

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

ESCAPE FROM THE PIT.

MAY 11 1968

A Sermon

BY MR. JAMES WELLS,

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, 9TH OCTOBER, 1870.

"And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."—Zechariah xiv. 5.

I OBSERVED last Lord's day morning that the Mount of Olives, like the other parts of this chapter, must here be understood figuratively, and is intended to represent the Jewish dispensation; that the Lord Jesus Christ came and severed that dispensation into its two parts, the curse and the blessing; that he set the blessing aside, and that he has set the curse aside; and that this old covenant, that was contrary to us, he hath taken out of the way, and nailed it to the cross; and yet these two parts are still visible. Hence the way in which we have access to God is called the valley of the mountains; and so it is that the curses still remain on record, not to be ministered, for they have been ministered; but as a testimony of the weakness of that covenant, and the necessity of a better mediator and a better covenant; and the blessings still remain on record, not to be ministered, for they are done with, but to show the necessity of blessings that are vital and eternal; a better covenant, established upon better promises, wherein we have everything infinitely superior to the first.

Our text is rather long, but I shall simply take a twofold view of it. First, here is *something to escape*; secondly, *the presence of the Lord with all his people*.

First, here is *something to escape*. "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah." Here the danger to which we are exposed is compared to an earthquake. Now you well know that an earthquake pays no regard to any one that is within its

reach ; it pays no regard to old or to young, male or female, nor to moral character nor immoral character, to wise or to foolish, to the rich or to the poor ; every one that is within the reach of the earthquake it mercilessly and unceremoniously swallows up. So, let a man be what he may, if he be not in Christ he is not out of the reach of the earthquake ; if he is not in the faith, he is not out of the reach of the earthquake. Therefore the great thing is to get out of the reach of this earthquake. There is some very deep Christian experience here. When the Lord convinces a sinner of sin, there is one thing he is sure to impress upon the mind—namely, the awfulness of being lost ; and such words as these—the bottomless pit—have a solemnity and an awfulness with the man which they never had before ; the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone hath a solemnity with him it never had before ; and so of the rest of the terrible testimonies of God in relation to that pit which sin hath worked out, and to that wrath which sin hath entailed. As I said just now, the earthquake shows no favour to any one that is within its reach ; and if you would escape the earthquake, it is no use to stand upon the precipice, and give a long list of all the good you have done, or all the good you mean to do ; or it is a pity to destroy you because you are so rich, and have done so much good, and are going to do so much good ; the earthquake would, as it were, laugh at all this. You must flee to the valley of the mountains, as from the earthquake. Now it is a wonderful mercy to be convinced of this our condition, and to be enabled to see that Jesus Christ is the way I will presently carefully describe—the only way of escape. It is a great thing, from solemn conviction and apprehension of mind to pray that prayer recorded in Psalm lxxix.,—“ Let not the waterflood overflow me.” Here is a flood of almighty and eternal wrath that must carry us away, for aught we can do, to eternal perdition. And then, when the soul sees that Jesus Christ hath rolled this flood back, that he has stopped its progress, and made a way for sinners to be saved, then, by faith in him, we can pray to God, and say, “ Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up.” Why, my hearer, the wrath of Almighty God is a terrible, unfathomable deep ; none that were ever banished into its final form can come forth after that. “ There is a great gulf fixed ; so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot ; neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.” An unfathomable deep. “ Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me !” This is real conviction, where this is—when you see gaping death and yawning hell, the curse of the law. Oh, how much in earnest are people in flying from earthquakes ! you find no hypocrites ; they are not mere pretenders. There is the earthquake, a great number already swallowed up ; and

