

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

THE WAY TO BE WISE.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JULY 23RD, 1865, BY

MR. JAMES WELLS,

AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE, BOROUGH ROAD.

“And unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.”—Job xxviii. 28.

THE original word, here translated “man,” is “Adam.” It therefore seems to refer to what the Lord said to Adam after the fall. So that when the fall took place, and the Lord gave the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent’s head, it became the wisdom then of Adam to fear the Lord after this order of things, and to depart from evil by him who alone could put evil away. And what the Lord said to Adam he saith, of course, unto all his people, and they find out very happily the truth of what he saith, that “Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.” But I am not quite sure that Christ himself is not here referred to. “Unto Adam,” unto the last Adam, unto Christ Jesus, “he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord”—and the Lord Jesus Christ was quick in the fear of the Lord; he feared the Lord with filial fear, in absolute perfection—“that is wisdom.” That was the Saviour’s wisdom, to so fear the Lord as to abide solemnly and closely by all that belonged to God. Hence his pure lips often uttered the sweet revelation, “The words”—the very words—“that I speak unto you are not mine, but the words of him that sent me.” So perfectly did he thus fear the Lord as to abide by the words of the Lord. “And to depart from evil is understanding.” You may say, perhaps, How could Jesus Christ depart from evil? Very well. Our griefs and our sorrows were the evils laid upon him, and he had to depart from them by his obedient life; our sins were the evil that was laid upon him, and he had to depart from that evil by his all-atoning death. And all of you that know his name, you see that Jesus Christ rose from the dead without sin; he had departed from it all by atoning for it all. And not only did he rise from the dead without sin, but all his people virtually rose 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.” And what we want is for the Holy Spirit to unite us to this great and wondrous Person, that we may from time to time drink into his spirit, come into his light, and fear the Lord after that order of things in which there is eternal salvation. However, I shall not this morning treat our subject after that manner. I shall take simply a twofold view. I shall first try to give what I believe to be *the sense of the text as applicable to the Christian*. I shall then, secondly, as far as time permits (and I suppose I shall get through only a small portion, set before you some of the *mysteries that are brought to light by this fear of the Lord, and by this departure from evil*.

I notice, then, in the first place, what I believe to be *the meaning of our text as applicable to the Christian*. “Unto man he saith, Behold, the fear of the Lord.” I will not occupy your time in describing the many false fears of the Lord that exist among men. I shall mention only one scrip-

ture before I bring the word of the Lord to prove the kind of fear here referred to, and that one scripture I am about to bring does, in my mind, lay itself like an axe to the root of the tree of all those systems. Puseyism and Catholicism! What are Catholicism and Puseyism? Why, they are an humble imitation of heathenism, of Judaism, and Christianity.—that is what they are; they imitate all three. Now hear what the Saviour saith, that “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Thus a man may fear God most solemnly, most earnestly; a man may grow in the knowledge of certain systems most wonderfully, and a man may so fear God as to give all his goods to feed the poor, and his body to be burned,—the dear Saviour hath said, if it be the commandment or tradition of men all is in vain. What a solemn truth is this! The Lord help me, then, this morning to make our text clear beyond dispute, and to enable you to enter into it, and to bless him for it. Now, then, what is the kind of fear? It is that kind of fear which the Lord alone can implant in the heart. And I will tell you where this fear will place a man; wherever this fear is in the heart it will place a man into the knowledge of God’s everlasting covenant; it will place the soul into an acquaintance with the certainty of God’s truth. And if the fear wherewith we fear him be not after this new covenant order; if we do not fear him in his immutable oath in Christ; if we do not serve him, fear him, love him after the order of the new covenant, then our fear towards him is not the fear of which he is the author. I now go to the 32nd of Jeremiah, and to the 40th, 41st, and 42nd verses, which give us all the information upon this subject that we can need. How happy am I this morning—I feel happy in the very thought of it—that I am speaking to hundreds of people that can say that they are brought to just where that scripture describes. And the matter stands thus: “I will make an everlasting covenant with them.” Take the word covenant there for the sake of explanation. Substitute two words for the sake of making it clear. Put the word *agreement* and the word *engagement*. “I will make an everlasting agreement with them.” You recollect in one place it is said, “Not imputing our trespasses unto us, but imputing them unto Christ,” and that “by grace we are saved.” Now the Lord has made an everlasting agreement with them—to save them by grace. I say it is pleasing for me to think that into this agreement your soul is happily brought. Some of you for many years have been brought into this agreement. I will make this everlasting agreement with them, to save them by grace. And then take the word *engagement*, I will make an everlasting engagement with them;” namely, that “they shall be my people, and I will be their God.” But let us take the Lord’s own words here, “I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear,”—here is the fear,—“in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” I this morning, then, appeal to you that are witnesses for God,—I can say nothing to the natural man here, except that he is out of the secret altogether; but those of you to whom the Lord hath revealed his covenant. Let us examine the words I have just quoted, that “I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” Now, where is it that your soul feels such homage to God? Is it not in this covenant; is it not by the perfection of Jesus Christ; is it not after the order of this mercy? And when you hear other gospels, do you not feel repulsed, and driven away, and disgusted, and ready to say, “Whatever the gifts of the man, I would not go over the threshold of the door to hear a dead-letter, graceless sermon, however much that sermon may be filled with human ingenuity and human gifts.” For the sheep of Christ,—and he is a covenant Christ, he is a shepherd belonging to the new covenant; his sheep hear his voice, and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him. Now, where is our fear of

