

SATAN'S SEVEN KINGS

A SERMON

Preached on Lord's Day Morning August 19th, 1866

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At the New Surrey Tabernacle, Wansey Street

Volume 8 Number 404

“And there are seven kings; five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when, he comes, he must continue a short space.”

Revelation 17:10

WE find the archetypes and representations in the Old Testament of all that is contained in this book. Hence the ancient literal Babylon becomes in this book a mystic Babylon, meaning the world at large in its aspect of hostility to God's truth. What are known in the Old Testament as literal Sodom and Egypt become in this book spiritual Sodom and Egypt. What in the Old Testament was literal Jezebel becomes in this book a mystic Jezebel; and what in the 34th of Ezekiel are called the destroyers of the pasture of the sheep of Christ become in this book Nicolaitanes, that is, destroyers, men that would destroy God's truth and people. And what are literal kings in the Old Testament become spiritual and mystic hostile powers against the truth and people of God in this book. We must not lose sight of this. If we attempt to take the kings and other personages, and the events spoken of in this book literally we shall everlastingly run into error. So that, with all due deference and respect to the opinions of the excellent, the learned, and the industrious men, who have tried to open up this hook after a literal order, I myself prefer taking the word of God as my guide. Let the Bible be its own interpreter. Hence there are, as you may be aware, different opinions upon our text. One learned man takes the five kings that are fallen to be ancient Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and Greece, and the other two Some Pagan and Rome Papal. But then there were many other ancient nations that were hostile to Israel besides those that that learned man names. Then again, Bishop Newton thinks the seven kings were the seven different forms of government succeeding each other in the Roman Empire. But these are mere surmises, and necessarily vague and uncertain. I shall, therefore, at once proceed to take the word of the Lord as my guide, just apprising you that we are to understand in this book in many respects definite numbers as given for indefinite; these definite numbers perhaps being given to direct us to those scriptures in the Old Testament that shall explain what is referred to. These seven kings are one in spirit; the five that have fallen, the one that now is, and the one that is yet to come, each is an embodiment of Satan. They are here called seven, because they represent the completeness of Satan's work upon the saints; for he has a complete work to do, but when his work is done, there he must stop. Now, then, where shall we find the archetypes or representatives of the seven kings? We have nothing to do but to go to the Old Testament, and it is one of the honors of the word of God that it explains itself;

although the Bible is written sovereignly, and the Lord does hide its sacred mysteries from the world. Hence, Solomon, in the 25th of Proverbs, said, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honor of kings is to search out a matter;" and so we are to search the Scriptures, and we shall be sure to be rewarded in so doing.

I go to the 7th of Deuteronomy, and there I find the seven nations of Canaan all in combination against Israel. Here are the seven archetypes; here are the literal kings that represent the mystic powers with which we have to deal this morning. Then you go to the 10th chapter of Joshua, and there you find the five fallen kings that hid themselves in a cave were brought forth and slain. Here, then, we get the interpretation of our text.

First, *the victory over these five Kings*. Now, here was a promised land to be possessed, and the question is, now did the Israelites get possession of the promised land? These kings of Canaan spoken of in the 10th of Joshua represent those combined hostile powers that I will presently notice that hinder us from taking possession of the promised land. We have three things here to notice. First, that they obtained the hill country of the promised land by the mission which the Lord gave to Joshua; secondly, by the special presence of the Lord; and thirdly, the completeness of the victory. Now if we can get clearly through these three, we shall see what is mystically meant by "five kings are fallen;" that is, the main victory is wrought, and all the other departments of Satan's kingdom are so weakened and so disjointed that the other conquests must necessarily follow, as in the 11th of Joshua you find the conquests followed until all was complete. Now the commission was given to Joshua; the word "Joshua," as you are aware, signifying "a savior."