those that are not, with what earnestness do they fly from it! It becomes a matter, then, of personal and of wonderful earnestness. Oh, you immediately say, even in relation to the earthquake, varying the words of the Saviour a little, and using the word "life" instead of the word "soul,"—"What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own life? or what shall a man give in exchange for his life?" And therefore the rich man, at the precipice of the earthquake, what are his estates to him? what are his riches to him? what is all the world to him? His great concern must be to escape this earthquake; there is nothing so solemn and important to him as this. Just so where the Lord is the teacher, he opens up the terribleness more or less of eternity, he opens up the terribleness more or less of being lost. And where there is this consciousness, ah, many a child of God has known, I do not say what it is to sweat drops of blood, but it has made many a convinced sinner sweat from every pore. I often think of the words of the poor little girl when she was dying; she said to the minister, "A sight and sense of God's wrath makes me sweat." "Ah," said the minister, "Jesus Christ, to redeem you from that wrath, sweat great drops of blood." What a difference there is between this conviction of our real condition, that makes way for the coming in of the things I have presently to state—what a difference there is between this and a little mere conscience reformation, a little morality, a better life, and a better name, and getting on better in the world; and they call that religion. It is good as far as it goes, but there is no salvation in that, there is nothing supernatural in that. You must be convinced of your need of Christ, and of the great truth that none but God himself can deliver you. I know some now that are in their own apprehension at the very precipice, as it were, of this pit; and some have told them to come to Christ; and I have said, "Can you come; or can you make him come to you? Can you move? Do you not feel that you are fixed as in a horrible pit and in the miry clay; that you are already brought, as it were, into the pit of horrors, and your prayer is, 'Let not this pit shut her mouth upon me,' for then all hope will be gone; then I shall be, in relation to eternity, as Korah, Dathan, and Abiram were in relation to time, when 'the earth opened under them, and swallowed them up, and they went down alive into the pit.'" We all look at that as a terrible judgment and a solemn circumstance. So then, here stands the testimony, "Ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah." I will not say any more upon this part, only let me ask all of you whether you know anything of this conviction. I do not say you must all feel in equal degree the same amount of terror; but at any rate you must be

convinced that this is your position, whether you have felt the terror of it or not ; you must be convinced that God, and God alone, can save you, whether you have felt the terror of your condition or not. You may not, perhaps, be able to join very deeply with the Psalmist when he saith, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me, and the sorrows of death compassed me about ;" and that filled him with a spirit of earnest prayer. "Being in agony, he prayed the more earnestly," "O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul ;" and we find from the same Psalm the Lord did appear, and did deliver his soul.

You will recollect that last Lord's day morning I showed that this valley was the new and living way to God which the Lord Jesus Christ had made by his mediatorial work ; and here stands, then, the blessed declaration that sinners shall flee to this valley, hereby to have access to God. This is the way of escape from the wrath to come ; and when you are favoured to realize some of the blessings that are in this way, then you can join with the apostle and say, "Even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." Now I do like this to be at the foundation of our religion. It is my desire to keep as simply to the gospel as possible, and say as little about others as possible ; but I must make just this one remark ; how it appears to you I know not, but it does appear to me that the reason we have such artificial and superficial gospels, and that professors have no doubts, and fears, and tremblings, and are so soon satisfied and contented, and settle down short of any saving knowledge of God and God's truth, is, because there is a want of this conviction of which I have spoken. Oh, what a wonderful change does it make in a man's character ! Just contrast Saul of Tarsus when he was in a state of nature, with what he was after called by grace. When the Lord showed him this pit, when the Lord showed him this earthquake, when the Lord showed him this gaping hell, how it brought him down ! He became a trembling man, until God rolled in the tide of eternal mercy, that enabled him to escape. No wonder a man at the foundation of whose religion lay such a conviction as this should be so earnest with the souls of men, the truth and glory of God, knowing that nothing but the grace of God can either bring a sinner down or lift a sinner up.

But let us look at this valley. Now this valley is said to reach unto Azal. I will not take upon myself the responsibility of the meaning of this word Azal ; it is an untranslated word, it is purely and simply a Hebrew word, and both Frey, in his Hebrew Dictionary, and Parkhurst, in his Hebrew Lexicon, say that the chief meaning of the word Azal is that of *near* ; then if we alter it a little, we may say it signifies *nearness*. Now if this be the meaning, and for myself I am satisfied it is, for we must go to our lexicographers for the