the Lord? I declare, though it may seem going a long way, that I can hardly describe to you in language the deep, I was going to say almost unfathomable, reverence I feel for God the Father in the order of this covenant. Oh, it is so sovereign, the immutability of his counsel! oh, what security! he has given himself as our security; as he could swear by no greater he hath sworn by himself. Here we may indeed have strong consolation. And I am not going too far when I say that I cannot describe the deep reverence I feel for Emmanuel in his wondrous life, in his wondrous death, in his wondrous resurrection, in the wondrous characters he bears. Oh, his love and his faithfulness! I cannot tell the depth of reverence I feel for that Holy, that Eternal Spirit that taketh up the isles as a very little thing, that giveth to every man severally as he will; this heavenly wind bloweth where he listeth, when he listeth, and how he listeth, and just as he pleaseth; and the greatest opposition that my wicked heart can offer to him is removed and melted by one touch of his finger; he can melt my heart when he pleaseth, and roll in upon my soul the achievements of the dear Redeemer; as saith the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." "Behold, the fear of the Lord." Now mark, I will make this everlasting agreement with them, to save them by grace. And "I will put my fear"—is not this the language of a covenant God? Shall we after this trifle with doctrine, and not care whether what we receive be the devil's lies or God's truth? Shall we after this look upon it as a matter of indifference after what order the Lord is to be revered? Here is a covenant, an everlasting covenant,—“that I will not turn away from them;” but, lest we should misunderstand the Lord there, he says, “to do them good.” Now the enemy may come in and say, Ah, he says he will not turn from you, and so he will abide with you, and if you do your part he will abide with you to bless you; but if you do not your part, he will abide with you to curse you. Lest we should dream of, or bring such a horrid doctrine into the gospel, the Lord says, “I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear,”—the fear of a covenant God,—the fear of God after this order of things, “in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” Now come, some of you little ones, that see and know these things, are there not times when you can truly say, after this order of things, with the disciples, when the Saviour asked them, “Will ye also go away?” What! away from this covenant? What! away from this faithful and unchanging God? What! away from this great High Priest? What! away from such a Shepherd as this? What! away from the Holy Spirit? What! away from these promises? What! away thus from the Lord? Why, where else can I find the words of eternal life? Go away? Lord, forbid it; let me suffer ten thousand deaths rather than ever depart from these blessed truths. We feel we cannot depart from them, nor make light of them; because just in proportion as we make light of any of these truths, we make light of the only remedy in existence for all our woe: once tread down the Son of God, what will you put in his place? Disesteem the blood of the covenant, what will you put in its place? Disesteem the Spirit of grace—the Holy Spirit, what will you put in his place? Here, then, “behold, the fear of the Lord.” I am coming, you see, to just what I have suggested, that this fear of the Lord of which I am speaking is as great a secret as any other grace of the Spirit. “I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.” We feel we cannot depart, there is something in us that will not let us depart. Our nature is bad enough; but, bless the Lord, there is something to overcome it; this sin of apostasy shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, as Adam was, and so fell; nor under the old covenant, as the Jews were, and so apostatized; but you are under

