

SERMONS ON ISAIAH

By

Dr. P. F. Bresee

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FOREWORD

Wherever the ministry of Dr. P. F. Bresee is known his fondness for the book of Isaiah is also reported, and the helpfulness of the messages which he brought from this portion of the Book of Books is noised abroad. It was therefore a wonderful service which Rev. C. J. Kinne performed when he, with the consent of Dr. Bresee's family, prepared the manuscript of twenty of these sermons for the press.

It should be remembered that the outlines, notes and fuller discussions found herein were intended only as aids to Dr. Bresee in his own preparation for the pulpit, and that their appearance in book form was never in his mind. This accounts for much otherwise inexplicable brevity and abruptness, and for a certain lack of finish which one would ordinarily expect.

But in preparing the copy for the press, Rev. Kinne followed the plan of making originality and personal characteristics his guide, and hence he made as few corrections and alterations as consistency would permit. Therefore we have a book as near like it would have been if Dr. Bresee had prepared it for the press himself as it is possible to obtain, and it will be read with special interest by all who knew this famous preacher and leader in the Church of God in connection with the organization and work of the Church of the Nazarene. And besides this, many who were not permitted to hear the

Word as it was spoken by this modern prophet will become somewhat acquainted with him by reading what he said.

This book deserves and will obtain a wide circulation and an interested reading. It will serve to instruct and inspire all those who long to be holy in heart and useful in life. It will bless and lift through its seraphic tenor, and yet it will encourage by its practical application of the sublimest truths. The appearance of this book just at this time is exceedingly timely, because its teachings are so positive and its spirit so full of genuine devotion. May the blessings of Him who inspired its great author rest upon the book and its readers!

J. B. CHAPMAN, Editor *Herald of Holiness*.
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SERMONS ON ISAIAH

THE REDEEMER'S CROSS

TEXT: Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool (Isaiah 1: 18).

DOING religion is first rate, if you have religion to do; but doing religion without salvation is a nothing. The teaching that religion is doing is one of the fatal fallacies of all ages; but men without spiritual vision naturally fall into it. It is what they see of a religious life, and they take it for the life itself. In his article on Practical Religion in the Fortnightly Review some time ago, Grant Allen tried to show that all religions, including the Christian religion, are just customs and consist simply in the doing of certain things. A denominational paper recently quoted, approvingly, Prof. Drummond's statement that moral goodness is the result of practice, like the skill of a pianist or other artist. But there is something more than practice back of even these accomplishments. I have practiced singing, but it did not make me a singer. Now a man who is in the condition that Paul describes as carrying about with him a putrid corpse of moral corruption, needs something done for him

besides practicing morality. Men need salvation, a mighty, gracious work done in them. The real answer to the heart cry, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" is "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Religion is not a certain round of ceremony; it is a new creature,—it is a new creation. The people to whom Isaiah spoke had much doing. They had temple-treading or church-going, sacrifices, offerings, and prayers in abundance. They were in this sense exceedingly religious, but they were far from being godly. The Christian religion does not begin with, nor consist of church-going, saying prayers and making offerings. It begins and has its life in the soul. It abides in man's moral nature, and thus it controls and regulates his outer life.

In the chapter from which we have taken our text, the Lord calls the people into court and pleads against them. He accuses them of deep moral pollution. He tells them how deep the leprosy lies within. How the whole head is sick and the heart faint. He tells them this has come about by the absence of earnest effort to be right. He tells them that they have not used the God-given power to find out the truth and walk in the right way. He tells them that animal instinct is truer to its purposes than their intelligence and moral perceptions. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." With power to think and search out the truth they are heedless, irreverent, callous, until their whole being is earth-seeking and corrupt.

He lays before them the results, both in their own

being and in the desolation round about them. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers." "The daughter of Zion is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city. Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah." A people to whom the light has come can not forsake it, and sink into forms, without falling under the divine displeasure and their prosperity be turned into adversity.

He accuses them of using surface methods by which they have attempted to palliate their condition. He accuses them of formality and ritualism. He says that there is no deep thought, no great over-mastering longing, no great heart-hunger after God. Your thought, and longing, and heart-hunger are earthly and carnal. You love the things which I hate, and then you come into my courts with offerings. The Lord said He could not away with it. It sickened even infinite love. It was an offense unto Him.

