

# SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE.

## A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 22ND, 1864, BY

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AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE, BOROUGH ROAD.

“The day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.”—1 Kings xvii. 14.

WE have to notice in the first place, *the way or the ground upon which the Lord thus favoured the earth*; that it was by sacrifice, as a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in his sacrificial character, as the way in which every blessing is to come. And then, secondly, we shall trace out, as far as time permits, *the several things indicated by the rain*. First, then, we notice *the sacrifice of Elijah*. The sacrifice was not slain for itself, but for the people: so Jesus Christ suffered not for himself, either in whole or in part, but entirely for the people. He is the substitute. And the blessed God delighted to do this because of his love to the people. “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son.” Here, then, is the way of escape from everything that is against us, and the way in which every blessing will come. And what can be more suitable? “That whosoever believeth should not perish.” So, by precious faith in Jesus Christ, we thus escape the guilt of our sins, we escape the power of our sins; we escape their reigning and their damning power; we escape the sting of death; we escape all the threatenings of God’s holy word. And not having now to meet God as an angry judge, but as a loving father; not having to meet him on the ground of demands of law and justice, but having to meet him on the ground of a sacrifice that hath put away sin, and on the ground of a righteousness that hath magnified the law, that hath met the demands of justice, and of law, and of truth: here, then, we have to meet the Lord, and the Lord meets us in the greatness of his love, and in the greatness of his mercy. And here is no wrath; for he hath interposed, concerning this substitute, an oath that he will not be wroth with us nor rebuke us. Now, the more clearly this substitutional position or order of the sacrifice is understood, the more it will encourage us, amidst the various circumstances of life, to hope in the Lord. You may depend upon it, that his own word must stand, and that he will stain the pride of the glory of all flesh, and that the haughtiness of man shall be laid low, whether man be like the firm oak, or whether he be like the lofty tower, or whether he be like the broadly-rooted mountain; or let him be whatever he may in the strength of his own conceit; when the Lord takes him in hand, he roots up the whole, and down must come the creature low enough to make way for the coming in of the substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ. And when that substitution is once brought in, and clearly understood, with what wonderful tenacity the soul holds it. “I found him whom my soul loveth; I held him and would not let him go.” If the Christian has his faults, he does possess excellences which no other person does possess; and amidst those various excellences that the Christian possesses, this is one, that he lays hold by faith of the Lord Jesus Christ as his substitute; and

he holds it with wonderful tenacity. He feels that this is his life; he feels that it is his sanctification; he feels that it is his salvation; he feels that it is his all; he feels and sees that the blessed God is on no man's side absolutely and eternally but by this substitution of the Lord Jesus Christ. The second thing that presents itself in this sacrifice is its acceptance. The fire descended from heaven, and therefore the acceptance of the sacrifice by the blessed God was clear to all the people. There was not a person there that saw it, that could dispute but that the sacrifice was accepted of God. There were the two sacrifices: the one for Baal, and the other for the blessed God. Now Baal, of course, was a nonentity, and therefore his sacrifice, notwithstanding the earnestness of the people in praying to a false god—and a false gospel is nothing else in substance but a false god—his sacrifice remained the same. But here, this sacrifice that belonged to the true God, the fire descended, and we shall presently have to observe, it became clear to the people, beyond all dispute, that the sacrifice was accepted; and when they were convinced of that, it put everything right. Now, when the apostles began to preach the gospel, the great point to be demonstrated to the people was the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Let the people be convinced that God hath raised him from the dead, that Jesus Christ is raised from the dead, that Jesus Christ is at God's right hand, and that Jesus Christ hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear, and that this is nothing else but the fulfilment of the predictions of the Bible concerning Jesus Christ. And so it is said, "With great power gave they witness of the resurrection of Christ;" and the reason they gave their testimony with great power was, that "great grace was upon them all." Being thus convinced that Jesus Christ was accepted, they at once saw the truth of the other proposition,—that he believeth in him shall be accepted too. It is, therefore, a great thing to have a religion that you know that God accepts; to have a religion that you know God hath accepted; to have a religion that you know God will never reject; to have a religion that God himself originated, and that the God-man Mediator himself established, and that God the Spirit reveals. Now then, to have such a religion as this, is to have that by which our acceptance with God is sure. How happy, then, in this respect are we who are here this morning, at least most of us! We are as satisfied of Christ's acceptance, we are as satisfied that he is at God's right hand, as ever Saul of Tarsus was. And the great thing with him was to convince him that Christ was risen, that Christ was accepted, that Christ was at God's right hand; and of this, Saul of Tarsus was convinced, and therefore could go forth and preach with assurance. Here, then, if Jesus Christ in his sacrifice be my life, my sanctification, my justification, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. If Jesus Christ be my religion, then my soul is identified with that which is at God's right hand, and where that is, there we shall surely be, too, if we are identified with this religion. So the acceptance of Christ, then, is, you will perceive, an essential matter. You will see how many vast numbers of religions have risen in the world, and Christianity now is cut up into a great variety of shapes and forms; so many shapes and forms that it is no small mercy to distinguish God's form from all other forms. "Hold fast the form of sound words." And as the Saviour said to the Pharisees, "Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape;" that is, his form, his new-covenant form; that form of love, that form of election, that form of mediation, that form of salvation, by which the sinner is saved. Now, I say, amidst the various shapes and forms, it is a great thing to distinguish God's ark, the one that he has devised, from all others—God's tabernacle, the one that he has pitched, from all others. Of course the mere professor says, anything will do; but not the man that feels after what form and manner he is a sinner; that he is a sinner at first, after the form and manner of his fall in Adam; that he is a

