sword; and therefore, its being written there denotes the infallibility of the sword; the sword can never fail. And so, the sword of God's word shall never fail; God will use his word and will cut down every sinner by the sword of his truth that he intends to cut down. One of old saw this, and was led to say, "Your sword upon your thigh, O Most Mighty, and in your majesty pride prosperously, because of meekness, and truth, and righteousness." So that here at the last shall Satan come forward and proclaim to the universe that the Savior's sword has failed? Ah, says Satan, I have got hold of that man; and the Savior cut at me with his sword, but he could not beat

me off, and he could not deliver that man; and I have one at last in hell whom Jesus intended to take to heaven. This may do for you free Willers, for you duty faith men, who tell us there are thousands in hell that ought to have been in heaven. Such is the way in which they speak of this mighty Person; if so, then he has failed somewhere. But no; he still goes forth conquering and to conquer; he knows when to smite, and where to smite, and who to smite; his sword has never failed. Thus, then here is a perfection of conquest; and we see what the Savior is at the end of that conquest.

Second. I now come to *the companions of the Savior*, implied by the horses, the riders on those horses are witnesses for Christ; and secondly, I shall show that they are coworkers with him. Well, but what is their business? Why, to go forth and to bear the tidings of this wondrous victory to the Earth's remotest bounds, and down to the end of time. But we must get some keys to unlock this; get some light somewhere to shine upon this. Zechariah describes the difference between what we are in the Lord's absence and what we are by his presence, thus: "The Lord of Hosts has visited his flock," poor timid things, "the house of Judah, and has made them as his godly horse in the battle." Now, in the Lord's absence, we are poor timid things; but when the Lord visits us, then we are like Job's warhorse, we can defy anything and everything, care nothing for anything. Hence said one of old in the manifestation of the Lord's presence unto him, "I will not fear though 10,000 set themselves against me;" that is the Lord's presence. That is one little ray to help us in the meaning of our text. Secondly, the church, in Solomon's song, is compared to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots. I confess I cannot clearly get at what that means; the simile is not a customary one with us; it is Oriental, and ancient, and somewhat out of use in common parlance, and that makes many of these similes difficult for us to understand; still there are many ideas arising from that simile worthy of the Christian's attention. The first is that of royal property; Pharaoh's chariot denotes royal property. So, the people of God are royal property. Secondly, it denotes costliness; the horses were no doubt, very costly, and so the Lord's people are very costly; they are bought with a price, such a price as is found nowhere else. Then, again, these horses and chariots being richly caparisoned, may refer to those graces that adorn the church and distinguish her from the world. Now, ministers of the gospel being set for the defense of the gospel, they are, by an oriental and ancient mode of speech, called "chariots and the horsemen thereof." Hence said Elisha to Elijah, "My Father, My Father, The chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." Elijah was set for the defense of the gospel, and he did instrumentally defend; Elijah was set for the liberty of the people of God in contrast to that thralldom, and idolatry, and degradation into which they were brought by the Baal's prophets, and he is therefore spoken of under that simile, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof.

Now with these views I think we may pretty well get at the meaning of our text. I come to the first of Zechariah, and I find the very subject of my text there handled; I go to the sixth chapter, and I again find the same subject handled. In the first chapter the prophet says, "I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom." We know this man was Christ; that is, this man upon the red horse; he is in that same character called an angel, and being called an angel, we know who he was, and he is there spoken of as riding upon a red horse. It was night: the prophet saw Christ there in his humiliation, in the center of his conflict; and "behind him were red horses, speckled, and white." And these horses most writers tell us, mean political and ecclesiastical powers; well, they may bear that interpretation, but do not let us confine it to one idea; if we take it spiritually, it stands out as clear as possible.