the personal reign of Jesus Christ, and grace shall reign in your hearts, and keep you in that reconciliation and friendship into which you are brought: made friends with God, to be his enemies no more for ever. That is the fear of the Lord, then. Now, lest I should discourage anyone, I may just say that happy the man that begins to be concerned about eternal things. If I am therefore speaking to any that do not understand this covenant, that do not understand these things, and yet just begin to be concerned for eternal things, I will tell you this; if the work be real in your heart, however ignorant you are now, you will remain an uneasy, dissatisfied, restless creature, until you find out God's covenant; and when you find out his counsel, and what his salvation is, and what his dear Son is, then you will rest, and not before. And, therefore, I would not discourage the beginning of the work, where there is no as yet clear understanding of this matter; but if the work be real, it must be tested by what it leads to. "Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." But mark again, "Yea, I will"—here is no *if* in the matter;—"I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul." What land? The land of the new covenant; the land where Jesus reigns; the land where neither evil nor adversary can enter. "I will plant them assuredly." "For thus saith the Lord, like"—here is an analogy, yet a contrast—"like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them." Would you like to have a scripture to explain that? The 5th chapter of the Romans explains this; "By one man's offence judgment came upon all men"—there's the evil; "by one man's obedience," not by many men's obedience; wouldn't you like to mix up a little of your own doing? How mortifying to the pride of man, that not anything is admitted, from a thread to a shoe-latchet, but "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," divinely, eternally, infallibly righteous! Thus in the Adam fall I have brought upon them this evil, as their legislator and lawgiver, revealing my wrath against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, and that by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified; but by the work of faith, faith in Christ Jesus, I will bring upon them all the good that I have promised; and what that good is eternity alone can show, it is too great for us to attempt any description of. But another word upon that clause, "I will not turn away from them, to do them good." All things work together for good to them that love this covenant God. Ah, say you, Paul does not mean that. Does he not? Let us test it by tracing out the items of this covenant. "Whom he did foreknow"—same thing, you see—"he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." People do not like the doctrine of predestination. Why, who shall undertake to describe the blessedness in those words I have just quoted—"predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son"? If we had been predestinated to be conformed to what Adam was before the fall, that would have been a great thing; if we had been predestinated to be conformed to the image of angels, that would have been a great thing; but to be predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son—to be holy as he is holy, righteous as he is righteous, and happy as he is happy, why, what can equal it in greatness? To be conformed to the image of him who is the brightness of God's glory, the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of God, that we may sit down for ever with him—"And them he called, justifies, and glorifies." Why, it is just the very same thing. "Unto man he said, Behold, the fear of the Lord." *He* said it.—mark that, *he* said." The Lord said that to me many years ago, and I

began to fear him; and I cried, and I sighed, and I read, and I prayed, and I sought, and at last the everlasting gates were thrown open, the doors lifted up their heads, the King of glory came in, and from that moment to this my soul would choose strangling rather than life, than to give up one particle of this blessed new covenant truth. It is hidden from the world; though this covenant be scattered through the Bible, none see it but the poor and the needy, that cannot do without it.