sinner after the form and manner of the depravity of his heart; that he is a sinner after the form and manner of many faults in his life; and he sums up the whole with, "Unclean, unclean." Therefore, such an one needs that order of priesthood, and Christ is after that order, namely, the power of an endless life; eternal efficacy in his precious blood. This is that which the Lord hath accepted, and he brings his people unto this. Here are two things, then, to understand, and for our affections thereby to be won to God, namely, that Christ was the substitute, and that Christ is accepted; and if we are thus identified with him, then it stands thus: "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." And you see how essentially important this is, because you have so much about you as a ground upon which holiness and justice would despise you, reject you, and condemn you, and cast you away, that there could be no hope of acceptance with God. But then, if you once see the kind of substitute the Saviour was, and see how he is accepted, that he is accepted as all and in all, that his eternal perfection is your eternal perfection, or else it would not be true, "Ye are complete in him." Now the third thing that presents itself in this sacrifice is, the intensity of the fire. The fire "fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." Now here is the intensity of the fire; you see it consumed everything with which it came in contact. There is something here very instructive. There is something here that seems to set before us the truth of the declaration, that "our God is a consuming fire." There seems something set before us here to remind us of the words of Isaiah, "Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings? Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?" How intense that fire was, and is a figure of that fire, that when once lighted up upon the creature, can never be quenched. "The fire is not quenched, the worm dieth not." Here is that second death, here is that eternal fiery law of God, breathing eternal indignation. Now then, in the Lord Jesus Christ, we see that which even the intensity of God's eternal law could not consume. When the fire of God's wrath, the flaming, the fiery sword, fell upon Christ, he was stronger than that law, it did not consume him, it could not consume him. How often, no doubt, many of you have thought of those beautifully significant words upon this subject in Isaiah, where it is said that "Lebanon is not sufficient to burn, nor the beasts thereof for a burnt offering." You naturally think, Ah, blessed Jesus, that while Lebanon was not sufficient, that could not have quenched the fire, that could not have delivered us, but thou didst deliver us. "Nor the beasts thereof for a burnt offering," because the fire would have consumed the beasts, but at the same time the fire would be in a position again to break forth. But when Jesus Christ appeared, then this fire could not consume him, and the reason was because he was God as well as man. He met that fire with an almightiness, he met that fire in the strength of his eternal omnipotence. And so delighted is the blessed God with him, that "he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." So our acceptance is not a cold acceptance; we have several illustrations, the prodigal for one; see how warmly he was accepted; and so it is said of the saints, as they enter heaven, that they have an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Christ hath endured it all. And hence, when you come to the latter part of the Bible, in the account you have of the city there, there is no sign of fire. There are the precious stone foundations, there are the jasper walls, and there are the gates of pearls, and there is the river, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb, and there is the Paradisiacal tree of life, and there is not the created sun, for that would convey the idea of fire; and hence there is no burning sun, "for they need not the light of the sun, nor of the moon, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and," to show the mildness of it, "the

Lamb is the light thereof,"—a complete contrast to that world where hope and mercy can never, never come.