There was no other man under the heavens by whom the Israelites could obtain the victory but by Joshua; because Joshua was God's chosen man, God's appointed man. Here he was, a beautiful type of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now then, let us see what stood in the way of our getting to heaven, what stood in the way of our coming into the favor and presence and love of God, and let us see how Jesus Christ has wrought the victory. Mark, these kings were fallen; they tried to hide themselves; but the Lord know where they were, and they were pointed out, and dragged forth, and slain. Now those hostile powers represent, in the first place, sin. We come to the Lord Jesus Christ. Who is the man that was commissioned to destroy sin, the works of the devil? Who is the man that was to atone for sin? Who is the man that was commissioned to atone during his whole life, and achieved in his atoning death victory over sin? We all know that that wondrous man was the man Christ Jesus, the son of God's everlasting love. And there is not anything that I am aware of which we are more satisfied than this, that the victory of the dear Savior over sin is complete; so that sin is a fallen king; it can be a king no more; its life is gone, it is virtually destroyed. The consequence is that these people that receive the victory that Christ has wrought must come into possession of all that the love of Christ has provided for them; in other words, of all that Christ in his love has for them, for he is heir of God, and they are joint heirs with him. Then, if they cannot be separated from the love of God, they must come into possession of all that God in his love has provided for them. So that if sin be one of these mystic powers, how has our spiritual Joshua laid sin prostrate at his feet? Where is there a sinner that knows the Savior that does not rejoice in the delightful truth that he has conquered this deadly foe, thus put away sin by the sacrifice of himself? If death be another ruling power, then what a fallen king is that. It has no sting in it; he has taken away the sting of death. Then we need not fear to march down into the valley of the shadow of death. Fear not to go down into this Egypt, for I am with you. David knew that the Lord would be

with him; that that death that had destroyed so many millions was itself destroyed, swallowed up in victory by the Lord Jesus Christ. That king is fallen, it has lost its life, and is gone. Then if another ruling power wan error, error is also virtually overcome. How full the religious world was of error when the Savior came. You have only, in order to mark the ignorance of the religious world of the Son of God, to read through the 23rd chapter of Matthew, and see what foolery and blasphemy they had substituted for the pure truths of the gospel. But the Savior brings in the beatitudes, and swallows up all those errors. So, that in knowing Christ aright we know the truth aright, in knowing Christ aright we are delivered from all error; for if we find eternal perfection in him, then, as a learned man says, perfection cannot be improved, and if anything, be taken from it, it ceases to be perfect.

“Perfection then in him we view,
His saints in him are perfect too.”

Being brought to know this, the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. Thus, are sin and death conquered, thus is error overcome. Though Satan may deceive the whole world, he cannot deceive the man that knows experimentally the truth for himself. “If it were possible, he would receive the very elect, but the Lord takes good care that they shall find their all in himself as their covenant God, and thus shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free. Again, if tribulation be another ruling power, for you must never look at tribulation as a friend; tribulation is an enemy; it is a friend only as God makes it work for good. Job could not look upon that sweeping calamity that came upon him as a friend; no, it was by the hand of Satan, though under the sufferance, as Job nicely recognized, of the most high God. Every affliction is an enemy; every trouble is an enemy; every loss and every adversity is an enemy; there is no question about this; only the Lord makes it work for good. So if your troubles and my troubles be the means of furthering our good, no thanks to Satan, who is very often more or less the author of those troubles inflicted upon us; and no thanks to the troubles, but thanks be to God that causes us in Christ Jesus, by abundant consolation there, to triumph over our tribulation. Now it is on the ground of Christ having overcome tribulation; and tribulation never overcame him. Job was an excellent character, but I can show unto you one more excellent, namely, Christ Jesus. The Savior had much more cause in one sense to curse the day of his birth, for the sufferings of Job were nothing, they were as a passing shadow in comparison of the tribulation to which Christ was born, the sorrow which he carried, and the grief which he bore. But his patience was perfect, he held out to the last, and thus overcame tribulation.

