

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

ENCOURAGEMENT.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, AUGUST 21ST, 1864, BY

MR. JAMES WELLS,

AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE, BOROUGH ROAD.

"Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord, and work: for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts."—Haggai ii. 4.

If we are once blessed with divine faith, it matters not at all what we have to do, to bear, or to encounter. And what is divine faith? It is, first, divine authority; for when the Lord takes a sinner in hand, that sinner is led to ask this question, What right have I to conclude that I am a Christian? He seeks the Lord; by-and-bye, in the Lord's own time, a word comes home with power, endears the Saviour, and "unto you that thus believe he is precious;" and thus it is demonstrated to you that your faith is of God. And then, your faith being of God, Christ belongs to you, and if Jesus Christ belongs to you, then all that is embodied in him belongeth to you; all the promises, as well as the precepts, belong to you, and God the Father is your Father, and the Holy Spirit your teacher. Now, having this divine faith, this divine authority, it matters not what, I say, we have to bear or to encounter when this faith is in exercise. Hence it is that the builders of the temple and the walls on their return from captivity met with very much discouragement. There is hardly anything you can imagine that the enemy did not try. They slandered Nehemiah, and tried to frighten him away from the work; slandered the people; applied to great kings; and did all they possibly could. And the Lord did suffer the adversary to hinder them for a time; but by-and-bye, he who hath all hearts in his hands steps in, in the second year of Darius, by the prophesying of Haggai and Zechariah; then the people had a fresh manifestation of divine authority to go to work, and they went to work in good earnest, and the enemy soon became little in his own eyes, while these few people whom the enemy had despised, proved to be triumphant, like Gideon's three hundred, and by those few the Lord wrought the victory. Therefore said one of old, "It matters not with thee, whether with few or with many." What a sweet thing it is, then, to have this divine faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to have the Lord on our side! Why, if there were nothing more than this, that we have to live a little longer, and then that we have to die, and that eternity comes next, and how do we know how we shall do with the swelling of Jordan except the Lord be on our side? But if the Lord be on our side, if we have his authority to conclude that he is on our side, then we may live in the confidence of that, that he will take care of us; and we know how we shall do in the swelling of Jordan, we shall pass clean over; and we know how we shall do when we get into eternity; we shall cast the crown of victory at the dear Redeemer's feet, and join with all already safely landed there, ascribing salvation to him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb, for ever.

Our text, though rather long, I shall divide simply into two parts. Here is, first, *a fourfold exhortation*; here is, secondly, *the reason assigned*

for that exhortation,—that fourfold exhortation; “I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.” “Be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith the Lord;” that is one; “and be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest;” that is two; “and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith the Lord;” that is three; “and work;” that is four. So here is a fourfold exhortation, and then the reason assigned at the last; “for I am with you, saith the Lord of hosts.”