meaning of words,—if this be the meaning, how very beautiful it is ! signifying *near*. Hear what the word of the Lord saith upon this :—“By the blood of Jesus we have boldness to enter into the holy of holies.” Therefore it means that by this valley, or by Christ Jesus, you are brought nearer to God than you could be by any other way. Let me run a contrast here. The high priest under the law had a nearness to God, but it was only an external and an earthly nearness ; but the Christian has an infinitely, I may say, greater nearness to God than the high priest had ; for the Christian enters not into the temple made with hands, but into that temple that is not made with hands ; the Christian enters not in by that sacrifice that is merely temporal and typical, but the Christian enters into heaven itself, whither our forerunner hath for us entered. Oh, then, how nigh this wonderful work of Christ brings us to God ! and will present us at the last in his glorious presence. That appears, then, to be the meaning of the word *Azal* ; and very expressive it is. But then the valley is also said to be a very great one ; that is to denote the clearness of the way. The road was to be clear, and no obstacle thrown in the way ; no obstacle could be lawfully ; persons might unlawfully, but no person could lawfully throw an obstacle in the way of the man in olden time that was flying to the city of refuge. The stones were to be gathered out, the highway was to be cast up, and no one was to hinder him, and no one to throw an impediment in his way, nor obstruct him. It is true they might do so, but they could not do so lawfully. Therefore the greatness of this valley, I think, means the clearness of the way ; that the Lord Jesus Christ hath put sin out of the way, and delusion, and the world, and every thing else, and therefore nothing can hinder. But then it may be said, if it is a great valley, and the way is so clear that the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein, how does this accord with the Saviour’s words, “Strive to enter in at the strait gate ; for strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it” ? Well, say some, here you have a great valley, and yet the Saviour gives us a strait or a narrow gate, and a narrow way ; how do you make this accord ? I can make it accord ; at least, it accords in my own mind ; I will tell you how. Had it not been for the universal opposition to this from men, being blinded by Satan ; were it not for the universal opposition of men to vital godliness, and to Christ as the way, the truth, and the life ; were there not that universal opposition to the eternal perfection of Christ and the sovereignty and certainty of the grace of God by him ; but for this we never should have heard of a strait gate, we never should have heard of a narrow way ; for the gate is not narrow in itself, and the way is not narrow in itself. If Joshua the high priest

had been standing anywhere else, Satan would not have opposed him ; and see what the Old Testament prophets suffered in order to enter in in the right way, in order to seek God in the right way ; and if Joshua had been standing anywhere else but before the angel of the new covenant, Satan would not have troubled himself to stand at his right hand. Nothing has met with so much opposition as the true and only saving way of eternal salvation. They crucified Christ on this ground—they did not know what they were about, but Satan did,—in order to get the only way of salvation out of the way. Now you will observe that the Saviour, when he speaks of the strait gate and the narrow way, speaks of it contrastively :—“ Enter ye in at the strait gate ; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.” There is the easy-going Catholic, he ought to go well, there is no rising up against him ; there is the easy-going formalist ; there is the easy-going Puseyite, and a great many other easy-going professors ; the gate is very wide, all go along very comfortably. We are no sectarians, say they ; we extend our charity to all ; but they would leave the people of God out when they say that. Thus the world’s religion, then, its way is wide, its road is broad, and it is easy to go that way. But as soon as you are determined to renounce all the religions of the world, to renounce all confidence in the flesh, and come into the eternal perfection of Christ, to seek eternal life by his eternal perfection, and in submission to God’s sovereignty, and by that better covenant to seek eternal life by the covenant of eternal life,—as soon as you come there, you are stamped as an Antinomian directly ; there is something about you that makes you hateful to the world. I apprehend, therefore, that the reason why the gate is said to be strait is because it is universally opposed ; and tens of thousands of the people of God have lost their lives rather than seek the Lord in any other way. Hence the Saviour hath said, “ He that loseth his life for my sake shall keep it unto eternal life.” That is the way in which I reconcile the greatness of the valley with the strait and narrow way. For instance, take away the internal opposition you meet from your own heart, and the external opposition, wherein would you find any hindrance ? Is there any narrowness in God’s love, in God’s Christ ? Is not his work deeper than hell, high as heaven, broader than the sea, and longer than the earth ? There is no narrowness there ; there he shall be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams. It is at any rate the privilege of the people of God to understand these matters.