At this point the Lord begins an appeal to them, to open unto them the deep treasures of His heart of love. "Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes: cease to do evil; learn to

do well." Come now, let the controversy cease. He does not ask men to bring arguments why they should continue in rebellion. He knows that man has no reason. Rebellion against God has no reason. Whenever a rebel looks up honestly into the face of God, he is speechless. What He does ask is that man cease his wickedness, lay down his weapons, and throw himself on the mercy of God. What I desire this morning is that you stand with me in the midst of all this darkness and see the rising of the sun of righteousness. Amid this putrefaction of sin, feel the truth of heaven.

Right in the midst of this text is planted the Cross of the world's Redeemer. Down into it comes the fire of eternal love. Down through it flows the blood of the atoning Lamb. Here is mercy, forgiveness, and cleansing.

There are three great cardinal facts: (1) A Divine Redeemer. (2) An atonement of infinite merit. (3) The cleansing of the soul from all sin. These things, if they are urged with effectiveness, in the power of the Holy Ghost, a sinful world hates, humanitarianism avoids, and so-called churches which build upon the nobility of human nature, pass by on the other side. But according to the Word of God, a divine Redeemer, who was as a Lamb slain, making full atonement for sin, and whose blood cleanseth from all sin, is the one and only remedy for such conditions as are here described.

On the margin of this great stream of divine love and power, nay wading out into it as far as my thought and longing heart can take me, here amid its billows of

light and glory, I stand with you today, to consider, to feel, to know, this boundless truth, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." O men and women, press this way. Catch the meaning of this heavenly voice. Know its import and power. It does not mean unconditionally. The voice of invitation is, "Put the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." A command which reaches from deepest thought to highest purpose, from smallest act to largest doing. This is the battle. Let the battle end. Let this thy controversy cease. The man who does this because he hears the divine voice is a candidate to have the heaven of love emptied upon him. And he will have no difficulty to enter in and receive. The day that a man thus turns to God is a day of salvation. That day his sins are all forgiven. They are blotted out of the book of God's remembrance, and they are washed out of the human soul. O, the marvelous transition when a man is born to God. His sins gone, their condemnation gone, their burden gone, their love gone. And in their place a new divine life and a new love, a new joy, a new hope. He is in a new world. There is power in Jesus' blood to take away the vileness of the vile, to save men from the hell that sin has already begun to kindle in the soul. Power to take men out of the gutter, and to save those crushed down with pride and social respectability. Publicans and harlots are easier to reach than a bigoted Saul of Tarsus. There is power to save a poor woman who

creeps in and washes the feet of the Master with her tears. But one needs saving just as much as the other. It was when Saul felt that he was the chief of sinners that he got to Jesus. When a man or a woman feels thus, when he would only seek the lowest place, then is his salvation near.

I desire to call attention to the completeness of this work of cleansing from moral impurity. I believe that Isaiah here includes perfect cleansing. Scarlet and crimson are in the very fiber. They can not be taken away by any ordinary cleansing. You can wash a garment clean and yet it will be scarlet; but here the very color, that ineradicable color, is taken out, and the fiber is made white, which shows that not only the filth of our transgression is taken away, but the tenacious coloring of depravity is removed. But to place it beyond all cavil, I call attention to this prayer of David, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Now it is a fact that all snow is somewhat impure. It is said that if you climb to the highest mountain top, a residuum of dirt will be found in the snow. Whatever Isaiah may have meant to include in this text, we know that the residuum of carnality rankles after the forgiveness and washing away of all actual transgression. The New Testament is very clear and explicit, that after conversion, after men and women have become the servants of Jesus Christ, after they have been washed from their sins, there remains the inheritance of sin, carnality, the old man, the body of sin, the flesh that warreth against the Spirit.

We know that this is true in our own experience. It is not so much method which I wish to emphasize as this great fact. There is cleansing in the blood of Jesus to the uttermost for all men. There is one way, one blood-stained way. Your part is to cease the controversy by ceasing sin, by turning away from evil, by ending rebellion in complete surrender to God.