Now these are represented as being with the Lord Jesus Christ: going forth with him. And when the prophet saw these, he said, "O my Lord, what are these? And the man that stood among the myrtle trees answered and said, These are they whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro through the earth." Does not this accord with something like these words: "Go you into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Did not the apostles go forth majestically: if the horse denote strength did not the apostles go forth with mighty strength; and was not the victory that Christ has wrought their theme wherever they went, and did they not see Satan falling like lightning. And these persons are represented as witnesses, and they came and give in their testimony: "Behold all the earth sits still, and is it rest;" that is a true testimony, but it was a bad one, it was an evil report. If you go to the book of Haggai, you will find there what is meant by all the earth sitting still and at rest. There is the house of the Lord, who cares for it? There is the service of the Lord, who cares for it? No one. They were all quiet; and although they sowed much, and bought in little, although they ate much and had not enough; though they drank, and were not filled with drink; though they clothed themselves, and were not warm; though they earned wages to put into a bag with holes; they were quite it rest as regards to the house of the Lord; it is not convenient yet to build the house of the Lord, the time is not yet come. Now the Lord sent these witnesses, and they stirred up the mind of the people to build the house of the Lord. They were it rest. And I have often thought that reproach belongs to a great many of the people of God in our day. "All the earth sit still and is at rest." I am sure we are always best off when the Lord stirs us up and keeps us moving.

Now, then, these sources represent the people of God and that strength they have in oneness with the Lord; represent the people of God, and the ministers of God especially, and the sweet association with the Lord Jesus Christ. Then in the sixth of Zechariah you have the same subject; here you have the ministers of God coworkers with the Lord, and you have the place where they come, and the nature of their work, and the climax of their work: "I turned, and lifted up my eyes, and looked, and behold, there came four chariots out of between the two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass." What are those four chariots but the same things with Ezekiel's four living creatures. It is a sort of custom of Zechariah to illustrate the desolation of the people by being destroyed on all four sides, the cardinal points: hence the four horns that disperse Judah and Jerusalem; in contrast to this, there are four carpenters or four builders, to defend Jerusalem; so that, as they have been destroyed on every side, now they should be protected on every side. I am fully aware that men generally take the four chariots to mean the four empires, Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome; most writers make these four empires swallow up everything; whereas these empires are nothing but mere correlatives; the gospel is the theme of the Bible, and the children of God are the main objects which the books of the Bible have in view; and the others would not be named at all were it not for their connection with the church in some form or another. I take the chariots and horses, then, to indicate the ministers of the gospel; and these two mountains of brass, conveying the idea of stability, I take to mean the law and the gospel, both of which are firm. And those chariots came out from between those two mountains; and so, the man that is sent of God must come from between these two mountains. He knows the stability of God's eternal law, that not one jot nor tittle can fail, and he knows that none but Jesus Christ can meet the law; and, on the other hand, he is equally well established in the stability of the gospel, not one word thereof can ever fall to the ground or pass away.

As to the different colors of the horses, I will not stop to enlarge upon them, but merely to notice that when the prophet asked what they were what was the answer? "These are the four spirits of

the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth;" they are his servants, working together with him.

Now our time is gone, I may just notice the climax of the whole. You will see there is a beautiful analogy between the close of the ministry of these chariots in the sixth of Zechariah and the close of the Savior's victory in the 19th of Revelation; and the close of their ministry accords with the whole range of Scripture upon the same point. The black horses go toward the North; the white go after them, and the grizzled (men of various shades as it were of gifts) go toward the south country; "and the bay went forth and sought to go that they might walk to and fro through the earth," ministers of the gospel will seek to preach the gospel where they can. Then cried he unto me, and spoke unto me saying, "Behold these that go toward the North country have quieted my spirit in the North country." That historical meaning is of course the delivering of the Israelites from the Babylon captivity; the spiritual meaning is this, I take the North to mean the law and the black horse to symbolize humiliation; well, and everything that is solemn. And so, the man that knows something of the northern blasts of God's law, he is broken down; he comes down into humiliation, pleads a Savior's name; and when he gets hold of that name, God's Spirit is quiet; God's Spirit will be quieted by nothing but what Christ has wrought; and the conscience if we are taught of God, will be satisfied with nothing short of the victory he has wrought. And these ministers bring the tidings of what Chris has done, and that quiets the Spirit of the Lord. The law has nothing more to say; the law will never say a word to you: no, for it is magnified, honored, and established by the righteousness of Christ. Thus, then the victory which the Savior has wrought, is a complete victory, and his people are represented in him. I do hope and pray the Lord may lead us to understand these symbols and these mysteries more clearly; for they all have a tendency to entwine our thoughts and affections with those eternal things wherein lies our everlasting portion.