This valley, then, is nothing else but the humiliation work of Christ, as I showed last Lord’s day morning. Let us just see what the people of God meet with in this valley, and see whether we have

met with what is to be met with in this valley ; that is, in this new and living way. The first thing named is that of light. "It shall come to pass in that day that the light shall not be clear nor dark ; but it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord." There is no day so well known to the Lord Jesus Christ as the day of the gospel dispensation ; that dispensation, that kingdom, that inheritance, that state of things he hath established by taking all our sins, blotting them out, forgiving and forgetting them for ever, from what he suffered. That is a day that he knows above every other day, and it is an eternal day ; "this" eternal day of everlasting light "is the day which the Lord hath made, we will be glad and rejoice therein." There is no day which God recognises with such pleasure and such delight as that eternal day that is by Jesus Christ, in which the darkness is put away, and the true light eternally shines. Well might the poet say, for it is perfectly true, that "eternal sunshine shall settle on their heads." But then it says it shall be neither light nor dark. Now it is not so dark but that we have seen the horrible pit ; it is not so dark but that we have seen there is a hell of never-abating despair ; and it is not so dark but that we see that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. As saith the apostle, "Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face ; now we know in part, but then we shall know even as we are known." Now we are standing between midnight and mid-day ; the midnight is behind us. There was a time when we were quite in the dark, but we can now see ; "whereas I was blind, now I see." It is not yet noonday light, nor will it be until we reach those purer climes ; until our souls depart this dark region, mortality, and all its faults and infirmities swallowed up of eternal life, and we then not only made to bear, but made to be happy in the sunlight of the penetrating presence of the Great Eternal, who shall be unto us an everlasting light, and the days of our mourning shall be ended. Thus we stand between the two. Bless the Lord, he has enlightened us ; we have not yet reached the noonday, but we have light enough to see the way to that noonday. So it is neither light nor dark ; it is not so dark with me as to mistake another Jesus Christ for my Jesus Christ ; it is not so dark with me as to mistake another covenant God for my covenant God ; it is not so dark with me as to mistake another gospel for the gospel of the great and blessed God. We have just light enough to enable us to serve the Lord acceptably. "It shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night,"—it is a day well known to the Lord ; there is no other day in which he is so interested as this eternal day, nor we either ; so that his interests and ours centre in the same light, and in the same end. "I apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus." And "at even-

ing time it shall be light." It is not day nor night now : it is not night ; bless God, the night is past ; and it is not yet noonday ; but " at evening time it shall be light." As I have shown in a sermon in print upon that text, this evening time has many applications, but I shall now notice only one ;—" at evening time it shall be light"—at the evening of our life, the very moment the soul departs from the body, where is it ? Present with the Lord. There is a wonderful deal of quibbling now among learned men as to where the soul goes to, immediately until the day of judgment. Some say it goes only to paradise, some one place, and some the other ; but I am quite content with the apostle's definition,—“ absent from the body, present with the Lord.” Well, what is there there, say you ? I will tell you ; there is there, wherever it is, I was going to say, a fulness of joy, and at his right hand—I am glad they are at the right hand, because they are safe, for Christ is there, he is at the right hand of God,—and at his right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Now does not the Saviour answer to this ? Is he not our light ? Can we not truly say that by him we see the way to escape ? we do see he is the way of escape ; and therefore by faith in him we are out of the reach of hell, out of the reach of the pit, out of the reach of the earthquake. I hope all of you catch this idea—that the only thing that can save you from the earthquake is to get away from it. You may plead your character, this, that, and the other ; the earthquake would, as it were, laugh at that ; it would not care whether you were an emperor, or a philosopher, or a king ; it would not care what you were, it would swallow you up. You must get away, that is the only remedy. The richest man with all his wealth would not be able to bribe the earthquake ; the earth would go yawning on, and swallowing up everything that came within its reach. Just so, my hearer, we must get away—" Ye shall flee to the valley ;" and this valley is, as I have shown, the humiliation work of Jesus Christ ; and oh, what a blissful valley it is to flee to ! Here, then, we have light—twilight at present, but then Christ is eternal light, and Christ, who is our light, shall shine more and more unto the perfect day. You know hell and death are terrible subjects ; but when you come to die, if you have the shinings of the Lord's presence, what care you for hell ? You are out of its reach. What care you for death ? To you it is a shadow ; yea, as you have been singing this morning, you will long to depart when you feel something of the overwhelming glories of that dear Mediator who hath brought in this new and everlasting covenant. Thus, then, Christ is the light, and the Lord brings his people out of darkness into marvellous light.