Thus I hope I have made this matter clear, that this fear of the Lord is that fear of him, respect for him after the order of this covenant, from which we cannot depart; we feel we cannot; the Lord will not allow us. God, the searcher of hearts, knows we have no desire. No; we can be open in our profession, we can be honest in our profession; our profession is not a put on thing; we have nothing to disguise, nothing to hide, but to manifest the whole of our religion. We have no private opinions that clash with our public profession. How many are there now that are Socinians in heart professedly believing in the deity of Christ! how many persons are there that are Sabellions in heart, but publicly believe in the doctrine of the Trinity! And what is Bishop Colenso? Why, a rank infidel; I tell him so to his face; he is nothing else; he is a rank infidel, and ought to be ranked with such. To go to tell us that Jesus Christ was an ignorant man, and did not understand Jewish history! Why, those who spat in the Saviour's face could not blaspheme more awfully. And when I read the works of Colenso, which, of course, as a minister I did, in order to see what the devil was about, I have often said before, and say now, it is a remarkable thing there is not a single point which he takes up so triumphantly that he did not, either wilfully or else by oversight, omit the very scriptures that would have cut him up root and branch. I may just mention one point I have often mentioned before, and could mention many. He reckons that it was impossible to hold the passover under 250,000 lambs; that is his reckoning,—must be 250,000 lambs. "Where are they all to come from?" the Bishop says. Where are they all to come from? That is an old note, you know, upon another subject. Where are they to come from? Well, if I had been by the Bishop's side when he penned that, and he had said to me, "What do you think of it?" "Well," I should have said, "I would have your Grace just go to the Second Book of Chronicles, the 35th chapter and the 7th verse, and you will find there was a great passover then, in the days of Josiah, and 30,000 lambs did then. You can't make a passover under 250,000, but the Lord made one with 30,000." So that I should have taken up my abode in that crag of the rock, like an eagle, and looked down: "What are you doing there, old fellow? Cannot you get your 250,000 lambs? I have got my 30,000 here; I am all right. I have got the Lord and the 30,000, and you cannot do without 250,000." Therefore, I say, we are honest in our sentiments; we hold no private sentiments; we bring them all forth into the open air; they are not hothouse sentiments, or summer sentiments, they will all stand the winter; they have stood it, and do and will stand it. And we bless God for such truths and such revelations. But, however, we will go straight on if we can: forgive this digression.

Now, "to depart from evil is understanding." How am I to depart from evil? I must first know the evil that I am under before I know what departure from it is. Now I take it this way: there is a notorious thief;—"Well," he says, "I'll leave off thieving, and I will run away." Very well, he leaves off thieving, and runs away. Ah, he says, I have departed from evil, I have left off thieving, I have run away, I am happy now, it is all right now. Presently, a gentleman comes and taps him on the shoulder. "You are my prisoner." "Your prisoner! why, I have departed from evil, I have left off thieving, and run away." "Ah, what is to be done with what you have done?" So the man is brought before the magistrate, committed for trial, by-and-bye sentenced to punishment; see