The fourth thing that I notice connected with this sacrifice is the bringing back of the heart of the people; "thou hast turned their heart back again." Here was the reformatory, at any rate, conversion of the people. I do not apprehend that their acknowledgment of the God of Israel was regeneration; it was a natural and moral conviction that brought them away from false gods so far to the true God of Israel; a type of that true conversion in which the sinner is savingly brought to God. And their language, too, is remarkable, when they witnessed these things. As I have already hinted, we—happy our eyes who see it—we have witnessed the antitype; we have seen Jesus dying for sinners; we have, as it were, heard his dying groans, and we have rejoiced in his dying testimony; we have seen Jesus rise from the dead, we have seen him ascending to glory, we have seen him, as it were, at God's right hand, and we have seen him fulfil his promise in sending the Holy Spirit, and we have seen that he hath quenched the violence of the fire, that his work is complete, and that there is no wrath left; we have seen this; and therefore what took place in the Israelites in a mere mental and moral sense, has been wrought in us in a higher and more important sense. Their words, as you are aware, were, "The Lord, he is *the* God; the Lord, he is *the* God:" not "The Lord, he is *a* God," but "The Lord, he is *the* God." The first thing there intended is the exclusion of every other. "The Lord, he is *the* God; the Lord, he is *the* God." See how this accords with the New Testament. We are assured that there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved; so that we can say that Jesus Christ is *the* God, that he is *the* Saviour, that he is *the* mediator, and that he is *the* all and in all; and that he is not merely *a* Son of God; that would be true, to say that Jesus Christ is *a* Son of God; but it would not place him in his proper light. He is, therefore, *the* Son of God, excluding all others, that there is none other a Son of God in the sense that he is. None other was ever the Son of God, or ever can be, or ever will be, in the way that he was, and in the way that he is. So we are brought, through the Lord's mercy,—for I may, as I go along, gratulate the mercy that hath brought us to this, that we can say, in relation to our covenant God, Father, Word, and Holy Ghost; for in our eternal salvation as well as in nature these three are one,—that we can say, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth I desire beside thee." Thus, then, they were brought over to the true God of Israel, to the renunciation of all others. So we, if we are divinely taught, we are brought to Jesus Christ as the only mediator, and we are brought to God the Father as God and Father over all; calling no man on earth father, for one is your Father, even him which is in heaven. And there is also one gospel, declarative of these things. "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God;" exclusion, therefore, of all others. And a right knowledge of the sacrifice of Christ is sure to lead us to this. Only go to the 7th chapter—if I were to take the 7th chapter there would be no harm in doing so—of Revelation as an illustration of what the saints are in heaven. You find that though there is a multitude that no man could number, yet their voice was one. "With a loud voice." Their voice was one. Such religions in the world—there are a great many voices, and very inharmonious voices indeed, but those in heaven, their voice was one; the salvation was one; the God was one; the Lamb was one; their origin was one, they came out of great tribulation; their way of coming out of that tribulation was one, they all washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; their state, their condition there was one. Here, then, is a type that the Israelites being brought to the true God is a type of that true conversion of the soul to God, that reconciliation to God which is by Jesus Christ. "Jehovah, he is the God;