Upon this fact are founded such scriptures as the following “You shall sorrow no more at all; the days of your mourning shall be ended. “These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Again, if Satan be a ruling power, did not the Savior overcome him? He bruised the serpents head, and the serpent was to bruise the Savior’s heel. The Savior wounded Satan in his vital parts; but Satan could not wound the Savior in his vital parts. “You shall bruise his heel;” shall make his path very rough. Satan did that; but he could not touch the Savior in the vital part. Even when the Savior came to die, there stood the Roman lictor with the spear, ready to pierce his side, but he could not do so until Christ had given up his life into the hands of justice. Satan hoped by that Roman soldier to spoil the atonement of Christ, by taking his life from him before he conquered every foe; but no, no, “No man” not that fierce-looking Roman soldier, that thirsts for blood, delights in slaughter, whose

very profession is to kill his fellow creatures, not even him, “no man takes my life from me; I lay it down of myself.” He said, “It is finished.” gave up the ghost, and thus bruised the vital parts of Satan, so that Satan has been confounded from that day to this, and will be confounded even to the end. I do not wonder, therefore, at his teaching men such infinite fooleries as we see in Popery and Puseyism; for they are infinite fooleries. I do believe that in the Old Testament age the devil would not have thought of such things, but he is so confounded now, that he hardly knows what he is about. Not that I am going to pity him: he has no pity for us, nor had he for the Lord Jesus Christ. So, then, in my text we have the five kings that are fallen. I go to the 10th of Joshua, and there I get the archetype; I go to Calvary’s cross, and there I hear sin give its last groan, there I see death swallowed up in victory; there I hear the tremendous fall of the towers of Satan; there I see his territories conquered; there I see error overcome, and Christ rise to shine into the minds of his people as the sun rises, even a morning without clouds.

Well, now, this is one step by which they were to get possession of the hill country. And what we call locality there is spirituality now; what was literal there must be understood mystically here. How do you get into the hill country? What is the hill country? Why, the love of God. How do you come into that but by the victory that Christ has wrought? Eternal election. Ah, say some, I should not like to go so high as that. If you are taught of God you will be glad to get up there. Why shall I be glad to get up there? I will tell you. The reason why you will be glad to get up into that hill is, because it is an election of grace, and as you go on your experience will teach you that if grace has not inscribed your name in God’s eternal book, nothing else can; so you will be glad to get there. And if your experience is not such as to make you glad to get there, so much the worse for you. Divine predestination is indeed a blessed truth; “He has not appointed us unto wrath, but to obtain salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ,” That is another hill into which we are to get. The immutability of God is another hill belonging to this high country, and you will be glad to get up into that mount. Ten thousand changes in your friends and in your foes, in your circumstances and in life, but “his love no variation knows;” his counsel shall stand for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations. The atonement of Jesus Christ in its eternal perfection, the righteousness of Jesus Christ in its eternal perfection, and the sworn promise of God, these are the hill country.

Well, now, I must go to the next point, that they obtained this wonderful country; wonderful it is in the antitypical, stated in the archetypal to set forth the antitypical and the ultimate, that they obtained it by the immediate presence of God, shall I call it the twofold presence of God? “Sun, stand you still upon Gibeon.” It is said “the sun stood still in the midst of heaven.” Our translation does not convey that clearly. The sun stood still in the horizon; it was just going down, just level with the earth, shone from the west towards the east; and the moon was rising just as the sun was going down, for it was full moon; the moon was directly opposite the sun. “Sun, stand you still upon Gibeon; and you moon, in the valley of Ajalon.” I know what you are thinking about, say you, just as Jesus Christ died, the moon of the gospel began to rise and shine, and has shone ever since.” “Your sun shall no more go down;” it went down once, but shall no more go down; “neither shall your moon withdraw its brightness.” But keeping to the point; let us view the sun here as a type of Jesus Christ. And how is God with you, but by the light of Jesus Christ? He is the true light; in his light we see light. Ah, you stand, or rather soar like the eagle, and bask in the light of this Sun of Righteousness. And as the sun did not go down until the people obtained complete victory, so the Lord, in and by Christ Jesus, will abide with you until the last enemy is conquered. There is the king that now is, and another yet to come, and the Lord will abide with you by the