We notice then, first, the strength. Zerubbabel was, no doubt, a type of the Lord Jesus Christ; we shall treat it as such, and show wherein his strength lay; and wherein his strength lay, of course, our strength lays. The first thing, then, I notice in which Zerubbabel was strong, was in the spirit of the Lord. “This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” There is nothing, then, without the Spirit of the Lord. Oh, it is a great thing to know something of the Holy Spirit as our strength; when he makes us strong in our confidence in the ability of Christ to save, when the Holy Spirit makes us strong in our prayers before God, and when we can cry to God earnestly and sincerely, and feel deeply our need of his constant friendship, of his great mercy, of his kind care and interposition for us, as the matter shall require. Take this away, where is the strength? Here, then, Zerubbabel was, by the Spirit of the Lord, made strong in faith, strong in solemn prayer, and strong in decision for the blessed God. Besides, if the Holy Spirit be our strength, then he is our strength not only by his own person, his own personal and almighty power, but he is our strength as the Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ, revealing to us the Lord Jesus Christ as the ground of confidence; and he is our strength as the Spirit of the Father, revealing unto us the Father in his love, and counsels, and eternity of his mercy. This, then, was one part of the strength of Zerubbabel. Let us come down to our own souls’ experience upon this matter. Where is our strength now? Is it not in Christ Jesus? And if we have a firm confidence in him, and earnest prayer to him,—where there is true faith there will be prayer; it is the prayer of faith that saveth the sick; “the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much;” what will not such prayer, such faith, do? that faith centering in what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done, and resting upon the immutability of the blessed God. Thus, then, “not by might,”—by human might, nor human power; “but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.” Hence, the Lord can turn, and will turn, all the human might and all the human power to the advantage of his people. Hence, the Lord turned the king of Assyria,—he is called so because the Persian empire at that time embraced Assyria; the Persian king was called the king of Assyria;—he turned the heart of the king of Assyria towards his people. He knows how to turn the heart of a Pharaoh towards Joseph; he knows how to turn the heart of a Nebuchadnezzar towards Daniel; he knows how to turn the heart of an Ahasuerus towards Mordecai; he knows how to do this. Therefore it is that this is our strength,—confidence in the Lord our God. In what a great variety of ways many of the people of God have to pray while passing through this world! Nehemiah had to pray respecting king Ahasuerus, or Artaxerxes, as he is in one place called—sometimes one name, sometimes another; Nehemiah had to pray that the Lord would show him favour in the sight of that man; and so the Lord did. Here, then, let us never despise faith; let us never make light of the spirit of prayer; let us never make light of deep solemnity and earnestness before God. Where there is not this, our confidence is presumption; where there is not this, our confidence is not well founded; but where our confidence arises from what Jesus Christ is, and arises from the earnestness of our souls, our consciences can bear us testimony that we believe unfeignedly, that we love the truth supremely, and that we are sincere in the sight of the living God; we can then leave all our

adversaries, we can leave all they are, all they say, all they attempt to do, we may leave them all in the hands of the Lord, and go on in his blessed ways with this assurance, that the Lord will not fail nor forsake us. So it was with Ezra; he was ashamed, he said, to ask the king for any soldiers to accompany them, though it seemed natural he should have them; but they besought the Lord that they might get safely across the desert, in spite of the troops of robbers that infested those parts; and he says, "By the good hand of our God upon us we came to Jerusalem." And let us spiritualize this: we know not what adversaries lie in wait for us; but the Lord doth; and let us not go down to Egypt for help, but let us entreat the Lord our God to make a way for us, and then our testimony, when we get landed in the new Jerusalem, will be that through the good hand of the Lord upon us we arrived safe at the new Jerusalem, and there we dwell, and that for ever. This, then, is one part of the strength; strong in faith, giving glory to God; strong in prayer, pouring out your souls in earnestness before him; strong in decision, taking your stand where the truth is, and standing out for it, if need be, even unto death. See some of our brethren that have gone before us hundreds and hundreds of years ago; see what they were subjected to, and see how they could smile at their foes amidst it all, rejoice amidst the fires of martyrdom, leap into eternity in the exercise of that precious faith wherein there was earnestness in the soul, and that spirit of divine revelation that made them reject the things that are seen for the sake of the eternal realities not seen by mortal eyes. The next part of the strength of Zerubbabel was the certainty of God's truth. "His hands have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it." That was God's own declaration to Zerubbabel. And you observe that this declaration stands in the positive form; that the same person who laid the foundation, that his hand should finish it. Zerubbabel is in this, as you will at once perceive, a striking type of the Lord Jesus Christ. He laid the foundation in Zion, and he has been carrying on the work, gathering in the materials, from that day to this; and his hand shall finish it. But then let us take it in another way; because such scriptures are intended to represent not only the ultimate completion of the church, but such a scripture applies to the final perseverance of every real Christian, that he who has begun the Christian race shall finish it; that same man who became sensible of his state as a sinner, was humbled down to the dust before God, and was led to know something of Jesus Christ; that same man shall get to the end. Now only think of it, if we could this morning all of us feel quite sure that we should finish our course with joy, joy unbounded, the joy of the pilgrim at the end of his journey, the joy of the man who has travelled here as a stranger, and safely reaches all his dear relations, safely reaches his happy home, above all, safely reaches where his God and Father is, where his Saviour is, where not an adversary nor evil shall be ever occurrent; the man who is a victor, overcomes by the blood of the Lamb; what more could we want? I do not know, as far as assurance is concerned, that we could want anything more than this, the sweet assurance that no one shall be able to say to you, not justly nor truly, nor to any other real child of God, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish, not having counted the cost." But you have counted the cost, and some of us have known comparatively little of the cost; our profession has cost us nothing yet in comparison of what a profession of the truth of God hath cost our brethren in times past, and we know not even now what it may cost us before we die. Let us therefore count the cost; let us be ready to sacrifice anything and everything; but sacrifice our souls and consciences and the truth of God for none. Buy the truth at any price; sell it, as we say, at no price. Now this was encouraging. How sweet it is to be assured, then, that the Lord will not leave us! And we can sometimes believe in the past better than we can in the future. We