what a mistake he made! This, my hearer, presents to us a solemn thought. Oh, how many by a little reformation have rested down in the notion that they are good now, and they have departed from evil, and there is nothing to fear! By-and-bye, when they come to die, and find themselves in the hands of death, at the last great day they will find themselves sentenced by the great Judge with, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." These are your conversions, these are your human conversions, your moral conversions, your empty conversions, and they call it departure from evil. No; it must be done in a better way than that; it must be done in this way: the Lord Jesus Christ brings in a righteousness to exempt me from my unrighteousness, and thereby magnifies God's law; that justifies me, and by that righteousness I get away from all unrighteousness in a way that accords with the perfections of God. Jesus Christ brings in his atonement, and he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and by his atonement paying my debt, by his ransom being in my place, I do thereby depart from evil in the power, in the penalty, and finally in the existence of it. I depart from it legally, righteously, triumphantly, vitally, entirely, eternally, because the work of Christ is eternal. Nothing short of that is real departure from evil, and "Blessed are the dead," and the dead only, "that die in the Lord; their works," of faith in him, and love to his name, "do follow them," to bear testimony that they were receivers of and friends to the Lord Jesus Christ. That is one thing, then, in this departure from evil, receiving Christ Jesus who is the end of evil. Secondly,—Ah, one saith, is not that enough? No; want something more yet. What is the next thing? I must depart from evil also by three things more. First, by the sovereignty of God the Father. 103rd Psalm: God the Father is there represented as a father pitying his children. "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." For me to depart from evil in relation to God the Father, I must receive the testimony of what he has done in imputing my sins to Christ, and sovereignly imputing Christ's work to me. Thus I receive God the Father in his sovereignty, in his mercy, in his choice of me, in his grace. And then God the Father saith, "Loose him, and let him go;" Christ saith, "Loose him, and let him go." That is to depart from evil. You can get out of the evil only by bringing in the good; you can get out of death only by bringing in life; you can get out of darkness only by bringing in light; you can get out of disease only by bringing in health; you can get out of bondage only by bringing in liberty. These are self-evident truths I am declaring. But, thirdly, I must depart from evil by the truth of God in my soul, by the work of the Holy Ghost. "I will put my laws into their minds, and will write them in their hearts." What laws? The laws of the new covenant, to which I have already referred, and therefore need not enlarge upon them. It is the very work of the Holy Spirit to plant these laws in the heart, by which you depart from error, receive the truth, rejoice therein, walk therein. And I meant what I said the other Wednesday evening, when I said, I have had plenty of troubles, and have troubles, great ones; the Lord in the depths of his sovereignty sees fit it should be so; but what I said on Wednesday evening I repeat this morning; if such a thing could happen that you as a people should show an inclination to depart from God's truth, I solemnly declare that every trouble I have ever had, every distress I have ever had, every agony of mind I have ever had, excepting when I was first awakened, and thought I should be lost—with that exception I do not know anything that would be to me so unbearable; it would distress me beyond all measure; I should think I had laboured indeed in vain; I do not feel I could exist. But it is not so, and never will be so. And also I can say, and John no doubt implies this in the reverse when he saith, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." As, then, to depart

vitally from evil is by the coming in of Christ, is by the coming in of God the Father, is by the coming in of the Holy and Eternal Spirit, guiding you into all truth. And what is the fourth thing essential? Well, I have already named the fourth in substance, but I may just name it, and that is, your continuing unto the end in the faith. "If ye continue in the faith, rooted, and grounded, and established, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel." We shall not be. That does not hinder us from praying that we may not, because our nature and Satan are bad enough for anything; let therefore our prayer still be, "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe."

Now, then, this new covenant fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; that is the wise man; and this vital and eternal departure from evil is understanding. When we shall rise to witness the last great evil—you will see it with your eyes, and I shall see it with my eyes; we shall hear it with our ears, our eyes will range, our immortal eyes will range over thousands of square miles of human beings that shall be on the left hand of the Judge, worlds of beings to depart from him into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. What an awful scene is that! From that evil, by oneness with Christ, we shall depart; from that evil, he presenting us in his own beauty and perfection, we shall depart, and a great gulf be for ever fixed, that the one cannot pass or repass to the other. The gulf is fixed, the scene is ended, the judgment passed, the glory perfected, and the solemnities of eternity will roll on with the wondrous hallelujahs of the saints, and in the lower world the groans of the lost. What a weighty matter, then, is this departure from evil! Worlds of woe are included in the word *evil* in our text, from which, by the interposition of a covenant God, our souls shall for ever depart.

I have said nothing of Christ coming and taking the evil,—we cannot say everything in one sermon. I will now give, as hastily as I can, just a sample of some of *the mysteries these things bring to light*. In the first place, this acquaintance with God in the new covenant, this acquaintance with the truth of the sure plantation of the saints in their ultimate destiny, an acquaintance with this is called "a path which no fowl knoweth"—the highflying Pharisee does not know it, "and which the vulture's eye," the keen philosopher "hath not seen;" "the lion's whelps," the mighty self-saviours, "have not trodden it; nor the fierce lion," the Pope, "passed by it." What makes you say the Pope is a fierce lion? Why, he is as far as he can. Look at that encyclical letter he wrote some time ago; the Pope intended that for a lion's roar, but happily he has lost the lion's power, though he still wears the lion's skin; and the encyclical letter turned out to be the voice of a certain relation with long ears.