If you have not come to God, if your poor heart knows nothing but earth, if when you look up this morning there is no vision, it is all dark, your sin and rebellion rise up before you—God says, "End the matter this morning, let the controversy cease, and in this moment, in the twinkling of an eye, I will forgive and wash thy sins away." There is full perfect cleansing for every forgiven rebel. Here I want to raise my Ebenezer, nay, here set up the Cross, that is my Ebenezer. I will write over it yea, it is written in the flowing blood itself. "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

O, my brother, let us come to this fountain and let us stand where we can sing, "Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness, My beauty are, my glorious dress." How I love to stand at the fountain of His blood. O this mighty Bethesda where the Angel of the Covenant keeps the waters troubled. I know that the porches round about are full of impotent folk, but there is healing for everyone.

The place where we have been called to stand, the place where this pulpit has been erected, is at the fountain of cleansing. If you ask me for the one place in the world's history that is the most glorious, that means most

for the salvation of men, I at once say, that "upper chamber." But one says, What about Calvary? Yes, Calvary was fearful, awful. The conflict that raged there amid the shrouded heavens and reeling earth was a spectacle for heaven, earth, and hell; but in resurrection glory Jesus gathered up the victories of that day, and, bearing them up to the throne, said unto His disciples, "Tarry ye at Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." And that day He came again in the glory of the Holy Ghost, and the added glory of the Father's presence in a peculiar sense. He entered that upper chamber bearing special gifts for His own, and Calvary was there, the Cross was borne forward from Passover to Pentecost. All the glory of that victory was in the "upper chamber." All the results were that day poured out as our High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ began His special ministry of baptism for which He had prepared the way. That place stands for holy manhood. Human hearts were cleansed that day, and perfect cleansing or holiness through the blood, became the heritage of God's people. That day men and women were empowered as never before. They were given power to testify, power to proclaim the truth of God. Rather, I might say, that day Jesus Christ came into human hearts and took possession. He created a close agency through which He could live and act upon men. He purified and took possession of human hearts as His own. He took possession of human love, thought, desire, passion, hands and feet as His own. Indeed He established one hundred and twenty thrones in human hearts of

which He took possession, and from which He began to minister. That day the heavens were opened to the Church of God never to be closed until the end of this dispensation. All the redeemed were to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. This is not a transient blessing, like the lightning from heaven, but an ever-shining divine Christ enthroned in a human heart.

THE WORKER'S THREE ERAS

TEXT: And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Enter into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty. The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low: And upon all the cedars of Lebanon, that are high and lifted up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up, and

upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall, and upon all the ships of Tarshish, and upon all pleasant pictures. And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain (Isaiah 2: 2-5, 10-17; 4: 2-6).

These passages were not written in a day, or in a year, but at different times in the life of this great, thoughtful, heaven-inspired patriot whose working life extended over half a century. They represent the three eras of his life, and these three eras or elements enter into every Christian life. They are braided like strands into every life that

struggles to know and do God's will, toiling in the lifting up of men.

Every young man who hears the divine call, whose ennobled aspirations throb with the Spirit of God is an idealist, an optimist.

The first utterance of the prophet is not by chance. The first chapter of every earnest young life is a vision of hope—great results quickly attained. The possibilities of men are seen, a divine impulse thrills him who sees, and he feels it can and must be speedily wrought out.

I can not say that this vision comes to every young man. *It is sadly true that there are many who never have any really great thoughts, who never feel any great overmastering impulse to do God's work in the earth. It is one of the sad things, one of the discouraging things that so many of the boys of all classes are of so little good. They do not seem to want excellence, they do not desire education, they do not covet the opportunity to lay their lives along side the needs of men. I can hardly say that they shrink from the struggle to try to make this world better, for they scarcely think enough to have any idea of it—they drift. They are in mind and character formed by those as frivolous as themselves, and who are in the same way of uselessness. Their minds are filled with rubbish. They breathe the pestilential air of the club, the ball-room, the theatre and the pool-hall, and are thus unfitted for any noble thing.*

What a relief it is to turn from this kind of young men whose highest ambition it is to dance a jig, to ride around

on Sunday, or to lounge about and smoke, to a young man who is really of some account in this world; one who listens to the voice of God, who feels that all the powers and forces he possesses are to help men and to bless the world. A young man whose joy it is to lay himself over against the world's evil and to be God's agent to rescue the weak and the needy, and who feels that it is more than happiness—that it is a real foretaste of heaven to be united with Jesus Christ and all good men to help make this earth to be filled with righteousness. The youthful ardor of such an one is full of hope and expectancy. Every young disciple is likely to be an optimist.