can say, Well, the Lord has been merciful hitherto. Well, not more merciful than he will be. And, indeed, if there is any difference, if we rightly believe, if there is any difference at all, the future is the better; for if he has been kind hitherto, he will not only not be less kind, but he will be more kind; and if he has been merciful in the past, he will be not only as merciful, but more merciful, in the future; and if he hath blessed us and taken care of us in the past, he will take care of us; not only will he not cease to take care of us, but he will take care of us, as it were, the more, if I may so speak, for the future. Hence it is that "the path of the just is as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day; and that we are to go from strength to strength, and from faith to faith;—that is, so I understand that scripture, from one degree of faith to another; for the apostle says, "The righteousness of God," meaning the righteousness of Jesus Christ, "is revealed from faith to faith;" that is, by the knowledge of him; we glory in increased acquaintance with him. And besides, mercy and peace are not to be diminished. It is true your poor body may wear out, friends may die; enemies may rise, slanderers may rush in upon you with all the forces of hell, and you may be exceedingly tried. But then the Lord's grace is sufficient; mercy and peace shall be multiplied. I would that I had gifts to handle this part of my subject as it ought to be handled, in order to show to you not only the past, but the certainty of the future faithfulness, mercy, and loving-kindness of the Lord. Give me an instance, if you can, in all the Holy Scriptures where one old Christian, where one aged disciple, where one who had known the Lord, has not been prepared to bear testimony that while on the one hand the tribulations of his latter days might have been, perhaps, the heaviest, and the most painful, and the most numerous, it has been the case sometimes; was so with David, and so with many others I could name;—but then all this was to make way for the coming in of the Lord to fulfil that scripture that as tribulations abounded, consolations abounded also. So then, having this spirit of confidence in Christ, having this spirit of grace and supplication, and having this assurance that he who began a good work will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ, we may well be strong in the Lord, strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. What are silver and gold? what are wealth and friends? what are all the treasures of the world, in comparison of spirituality of mind." Oh, to be spiritually-minded is life and peace, to be spiritually-minded is to be God-minded, Christ-minded, gospel-minded, heaven-minded. Then we drink from fountains that will never cloy; then we eat indeed angels' food; then we join in music more than angelic; then we walk in a light that is above the brightness of the sun. We then hold converse with the most high God; we then go into the cabinet secrets of the blessed God; we then go deeply into the great mystery of God manifest in the flesh; we then participate a little in that dignity put upon the people of God, kings and priests to God. This is what we want,—spirituality of mind. Alas, alas! most of us, I suppose, groan under the burden of what the apostle describes, and we are witnesses to the truth of his words, that "to be carnally-minded is death." And so it is when your mind is for this world, its gains, its honours, its pleasures, its advantages, or any of it; when your mind is bent that way, oh, how dead you then are to eternal things, until some fiery dart comes in, some earthquake, some storm of hail, some terrible adversity sets in, wakes us up, and then we begin to cry out for God, and for his mercy, and for his salvation, and for his presence, and for his power. And will he say us nay? Oh no, oh no. The disciples were indeed glad when they saw the Lord, and so shall the people of God be. The next thing, and the last I will name, in which Zerubbabel was to be strong (and of course I name these because they apply to us, if we are Christians), was that he

should commit no error in completing this building. "Who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with those seven; they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth."