sun. I am afraid lest I should not make this clear. Mind, he did not abide with them by their good deeds, or anything good about them, but by the sun, by that over which they had no control. It was God's work. So, he abides with you by Jesus Christ. Is it not in the same psalm where this blessed truth of the Lord looking upon us in Christ is spoken of, that God himself is called the sun? The 84th Psalm, "Behold, O God, our shield, and look upon the face of your anointed," "The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." in this precious faith of Jesus Christ. Now, if you abide by Christ, the Sun of righteousness, you are sure to see your way. He that walks in darkness stumbles, does not know where he is going, but you do. Your way of being holy, your way of being righteous, the way of eternal life and glory, is as clear to you now almost, I was going to say, as it will be when you get to heaven. "The wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein." Then, also, the moon. Now, as the moon receives its light from the sun, so the gospel receives its light from Christ. The lighted side of the moon is not always turned towards us, and we talk about the changes of the moon; but after all I am philosophically speaking when I say the moon has always the same face towards us; not always lighted, but the moon has never changed its face towards this earth since the foundation of the world. Just so the gospel; it has always the same face towards us; but it does not always appear so light. You read a chapter at one time, and rejoice in it, find it most beautiful; you read it again, and can see nothing in it. The sun does not shine upon it, that is the reason. You think because you do not see it that it is gone; So the gospel does not always appear with the same light; we long for the Sun of righteousness to come and shine upon that part of the moon of the gospel that is in darkness; and when the Lord does so, and lights it up, and I have the two lights, namely, the light of the sun and the light of the moon, then I can see the glory of Christ, and can rejoice that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. Thus, they gained the victory. It was a wonderful thing that the sun and the moon should thus stand still. There was no day like it before, and never will be again. That day certainly had its beginning, and had an end; but it had no predecessor, and will have no successor. And I am sure that Christ in his work had no predecessor, and will have no successor. The archetype was a temporal day, but the antitype is an everlasting day. "He has brought us out of darkness into his marvelous light." Thus, then, here is victory, and the Lord being with them, or with his people, by Jesus Christ and by the gospel leads them on to completeness.

Then, thirdly, to denote the completeness, Joshua did that that you must look to the word of God for an explanation of He said, "Come and put your feet upon the necks of these kings," to denote the complete subjugation of the one and the complete victory of the other. Now go to the 91st Psalm, never mind about the precise number five, "You shall tread upon the lion and adder, the young lion" ah, but see; David, you may tread upon the lion and the adder and the young lion, but what will you do with the dragon? In comes the promise, "And the dragon shall you trample under feet." That is the last part of the promise in that Psalm. "You shall tread upon the lion," that is Satan in one of his forms; and upon the sneaking adder, sneaking about and seeing whom he can injure, whom he can poison, and what mischief he can do. A poor child would be afraid to go that path if he knew the adder was there. But if you had on a good pair of shoes of iron and brass, and the promise that you should tread right upon his head, so that he could not hurt you, you would not be frightened then. No. Therefore do not be afraid. I cannot tell what adders there may be in your path, but God will protect you, and by-and-bye you shall tread upon them and crush them. But here comes a young lion. But the old Christian, in all the power of God's truth and grace, puts his foot upon the system of this young lion, and treads him down. Then the devil comes like a dragon, but the Christian treads upon the dragon as well; he is triumphant over all. The Savior has bruised

Satan's head, so that you shall tread down his mightiest power, because Christ has done it. You shall put your foot upon the necks of these kings. We can thus stand upon sin as a conquered foe, and tread it under our feet; we can stand upon death as a conquered foe, and feel that its sting is gone; we can stand upon error, upon tribulation, and upon the united powers of Satan, as conquered foes, and can say, with good old Deborah, "Oh, my soul, you have trodden down strength." So much, then, for the five kings, representing the combined powers against the literal Israel; representing the combined powers that Satan has brought, in different ages, against the spiritual Israel. Joshua conquered them; the Lord was there the victory was complete. Just so it is in the gospel sense of the word. Some people have a notion you must understand nine or ten languages, and that you must read all the Church histories, a cart load of them or a wagon-load, that have been written, in order to understand the book of the Revelation; and that this book, God's book, is indebted for its interpretation to human wisdom and human learning. I hate such a doctrine.