Thank God for it that it was so, and may it still continue to be so; the Lord preserve us in this as well as in every other respect. Now, then, it is a path which we did not once know, but we do know now. If you have any doubt about my view of this, turn to the 35th of Isaiah—"And an highway shall be there, and a way; and it shall be called, The way of holiness;" just in accordance with what I have said to you this morning: Jesus Christ is that way of holiness, because he is the end of sin and the end of the law. "The unclean shall not pass over it;" the man must be regenerated in order to come into it; "the wayfaring men"—as we say, *bona fide* traveller; he is the man that is travelling to the celestial world, that comes into this hidden path. "No lion shall be there," not in Christ: all the lions are in the world, not there,—nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon;" our sanctification is safe there, our life is safe, our liberty safe, bread given, water sure; all is blooming and beautiful there—there eternal sunshine must settle on our heads. "But," mark, "the redeemed shall walk there," in this hidden path: it is redeeming blood that has brought them into the secret; and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall

obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." Here, then, is the narrow way, it brings to light; that strait gate, narrow way which none knoweth but those who are let into the secret of this covenant, and into the knowledge of what Christ is as the Mediator of that covenant. Again, just to name one or two more mysteries before I close—only a mere sample; it is a path in which a wonderful revolution is brought to light; in which a wonderful way of supplying our needs is brought to light, and in which the wonderful government of God is brought to light. "He putteth forth his hand upon the rock; he overturneth the mountains by the roots." Does this rock mean our sin? "Look unto the rock whence ye were hewn." Sin is a rock in which we were imbedded, in which we were dead, in which we were buried; Christ put his hand forth upon this mighty rock, and overturned the mountains by the roots. Here is the mighty revolution which he wrought when he rolled this rock of sin away, when he rolled these mountains away, and these mountains are lost, and hath brought us up to a spiritual level,—“Round about Jerusalem shall be level,”—brought us up to a level; he has taken these mountains away, and brought us to stand even with justice, even with his covenant, even with his truth—a mighty revolution. Such language is none too strong. The Christian sees, as Dr. Watts poetically and nicely sings, that—

“His sins like pointed mountains rise.”

Christ has overturned the whole, wrought this mighty revolution, and has thus brought about that state of things described in the 40th of Isaiah—leveling the mountains, exalting the valleys, turning darkness into light before us, making the crooked straight, and the rough places plain. We cannot be too well established in what the Saviour has done; it so endears him. Secondly, the way in which he supplies the needs of his people. “He cutteth out rivers among the rocks.” Why, say you, this is all geological. I know it is literally, but there is no doubt it contains a spiritual mystery. “He cutteth out rivers among the rocks; and his eye seeth every precious thing.” Literally, this means the precious metals and the precious stones that are formed in the laboratory of nature; invisible to man, but open to the all-seeing eye of God. Now if you go to the 139th Psalm, you will see there that the Lord’s people are represented as being formed invisibly, like the precious metals under the earth, and like precious stones. By the secret laws of the most high God the souls of his people are formed, unobserved by the world. “I was curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.” So when the Lord formed your soul none but himself saw it. You felt there was something moving, but as yet you scarcely knew what; but at last you became another man. Hitherto you had been, as it were, a common pebble; you now become a precious stone. And now that you are new formed, nothing on earth is good enough for you. When a precious stone is formed in the laboratory of nature, if that stone could speak it would look round and say, “Dear me, what bad company I am in!” Why, that precious stone would feel as though there was a sort of royalty in it, a value about it; it would not be content with its position. It would say, “I am fit to adorn the crown of an emperor; I am fit to adorn the foundation of a city.” Just so the soul when formed by the laws of grace, that soul now becomes one of the treasures of the Most High, called in Deuteronomy the treasures of the sand: “They shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of the treasures hid in the sand;” which are the people of God, searched out, and brought up, and fitted to adorn the city and the crown of the dear Mediator. This wisdom, then, discovers this mystery; the Christian can understand it.