Now what is the next thing they meet with ? The rolling in of the blessings of the everlasting gospel. " And it shall be in that day,

that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem ;" not out of the earthly Jerusalem, because they are not literal waters ; you would not take them literally, any more than you would the waters in Rev. xxii. ; John saw a river proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb ; you would not take that literally, but spiritually, as expressive of the rolling in of the everlasting blessings of God's love. Then, again, in Jeremiah xxxi. 9 the Lord saith, " They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them. I will cause them to walk by the rivers of waters in a straight way, wherein they shall not stumble ; for I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn." Here, then, are the living waters that were to come from the heavenly Jerusalem ; and they were to divide into two parts, one part towards the western sea, the other towards the eastern sea, both these seas representing men by nature ; and where these waters come the sea shall be healed ; and so where this glorious gospel comes souls shall be healed and saved. So that towards the east and towards the west, embraces both hemispheres, and means the same thing, though in a different form, as the river of Eden, which parted into four heads. " Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Let us see if we can get at what these living waters actually are. I like mysteries, but I do not like mystic sorts of things, that we can form no definite idea of ; I like a definite idea of a thing, it always does us so much more good than a mere vague idea. Therefore let me at once plainly say that God's word, his gospel, including all the promises and testimonies of the gospel—these are the waters of life ; as it is written, " That he might sanctify and cleanse the church with the washing of water by the word ;" and " ye are clean through the word I have spoken unto you ;" and " the Spirit saith, Come," by convincing men of their need of these mercies, of these promises, and these testimonies of God's salvation ; and then " the bride," by what she has experienced in realising these blessings, " saith, Come ; and let him that heareth," that is the minister, " say, Come ; and let him that is athirst come ; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The water of life there will mean the word of life. Abraham received the promise that God gave to him, not conditionally, but freely ; it was a positive yea and amen promise ; so of Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets and apostles. When the Saviour sent the apostles out to preach, he sent them with this river running by their side, for I may call those words a river, which they were to drink of from time to time and lift up their heads ;—" Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world ;"—that is the river. Why, say you, you cannot prove that. I think I could if I were to try. Isaiah xxxii. : " A man shall be as an hiding place from the

wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place;" Christ is that river. So, then, the river will mean the promises and testimonies of the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Now the Lord Jesus Christ, as the 110th Psalm closes with saying, was to drink of the brook in the way, and lift up his head; and so Jesus Christ drank of the brook of wisdom, and by virtue of what he was could lift up his head, and say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" We cannot do it that way, we must do it some other way,—we must do it by him; and so we must drink of this brook, this gospel, and thus we can lift up our heads and say, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death." Now Jesus Christ answereth to all this; here is the valley that he has made, here is the light, and here is the water of life. Can we ever sufficiently admire the words of the dear Saviour, when the woman asked, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest water of me, who am a woman of Samaria?" Ah, "if thou knewest the gift of God,"—now come, I must bring you up close, if I can, you little ones; you do know that Jesus Christ is the gift of God, and that the promises of God are the gift of God; and you do know that the blessings of everlasting love are by Christ Jesus; so that you do know the gift of God. Well, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would not have said, Well, woman, you are not a Jewess, or you are a dreadful sinner; he would have assigned no reason, but he would have given thee living water. Well, the woman thought it sounded rather comfortable, and began to reflect a little, and the Lord meant she should, because he brought her, in my opinion, to a saving knowledge of the truth; and of course she naturally asked whence he got that living water, and that she might have it, that she might not come hither to draw. She thought that there was some well of better water somewhere. "Art thou greater than our father Jacob, that gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle? Whence hast thou this water?" What, is there a better well than this? Why, we all know that this is the best well in the world. Who art thou? Well, as though the Saviour should say, it is a very good well; it has gone springing on, and the patriarch Jacob did drink thereof. And I must confess, if I were there, I should like to have a cup of cold water out of it. I grant that. But the dear Saviour gave her to understand there was a better well somewhere, and therefore said, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again,"—he will come by and by to want, for this well must ultimately cease, all human consolations must run dry,—“but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Here, then,