"Give me the Bible in my hand,
A heart to read and understand,"

and I shall go right fast enough. And I believe we are right this morning; I believe we have got the right seven kings, and we have conquered five; they are gone, we have got the victory. Now let us go on and see what we are to do with the other two.

Secondly, then, *I notice the king that now is, or the ruling power that we have to deal with.* There is still a king, that is a hostile power, against whom we have to stand. It is nothing else but the embodiment of Satan. A king is the representative of a kingdom. Have you no kingdom of enemies within you, no opposition in your old nature? Where is the greatest hindrance you have to spiritual thoughts, and spiritual desires, and spiritual profit, and spiritual advantage? Have you not sometimes heard a sermon, and heard it as though the minister were telling some old tale not worthy of your attention? Have you not sometimes read a chapter as though you were reading an old ballad? And have you not sometimes come to the word of God as though you were going to the gallows almost, as a kind of duty, forcing yourself to it? What does all this mean? Why, that your nature is instinctively hostile to everything that is divine and spiritual; and if God did not himself carry on the work, our old nature, the king that now is, would gain the mastery over us. Your old nature will tell you that you will be better tomorrow; do not trust him, he is only deceiving you. When I first came to war with this king, I tried to make peace with him, and I said, Yes, I will be better tomorrow. And so, I went on, and went on, until this old king I found to be still an enemy, and I found there was but one remedy, and that was for him to be chained down. Ah, when the angel of the Lord comes with a great chain in his hand, and chains the old king down, so that he can reign no longer, our language is, "Other lords have had dominion over us, but by you alone will we make mention of your name." The king that now is, then, is Satan in various forms, stirring up our old nature within. And the world, we have to encounter tribulation. But when you have had some hard struggles with your own heart, it will put you right in due time; hard struggles with a truth-hating world will put you right in due time; heavy afflictions and losses, to teach you your helplessness and wretchedness, and make you say, "O wretched man that I am," will put you right in due time. Here, then, is the king that now is. What does the apostle say of our present warfare? He speaks of it thus very beautifully, and exactly descriptive of Christian experience: "We wrestle not against flesh and blood;" no, it is not a flesh and blood warfare; the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God; "but against principalities," organized systems of hostility

to God's truth, "and powers." And I may just say, the worst of these powers are within us; the deceitfulness of the heart is wonderful; the bubbling up of the infidelities of the heart are truly wonderful. What a mercy for us that they are kept out of sight; that no one knows them but ourselves! We groan because of them, sigh, and feel what poor creatures we are. But these mighty powers that would turn us into unbelievers, into enemies to God, into Judases, Simon Maguse's, Cain's, Balaam's, or something or another, the almighty grace of God carries on the work in spite of them all; this is our victory over them all, the Lord Jesus Christ receiving him. "And against the rulers of the darkness of this world;" that is, against all that that would substitute something human into the place of the gospel. We are to stand against that. And I trust it will be your lot when I am gone to stand fast in the liberty of the gospel. This has been the offence, and is the offence, and will be the offence. Nevertheless, I am not ashamed, for I know in whom I have believed; I know that he will keep to that day that which I have committed unto him. I am not ashamed of this glorious gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes. And "against spiritual wickedness in high places;" that is that spiritual wickedness that would down put down the sovereignty of God, would set up the doings of the creature above the covenant transactions of God. Well, then, spiritual wickedness in high places will mean that kind of human pride that sets itself up above the sovereignty of God. But what would you do without that sovereignty? Why, if he does not do as he pleases, then someone else must, and woe be unto you if such were the case! But the Lord does as he pleases, and he loves you with all his heart, and will not do you any harm; no. As though the Lord should say, I will not do you any harm, and I will take care nothing else shall. Nothing shall by any means hurt you. The devil has his four agents standing at the four corners of the earth, lest the wind should blow upon the earth. Now, says Satan, I will not let the wind blow anywhere. Stop that Jesus Christ, put him to death, for the wind of his doctrine will blow adversely to me. Stop those high doctrine apostles. So, Satan has got his agents to stop everything from moving but himself. But then comes the command, "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads." God shall protect his own, and give them the victory.