the Lord, he is the God;" repeated for confirmation. And so the people of God will be confirmed in this. Through the Lord's mercy it has been the lot of some of you to be confirmed in this for many years. You feel sure that there is only one gospel, that there is only one Spirit, and that there is but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism; and you feel sure that there is but one God and Father of all; and therefore you will not, whether I live with you, or whether I soon die, or whether any other minister of truth you may hear, whether your minister live, or whether your minister die, God keeping you, you will never deviate from this gospel; you will never part from this gospel; knowing that the apostle himself, by the Holy Ghost, pronounced a curse even upon an angel from heaven that should bring any other gospel than that which sets forth the blessed oneness of the Lord our God, and the oneness of the people with him. But let us, if we may without being called to order, because sometimes, if we make any reference to the original, there are some think we have no business to turn to the original at all, but take the translation without any alteration. Well, there are very few faults in our translation, I believe, and I am not an advocate for another translation, for I don't think we could get a better, and I think we had better leave it as it is. Nevertheless, without finding fault with the present translation, there is no harm in going to the original, and seeing if you can get an idea or two to help you. Now the Scripture I have just mentioned, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God;" let us use the words as nearly as we can so as to make them convey to us just what they would convey to the Israelite; only to him perhaps merely in the rational sense, to us in the spiritual sense. And then it would read thus: "Jehovah, he is the interposer; Jehovah, he is the interposer." That's the literal rendering. What is that but an acknowledgment, in the first place, of the self-existence and eternity of the blessed God, Jehovah? It is not some demi-god; it is not some local God, as in those days they dreamt of; but it is Jehovah, it is Jehovah. Here is a self-existent God. "He is the interposer." God the Father interposes for us by the gift of his Son. So if you ask how God the Father has pleaded, and how he does plead, and how he will plead your cause; the answer is, by the gift of his dear Son. He comes to you with that ransom, and the command he gives is, "Deliver him," the man that's taught anything of this ransom, "from going down into the pit: I have found a ransom." So that God the Father is our interposer. The Lord Jesus Christ, he interposes by his mediatorial work; interposed, the poet says, his precious blood. The Holy Spirit interposes by the Lord Jesus Christ; for, saith the Saviour of the Holy Spirit, "he shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." He is, then, *the* interposer, so that we want no other. It will be a long time, then, before we turn Roman Catholics. We have often said, and I repeat it, that the greatest of all sins that man can commit, is that of trying to take the Lord's place. The fall of man took place by this. The serpent came in, and said, I will be God. Very well, then, said Adam, do you be God, and we will obey not God's law, but your law. And thus the serpent put himself into the place of God, and Adam and Eve placed themselves in oneness with the serpent. And therefore, if ever we do place ourselves, as it were, in the Saviour's place or in the place of God's truth, and put any of that aside, we hereby place ourselves in oneness with Satan. These, then, are four things that seem to present themselves in that of the sacrifice. First, here is a substitute — gave himself for me, died that I might live, took the curse that I for ever may be blessed. Second, that it is clear that sacrifice was accepted; so it is clear that Christ is accepted, and that our acceptance with God is by faith in him. Third, there was an intensity in the fire which neither the sacrifice nor the things connected therewith could overcome. But in Christ Jesus there was a power that did embody all the penalty, and there is no more curse. Fourth, that the people were brought away from dumb