Now these seven eyes imply that perfection of knowledge that Zerubbabel should have; that he should finish this building without any error. And so this is one of the highest privileges of the people of God, that they are to be kept from error. "There shall be an highway, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness." And if all the men under the heavens were to use all their learning and reasoning, and swear that Christ was not the way of holiness, my soul would stand against the whole. I know that he is the way of holiness; I know that sin is ended nowhere else; I know that his work is perfect; I know that his righteousness is everlasting; I know that his covenant of covenants, of which he is the Mediator, is ordered in all things and sure; and here we stand. And as to minor points, I am a Baptist;—some good people are not Baptists. And there are other points of a minor kind that I could name, but will not occupy your time in naming, in which good people always have differed, and will differ down to the end of time. And hence the necessity of each Christian church being independent of another Christian church, in order that one Christian church may enjoy all its sentiments and all its principles. Hence I could not unite with a church that was not strictly a Baptist church, because I could not have my principles there comfortably carried out. Some churches, where they have good ministers and good people, they are not Baptists. Well, I am not their judge; the Lord is their judge. I am not going to curse them because they are not Baptists; they will differ in these matters. But in all essential matters, such as the work of the Holy Spirit, such as the perfection of the Saviour, such as the immutability of the blessed God, such as a covenant ordered in all things and sure; all the saints are brought into these truths, and during all their pilgrimage they shall commit no fatal error, so that the testimony of each at the last shall be, "I have kept the faith!" For myself, I wish when I die to be found just where I am now, in the faith of Christ; for to be found in the faith of Christ is to be found in heaven; to be found in the truth is to be found in heaven; to be found in the bond of the covenant is to be found in Christ Jesus. Here, then, is the exhortation to be strong. And I would ask, do not these three things encourage us? First, here is the Spirit of the Lord, to cause us to pour out strong cryings and tears to our God from time to time, in the confidence of faith. Secondly, here is the assurance that the work shall be finished. Thirdly, here is the assurance, indicated by the seven eyes, that we shall have all that knowledge of him that we shall commit no fatal error; so that when we are called to cross the Jordan we shall see that as the truth has held us fast, we have been enabled to hold that fast. Now Zerubbabel was thus a type of Christ, and Christ is the representative of the people, and to be a partaker of this strength is to be a partaker of Christ. For who ever had the Spirit of God without measure as Christ had the Spirit of God? Who ever completed the end of his mission as the Saviour completed it? And who ever lived—honours eternal to his blessed, thrice million times blessed name!—who ever lived and died so free from error as the dear Redeemer? Not one erroneous thought, nor one erroneous word, nor one erroneous deed; lived, died free from error. Let him, then, in all these respects, in every other, be our strength. Well may the apostle desire "that the power of Christ may rest upon him;" that is, by the Spirit of God; for that would make him strong in faith and prayer; that would make him strong in the faithfulness of God; that would make him strong in the truth of God; so that he should live in the truth, rejoice in the truth, go to heaven thereby; that truth being shield and buckler.

Now the Lord introduces the antetypical Zerubbabel, and he says, "Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and he shall grow up out of his place." What a beautiful scripture is that! Now we find among men, if you put persons into a certain position, it is pretty good work if they keep it; perhaps you see no change; they never rise above it. A very good remark a friend of mine, a Dissenting minister, made to a Church minister in the country, some time ago. This Church minister said to the Dissenting minister, "You—what are you? Why, you were working in the brickfields once." The Dissenting minister said, "Yes, sir, I did work in the brickfields; and if you had been there you would have been there to this day." I thought it was a very good reply. Now it is said of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He shall grow up out of his place." He was under sin, but he did his work so well that he got to the end of that sin. He was under the law, but he did his work so well that he got to the end of it; under the curse, but he did his work so well he got to the end of that curse. He laid in the grave, but he did his work so well he could not be holden of it, but must triumphantly rise from the dead. But we have done our work so badly, we are under sin, and there we should have remained for aught we could do; under the law, and there we must remain, like the man in the brickfields, for aught we could do; under death, and there we must remain, for aught we could do; under wrath, and there we must remain for aught we could do. But the dear Redeemer lived for us, his work ascribed to us, and precious faith brings us up. He grew up by his personal worth out of his place, and his place was our place, out of that place he grew up, brought us up with him. "Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise; awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust, thy dew is as the dew of herbs." "He shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory." So he does; we all feel that; we never feel our consciences strike us for glorifying Jesus Christ. No! "And he shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne;" ruling in the perfection of his priesthood; "and the counsel of peace shall be between them both;" between God the Father and Christ; so I understand that scripture. And as, then, Jesus grew up out of his place, and by faith in him we are brought up out of what we are by nature into what we are constituted by the wondrous mercy, love, and salvation of God.