Well, now I come to the last point, *the shortness of the time that he is to continue who is yet to come*. "When he comes, he must continue a short space." You observe the number seven is used to denote completeness, and the one that is yet to come will mean the completeness of Satan's work with the saints. Death is the work of Satan; he drew us into the snare, he drew us into this sin, brought upon us all this woe. Now mark the language That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." And therefore, the king that is to come is the same that has been, only in another form; death, or Satan by death, is the king that is to come. Well, but, say you, that has come, and has continued; therefore, how can you say, "a short space"? I will make that clear. Many scriptures must be understood not abstractedly, but relatively; take them in the relation they bear to certain persons, and then you will understand them. For instance, in this same book the Savior again and again says, "Behold, I come quickly." Now abstractedly that was not true, because that is now 1,800 years ago, and he has not come personally yet; but he will come at the end of time. Again, "these things shall shortly come to pass." Now that does not mean that they should all be accomplished in a short time; but take it relatively. Are you a Christian? Yes. Well, then, what will shortly take place with you? Death. So that the king of terrors, and often; as we say, a terror to kings, is not come to you yet, but he will come, and that will complete the work. So that the child of God will not leave the world with a very good impression concerning Satan. He will say, Ah, Satan has thus brought me down; but the blessed Jesus has

redeemed me from this last enemy, this last king. Death is not the completion of Satan's work with the sinner, alas! no; but it is all he can do with the saints. He can kill the body, but after that there is no more that he can do. Thus, then, I understand the king that is yet to come; and when he comes in that shape and form, he must continue a short space. In a future world the lost are always dying, and can never die; there they seek death, and the more they seek death the farther it is from them; there Satan's tyranny is a tyranny without end. But when the Christian comes to die, he says, Ah, the last king is come; this is Satan's last display of his power; his work will soon be done. And how many a child of God, when he is dying, and Satan has come in upon him on his death-bed like a flood, and tried to hurt him to the last degree, the Lord begins to show a little light, and the believer has said, It will soon be over; a few hours more, and after that there will be no more enemies. Satan cannot touch us after death. As he could not touch the Savior, after the Savior died and rose from the dead, so he cannot touch the believer after the believer leaves the body. So, then, when death shall set in it will not be long; the enemy will not be suffered to terrify you very long. Ah, Cain, what, you have done your work, have you? you have slain your brother Abel, have you? Why have not you continued your malice to him? I cannot; he is dead. Ah, of course, and you can pursue him no longer. What are you now, Cain? Why, I am a vagabond, that is what I am, a fugitive and a vagabond upon the earth. Of course, you are; your works were vagabond works, and so you are what your works have made you. And so, the martyrs, they rejoiced that the reign of this king was short. Kindle your fire, dispatch me as soon as you like; I am not afraid to die; but I wish to be burned at once, I wish to be gone. So, then, this king with you and me is not yet come; he will come, but he will not continue long; it will be but a short space. We shall not be long getting through the valley. Why, say you, this is very discouraging. It would be if there were not another king as well. But when you are called to meet the king of dread,

“Love will compose your dying bed,
And grace your soul sustain.”

God will be with you there, and will limit the reign of this king that is yet to come, and this king shall do no more in the valley of the shadow of death than God is pleased he should do. But the King of heaven that comes to you, he will not continue with you a short space; he will be with you forever; you shall have an abundant entrance into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Who among you this morning can say that our text is not a Christian text? Here we have the victory typically; here we have the presence of the Lord, the sun and moon, typically; here we have the foot upon the necks of the conquered kings, typifying the standing of the saints in oneness with Christ; here we have the continued presence of the Lord; here we have the one more king to come, the one more part of Satan's work; when that is done, that is the seventh, and his work is completed; our souls, free grace reigning, shall be made happy for ever and ever. Amen.