idols to serve, according to the order and spirit of that covenant, the God of Israel. And so now, by the Lord Jesus Christ, we are brought to renounce all confidence in the flesh, and to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to say with the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now let us look, in the next place, at *the rain*. "The day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." You will see how beautifully these circumstances photograph to us, as it were, in types and shadows the things that were to take place in ages after. Now as the rain followed upon this sacrifice, so the Holy Spirit descended as the consequence, on the day of Pentecost, of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. The sacrifice went first, the rain came afterwards. Jesus Christ first dies, then the Holy Spirit comes. Now there are many, many things, which time will not allow me this morning to enter into, implied in this rain,—more than you may at first sight suppose. It means, this rain means, the gospel and its blessings. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Let us set out with a definite idea, and then we shall get at what is meant; that it means the gospel of God, and thereby the blessings of the gospel. Not the blessings without the gospel, nor the gospel without the blessings; not the clouds without the rain, nor the rain without the clouds, but we must have them both. Now, then, let us have a scripture or two to show that this is the meaning; and let us test ourselves, our own soul's experience, with some of the scriptures we are about to name, that set this matter forth. Now I have said that the rain here typifies both the gospel and the blessings of the gospel. Hence the gospel which this rain typifies is the gospel of the new covenant. Hence it stands thus, "This is my covenant with them; my words which I have put into thy mouth," pointing, I should think, there to his dear Son, "shall not depart out of thy mouth," which they did not; "nor out of the mouth of thy seed," the apostles; nor did the apostles ever part with these eternal truths, when they once drank them in; "nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed," the seed of the apostles. We are true successors, if we are born of God, of the apostles. And you will observe it is to last for ever. Some of us received the truth years ago; well, it has never departed from us, and never will depart from us, and the Lord will not suffer us to be severed from that; why, we are united vitally to it. "Born of an incorruptible seed, that liveth and abideth for ever." The rain, therefore, means the gospel of the new covenant, and the blessings of the gospel. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty." Now, what know we of thirsting for salvation, thirsting for the mercy of God, thirsting for the blessing of God. "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." Then comes the explanation. "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Then it goes on to describe, which I must not stop to do, how they shall spring up. Thus, then, I think, before I enter farther into this subject, it does appear that the rain here typifies the gospel of the new covenant, and the blessings of the gospel. The man that knows what it is to thirst for mercy, and what it is to be a dry place; "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" the person that feels himself hopeless, dried up, as it were, destitute of any life, or anything that is good; when the gospel comes, softens his heart, and satiates the soul, endears the Saviour, and changes the scene altogether; such an one saith, I seemed to be like ground which the Lord would curse, for I seemed to bear nothing but thorns and briers; I seemed to be like ground whose destiny was to be rejected, for I seemed hard, and barren, and wretched, and destitute. But now the glorious gospel hath come with refreshing power; now I feel that I know the Lord, that I love the Lord, that I can rejoice in the Lord, and that I can bless the Lord. Now, what is this, but the gospel of the new covenant, and the blessings connected therewith, in and by the

sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Then, as it means the gospel of the new covenant, and as it means those blessings that bring us out of the state we are in by nature; so it means the substituting of a state of plenty for that of destitution. Hence, in the 2nd of Joel, you will find there, that old-covenant penalties are spoken of as having destroyed everything, left the people in a state of destitution. And now the Lord saith to these very people who see Jesus Christ, and who receive him—for in receiving him, we receive everything; if we receive him, the rain is sure to come, blessing is sure to come; how long it may be between the time that your soul really believes in him as your only hope, and the time in which you have power to know that you are a son of God, I can't say. "As many as received him, to them gave he power;" there is the receiving first, and in receiving him we receive everything; and having and holding fast the testimony of Christ, the blessing is sure to come. Abel received Christ before the Lord openly manifested his approbation of Abel. And so in reference to his people, they have received the truth concerning Christ, and in his word he hath caused them to hope, and they have waited and waited, and the blessing has been sure to come. Now the people who thus receive Jesus Christ are spoken of as children of Zion. "Be glad, then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God, for he hath given you the former rain moderately." In the Old Testament age there was no great outpouring of the Holy Spirit, then it was given moderately; "and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the latter rain in the first month;" which was the case on the day of Pentecost, as that same chapter goes on to show. And then it saith, that while he will thus give you the former and the latter rain, "the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." Now these, you are aware, are named as blessings of the gospel; the olive oil a symbol, I should think, of the grace of God; and the wine, I should think, a symbol of the blood of the everlasting covenant, and that cheerfulness which we have by this glorious gospel. And then the Lord says, "I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer worm, my great army which I sent among you." Now what must be the strength of a man's possession if a few locusts can destroy his possession? What must be the strength of a man's hope if a few insects can destroy that hope? What can be the substance of a man's possession if a few insects can destroy it all? Yet that was the case with the literal possessions of the Jews. The Lord sent these insects into the fields, upon the corn, and upon the trees, and destroyed everything. And just so it is with this life. At the mercy of the smallest circumstance our best comforts sometimes lie. Oh, how little it takes to turn joy into sorrow in this world! how little it takes to throw us down from the pinnacle of delight into the depths of privation, wretchedness, and misery! When the fall of man took place, farewell then to all the bliss of paradise; farewell to safety, because farewell to innocence; farewell to hope, farewell to fellowship with God: all was lost; and now our very lives lie at the mercy of the merest trifle. Ah, our precious lives hang upon a breath; our precious lives lie upon a pulse beating; as we say, the question is put sixty times every minute whether we shall live any longer; one pulse stop, the man is gone. See what a state we are in. Now then, the Lord substitutes another state. "The years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmer worm, my great army;" little things in themselves, but alas! alas! they do great mischief. "And ye shall eat in plenty," and where is that plenty? In Christ; he is that bread of life. Ah, the locust, cankerworm, palmerworm, may labour and try there, but that's beyond their reach. Neither sin, nor Satan, nor death, nor tribulation, nor anything, can deprive us of that plenty we have in Christ; there is the meat that endureth unto everlasting life; this puts everything to rights, all this by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. And