I go to the next part of the exhortation; "Be strong, O Joshua, son of Josedech, the high priest." Now wherein lay Joshua's strength as a priest? He, of course, also is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ; though I shall say but very little concerning him, because Joshua's antetype, bearing upon our subject, is very beautifully introduced. Now the Lord said to Joshua, "If thou wilt walk in my ways." Therein laid Joshua's strength; first, in walking in God's ways. I have already anticipated this as applied to the Saviour; therein laid the Saviour's strength, in walking in God's ways. I say it with reverence, that Christ must have lost all his strength if he had deviated from any one of God's ways; but he walked in perfection in all God's ways, and therefore had no weakness of his own. The weakness that he had was our weakness. He took our iniquities; he bore our sins. "If thou wilt walk in my ways;" and Jesus did, and we walk in Christ. Faith lays hold of him, and he becomes our way to God. "And if thou wilt keep my charge." Now the Saviour's charge was twofold. First, to finish the work which God gave him to do. Now we are all satisfied upon that, that he did do so. The second part of his charge he has not yet fulfilled; the time has not yet come. The second part of his charge he himself describes when he says, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." But they are not brought yet; but as he fulfilled the first part of the charge, the completing of his humiliation work, so he will complete the other part of his charge, and at the last say, "Here am I and all that thou hast given"

me." Now here is one thing, then, and here is our strength, as I have already suggested. Christ perfectly walked in God's ways, and the more we are kept there the more strong in eternal things we are. The way of righteousness is strength unto the upright; the Lord's paths drop fatness. And those who by grace have been brought to walk in those paths, see what strength they manifested; see the 11th of Hebrews upon this. "Then thou shalt also judge my house;" and so the Saviour does, and he gives judgment in favour of his people, because his blood acquits them from their faults, his righteousness exempts them from all condemnation. What a lovely, shall I say, feature his judicial character is—a form of love! We are not to understand his judicial character in relation to the saints in the legal sense, but in the evangelical and gospel sense. Hence what a judge he was among his disciples! Do they go to sleep, and by all military law forfeit their lives? "The flesh is weak, the spirit is willing," that is how he judges them. Doth Peter deny him, even with cursing and with swearing? Prayed that his faith may not fail. The words are hardly out of Peter's mouth before the Saviour pierced the heart and soul of Peter with looks of love and majesty, melted him down, and he went out and wept bitterly. I have no doubt, when we get to heaven, we shall better understand, look back, and more clearly see the workings of those Satanic elements that are everlastingly betraying us somewhere or another. Poor fallen man! great is the misery of man! Vain is the help of man in this matter; vain all human goodness, which is as the early dew and the morning clouds. If we are lifted out of this state, it must be by Jesus Christ. He, therefore, judgeth his people by the excellency of his worth, and thereby lays a foundation to acquit them of everything, brings them home faultless at the last. He is the judge. "And I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by:" and so he does; walks among the churches, walks among his people, and they stand by. Here, then, lay the strength; walking in the Lord's ways, keeping his charge, and judging justly. And the Saviour would not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears. If he had judged from external circumstances, as you and I do, and after the reports raised against his people, all sorts of things, he might damn the whole of his brethren. But no, he will not judge after the sight of his eyes, nor reprove according to the hearing of his ears; comes and brings the soul into the court of equity, balances things, finds out the extenuating circumstances, brings in the perfection of his work, and thus gives judgment in favour of the meek, the poor, and the needy. So shall he thus judge the poor, so shall he thus reprove for the meek, and with the rod of his mouth shall smite the Jewish earth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay those wicked men that slew him, and that slew his disciples, or ever shall. "Be strong." Now see, as Joshua was a type of Jesus Christ, see how beautifully Jesus Christ is introduced, in connection with this matter, as our strength. Now the whole of my discourse this morning is to show up the privileges of the Christian,—that he is strong in the Lord. Now, after dealing with Joshua as a type of Jesus Christ, he brings in the Saviour himself very beautifully. He says, "I will bring forth my servant, the Branch. For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua"—Joshua is only the type—"upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof." Seven eyes again, you see; that means the perfection of knowledge that should be in Christ. Now a stone, when it is graven, is passive; it undergoes—it is the patient undergoing suffering. Most ridiculous notions some good men have upon this; they tell us that the eyes mean eyes that are looking at the stone; hence they say, the eyes of the law, the eyes of the gospel, the eyes of justice; they multiply seven; they might multiply twenty. You see, there is an engraving; the stone receives an engraving. And so Jesus Christ, as man, reached a perfection of knowledge by what he suffered. The most