We rejoice in the idealism of the young hero. There is in it a real glimpse of the possibilities of men. It is light from far off suns on near mountain tops. It is the dream image of what is to be when the Holy Ghost has builded through toil and labor, sweat, suffering and blood; when the Cross has lifted man into a new race—the family of God. There are truth, joy, and inspiration in it. It is the angel in the marble block that makes the sculptor hasten to release it. It was the vision in mid-air that moved Michael Angelo to build the dome of St. Peter's. It is the vision of the New Jerusalem that girds the Christian patriot to toil on, building after the pattern shown in the mount. In some parts of the earth, by strange atmospheric conditions, a city many miles away is so photographed and reflected that you see it set down at your very door. This is what occurs in the vision. The mountain of the Lord's house is established in the tops of the

mountains, exalted above the hills, and all nations flowing into it. That is a true vision. It reflects the possibilities of the race through the truth and power of God becoming the incarnation of Jesus Christ. It did not die with Isaiah. It flashed out with great distinctness when Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." It fell with marvelous beauty upon the mountain tops before the eyes of St. John when he saw the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. It comes to us in surpassing loveliness as we see by the light of the Holy Ghost, Emmanuel—God with us.

This idealistic period is a necessity for those who are to be workers together with God. Who can build without ideals? or toil without an end, or give life's work in highest devotion without seeing something of the purpose? A slave may toil without thought and without hope, but Jesus says, "I call you not servants, but friends." The mystery of the glory is made known unto you. Before Nehemiah left the palace at Shushan he saw the rebuilt walls and Jerusalem rescued from desolation. That vision filled his soul. So the young Christian has a vision of the kingdom, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven. The young hero sees the dawning of a new day. He feels—I am connected with it. I can hasten it. Moses, as he left the court of Pharaoh, doubtless felt—It can be done—I can do it. I will strike, and these men will lay down their heavy burdens. What confidence there is in this era. I can tell men and they will hear.

Idealism is overwhelmed with the possibilities and sees

little else. It glows and burns with overmastering intensity and enthusiasm. It is often unwise, rash and impolitic; but thank God for it; without it men are good for nothing. We must have it, an abiding fact, led and guided by further divine revelation and manifestation, but the fact we must never lose.

We soon pass into the realistic; not out of the ideal—I trust. We must carry with us our ideals with all their enthusiasm or all is lost. Garibaldi never lost sight of liberty. Mezzini never lost sight of Italian unity under great religious principles. Isaiah never quite ceased to see the mountain of the Lord's house established in the tops of the mountains and all nations flowing into it. No Christian is to ever lose sight of the New Jerusalem coming down. A pessimist can not be a Christian; for the pessimist has lost sight of hope—the guiding star. Yet when a man goes to bring about the results he finds difficulties and obstacles everywhere which were not seen in the vision. When Michael Angelo turned to attempt to hang the dome of St. Peter's in midair, it would have seemed that he had seen the impossible. If you look at Garibaldi, wounded almost to the death, and lying on that South American island; or years afterwards a fugitive on the shores of the Mediterranean, his wife dead in his arms, you would say that the vision is a long way off.

When Isaiah turned to say to the people, "Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord's house," he found sin, frivolity, earth-seeking and disloyalty to God everywhere. There were so little righteousness, so little conscience, so

little care. He saw the eyes of the glory of God burning through every rank, and so little but offense to the eyes of His glory. He saw pride and lifting up of self—self-seeking—everywhere. Men were given up to gain and women to show until his heart sank within him. And is it not always so? You who have had a vision of the possibilities of men and have felt the thrill of heaven in your own soul—you have thought, "I can tell them, they will be glad to hear, when they see what it does for me. I can get this gospel under men and lift them. I can turn my face toward the darkness and it will flee away. There is fire enough in my bosom to burn up the sins of men." What have you found? Hardness, frivolity, pride, self-seeking, rebellion; few really trying to be right. Men willing to barter everything for gain. We find a professedly Christian civilization nursing with tenderest care the vipers that sting the people to their death. Every effort is made to turn young men into club life, where they shall be drowned in worldliness. Pseudo churches are set up with every attraction of eloquence, music and society, and with all kinds of aesthetic and ethical culture and work. University and college life, hardened by multiform influences, encourages men to discard, if not to despise, the real salvation which the Holy Ghost has brought. Pseudo churches, without a living Christ in the person of the Holy Ghost, set up to allure the people into their somnambulant chambers, where they neglect the great salvation. The intense worldliness, the dethronement of conscience, the allurements and deadly embrace of formality, the chilling in-