we have the waters of life. "In summer and in winter shall it be." I suppose there are two things meant there: first, that it is perennial—the heat cannot scorch up or dry up the gospel; and the cold cannot freeze it; so I have never to send a message to you in the hottest weather, and say, It is no use to come, the well is dry, and I cannot draw a pitcher of water to give the sheep a little if they come; and then, when winter is come, I have not to send a message to say the water is frozen, and the ice is so thick, that I cannot get a drop of water. Bless the Lord, there is no scorching heat in Christ, and no winter in Christ. "In summer and in winter shall it be." This mortifies the devil very much—that he cannot stop the flow of this water of eternal life, he cannot stop the shining of this sun that is brighter than ten thousand created suns. So "in summer and in winter shall it be;" it shall be constant, always the same. That, I think, is one thing meant. And then, I think, we may just accommodate it to the experience of the Lord's people. Some of the poor people of God have had on earth a very scorching time of it. When we look at those that have been burnt alive in many parts of our own country, and in other countries as well, it really seems almost a mystery that in this age of education and refinement any educated man or woman, leaving spiritual things out of question, should be found to sanction that murderous religion, Popery, that has shed torrents of blood, and burned so many thousands of the people of God alive. It is astounding to me that there should be sensible men or women found to follow that deadly and infernal system. And then to tell me, as they do say our good Dr. Cumming had some little hope of Cardinal Wiseman,—why, how can that be? He died where the martyrs were slain; he died in that Church that hath the blood of infants and of martyrs in her skirts; he died where hell is, where the devil is; he died under the man of sin; and unless God regenerated his soul in his last moments, that man is as surely in hell as Christ is in heaven. Don't tell me you may live and love a lie and then go to heaven; if so, then the word of God is not true, for every liar shall have his portion in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone. Nevertheless, the martyrs found these cooling waters overcome the flames, overcome the scorching heat in which they were; and it is good sometimes to look at it, for we all feel—at least I do—that flesh and blood would shrink at it, and so did theirs. But then this water of life cooled their feverish souls, refreshed and sustained them; and, mysterious and strange as my language may seem, there was more strength in this heavenly water of life to make them happy than there was in Satan's agents to make them miserable. Let them be tortured how they might, still there was a strength in this water of life that flowed into the soul,

that overflowed all the banks of their sorrows, and many of them in the very centre of the flames rejoiced in the Lord their God. What a blessed religion is ours! And then also in winter. We have our wintry times. We know nothing of those scorchings, and we hope and trust the world will never witness such things again. One does rejoice in the thought that, as soon as ever the Pope became infallible, he failed directly: I cannot help rejoicing in it myself. I know that is not the downfall of Popery, but it is the downfall of something, at any rate; and God grant that the rest may come tumbling down one after another, and the people come into this valley. It is a large valley, plenty of room for the whole of them; if the whole human race to-morrow were convinced of the necessity and the beauty of this work of Christ, there is plenty of room. "Yet there is room," said the messengers. Well, then, go out to the hedges and highways, to all the poor, and wretched, and miserable, that want my mercy, and compel them to come in, for yet there is room. Now "in winter shall it be." It is very wintry with us sometimes, very cold; you have experienced a great deal of coldness, some of you; and I was going to say you would be colder than you are if the Lord did not sometimes make his blessed word as fire to you; but he does sometimes, does he not? "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked with us by the way?" You watch the minister, and say, "I wonder if there is a word for me; he knows nothing of my particular exercise of mind and state; but if there should be a word that should describe just what and where I am, and what I want, I should regard that as from the Lord, and feel encouraged. And how often does a single sentence set the soul on fire with love to the dear Redeemer! So, then, these blessings flow all the year round: the tree of life, bearing twelve manner of fruits, which we read of in another place, sets forth the same truth.

The next thing we find here is unity. "And the Lord shall be king over all the earth." Men deny this is the case now; they say, Is he the king over all the earth now? and they say he is not. And the reason they assign is, because all men are not Christians. Well, say you, Is not that a powerful argument that he is not king over all the earth? Well, that argument might do very well, but it does not do for me, somehow, and I will assign the reason. Are you going to tell me that because the devil continues to be a devil, Christ does not reign over him? Are you going to tell me that because fallen angels continue to be fallen angels, Christ does not reign over them? Are you going to tell me that because sin is not holiness, Christ does not reign over it? Are you going to tell me that because we have to die, Christ does not reign over death?