valuable part of your knowledge arises from what you suffer. You do not know what the law is if you have never felt it; you do not know what the plague of the heart is if you have never felt it; you do not know what rottenness of the bones is, and what it is to tremble under a foreboding apprehension that some fearful judgment is about to come upon you, you do not know what it is if you have never felt it. Now then, Jesus Christ reached a perfection of knowledge by what he suffered. What he suffered made him, as man, perfectly acquainted with what sin really was, and with what wrath really was, and with what men really were. Was there ever, since the foundation of the world, or ever will be again, such a development of human depravity as in the dealings of men towards the spotless Holy One of Israel? They took his character away. People said, It must be true; everybody says he is a winebibber, a friend of harlots; everybody says so; oh, I know it is true; cannot be any doubt about it. And then they set all their blasphemous and awful ingenuity to work to mock, and despise, and put him to death in the cruellest way that they possibly could. Depend upon it, the more a man has the grace and truth of God in him, the more Satan will hate him, professors despise him, and the world fly from him. He underwent such sufferings, and by what he underwent acquired a perfect knowledge of what sin really is, and what wrath really is, and what men were, and what death really is—a perfection of knowledge. We shall go, I trust—no doubt we shall—deeper into this when we get home to glory. Much we talk of Jesus' blood, but how little is understood—

“Of his sufferings so intense
Angels have no perfect sense;
'Tis to God, and God alone,
That their weight was fully known.”

The next words, “And I”—this same Person—“will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” How true this is. Did he not do so? He did do so. At nine o'clock in the morning, on that eventful, never-to-be-forgotten, that wondrous day—at nine o'clock in the morning the sins of unnumbered millions all existed in full force. At three o'clock in the afternoon not one was left; every one was ended, every mystic Egyptian drowned, the victory was wrought. An incarnate God achieved in six hours what angels and men could not take one step towards, even through the endless cycles of eternity. “I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” “In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.” And who is the vine? Christ Jesus. And who is the fig tree? Christ Jesus. And do I, therefore, meet with a sin-laden sinner? Do I meet with a poor creature trembling under the apprehension of God's wrath? I at once tell him of Jesus; I tell him that the winter is past, that the rain is over and gone, by Christ Jesus; that the time of the singing of birds is come; that the trees put forth the promises of an abundant paradisiacal produce of all manner of pleasant fruits; and he hath said, “Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”

But I see I shall not be able to embody one half of what is meant in our text, nor one half of what I intended to say, therefore a few words more, and I must close. Now another part of the exhortation, passing by that part, “Be ye strong, all ye people of the land”—I have anticipated that in a measure—it says, “Work.” How are we to work? In faith; never get on without faith. Hence, if you are engaged in anything, once be persuaded you cannot do it, you give up directly. Once be persuaded you cannot continue to follow Jesus, that you cannot continue in his ways, that you cannot continue in his service; once dream of some insurmountable obstacle, once dream that you cannot go on, once get into that state of mind, and you sink into despair. See, then, how important it is to have faith in Jesus. Therefore it is that we are to work in confidence.