why does the Lord so deal with most of us as to remind us from day to day of the uncertainty of everything here? Is it not to carry us away from the uncertain to the certain? As saith the apostle, "That we may look not to the things that are seen, for they are temporal"—just the things we all do look at, if the Lord does not enable us to look higher,— "but to the things that are not seen, for they are eternal;" they will not deceive us. "Ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you, and my people shall never be ashamed." Ah, then, if I receive Jesus Christ, I have these blessings, I have eternal plenty, the Lord is my shepherd, and I shall not want. When everything is easy, and straight, and comfortable, and there is nothing to burden the heart, distress the mind, fetter the soul, nothing to cause us sleepless nights and days of weariness, when that is the case, we can be full of confidence, and hope in the Lord, and trust in the Lord, and all the rest of it. But let all this be taken away, let some cloud of locusts, cankerworm, or some similar circumstance, take it all away, and make you feel that you have nothing in your natural existence to exist for, and wish you never had existed; then let the bread of life come in, then let Jesus Christ come in, then let the wine of the everlasting covenant come in; what then? I know what then; I know what then. Though the fig tree then should not blossom, though the labour of the olive should then fail; though there should then be no fruit in the vine, and though then the fields should yield no meat, and though then the flocks be cut off from the fold, and though then there be no herd in the stall, yet there is something else, namely, the Lord my God, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." If I have no consolations in the low ground of temporalities, I have everlasting consolations in the upper springs of eternal mercy. There we can rejoice in plenty; there is that plentiful land into which famine can never enter. Here, then, by the sacrifice the Lord will send rain, and bless us with all these blessings. "Ye shall eat in plenty; and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God." Oh, it's a great thing, friends, to stand in the strength of the Lord, and contemplate that lofty, broad, blue, rugged, threatening, volcanic mountain, that seems by its very appearance to say, A little longer, and I will crush you to atoms: I will tear you to pieces; it will soon be over with you; to be able to answer and say, Who art thou, O great mountain? Says the mountain, I will let you know who I am. Will you? "Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." Jesus steps in; down goes the mountain, and he saith to the poor soul, "I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth," and what is this new sharp threshing instrument but the gospel? "and thou shalt thresh the mountains." Well, but, Lord, I cannot hit very hard." Never mind, just plead the promise; that will hit it hard enough. I did not tell Moses to strike the sea; just stretch your hand over it, the sea will go fast enough. And he said to Moses, "Smite the rock." I am afraid I shan't be able to smite it hard enough, Lord. What have you to do with that? I tell you, just go and smite it. Well, I shan't be able to hit very hard, Lord; I think the rock will laugh at me, Lord; I think the people will laugh at me, and I think the devil will laugh at me. They will all laugh at you if you don't; but if you just do as I tell you, just go and smite the rock, then they will laugh the other side of their mouths; rivers will flow out, and you will see that the power is not of man, but of God. Here, then, my hearer, it is that the Lord Jehovah he is the interposer. Thus, then, while the things of this life lie at the mercy, I say, of mere trifles, bless the Lord, there is a life in Christ—can never die, a blessedness that can never be taken away. I had intended to have gone on farther in that second chapter of Joel, but your time is gone.