fluence of a more than semi-pagan culture, and the general indifference arising from the absence of the manifestation of the Holy Ghost make things look dark.

If the Isaiah of today, as he tries to bring the message, and sees and feels the condition, cries out, "Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of," you need not wonder. And yet the vision is not of conditions, but of possibilities through the blood of the Lamb. You need to carry with you into your life-work the vision of the glory which has dawned upon you. The vision is not so much out as up.

Isaiah braided into his life work another strand; an all-comprehending, moulding, transforming force, which was really Christliness through faith in God. No man can be a consistent, continuous worker, abiding in the vision, with the conditions which are ever present with him, but through a faith in God which is dominant and overwhelming. The conditions will blot out the vision, and the barren deserts will drink up his spirits. Supreme faith in God, alone, rises so high above circumstances and difficulties that it abides in the vision.

Isaiah found out that idealism is not a controlling force, that human possibilities will not induce men. He also found that the facts and environments and human results must not and can not control the worker commissioned of God. He saw a new fact and that fact so entered into his life as to become both all-controlling and all-sustaining. He saw "the Branch of the Lord"—the new manifestation of God in this world. He saw that in connection with

this manifestation of God there should be the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, and that the daughters of Zion should be purified and the blood of Jerusalem washed away, and that the remnant of Jerusalem should be called holy, and that upon every dwelling place of mount Zion and upon her assemblies should be a cloud and smoke by day and the shining of a flaming fire by night, and that the glory should be a defense. Thus there is a place of safety and victory.

The battle is the Lord's. We bear our testimony, we strike our blow, but the residue of power is with Him. His eyes of glory search through the earth. In His hands are the red hot thunderbolts that go smiting through society as the cup of iniquity is full. In the meantime, the testimony abides, a cloud and smoke by day and a shining, flaming fire by night.

Nothing will do but the burning purifying fire, the white heat of the indwelling Holy Ghost.

Christianity never loses its ideals and inspirations; it never regards as ultimate its surroundings or difficulties. There is but one great ultimate, all-pervading fact, and that is Christ; the manifest all-glorious, almighty, abiding Christ. Allied, unified with Him, victory is assured. With Him we walk in the darkness as in the light, in the night as in the day, in the storm as in the calm. We look out upon the most barren desert, the darkest wilderness, or into the fiercest tempest as upon the garden of God. Christ calms the storms, makes the wilderness blossom and the deserts bloom. We bear the world's hope and glory, for the world's Conqueror goes with us.

THE PURGING FIRE

TEXT: *In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem; when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning. And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (Isaiah 4: 2-6).*

I ONCE ascended a mountain which was 14,000 feet high. As I stood and looked at it before I made the ascent, I saw it in beautiful outline, forests upon its sides, and then its high bald summit reaching far above vegetation standing out against the blue sky in beautiful relief. But as I toiled up its rugged sides—it was not a tourist mountain—I had other visions. I saw the great rocks which had to be surmounted, rugged fearful ways

hanging over precipices so high as to make me dizzy. With weariness, and finally with sickness, I climbed on. *There were visions all the way.* They were the same that I saw in one great picture when on the plain below, but in my climbing, often in desperation hanging to a great precipice, how different! But the mountain top was still before me and the blue sky above me, and my feet were to stand upon the summit.

The prophet Isaiah saw the mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains, and the nations flowing into it; but when he began as the prophet of God to bring the vision to pass, the difficulties were so great that for a time he was almost overwhelmed; yet in the midst of the struggle he had visions; *it was the same*, but O, so different. He now saw the upward path, step by step, and he saw that those who were going, at least for a time, were not the great multitude of the "all nations," but a remnant who were climbing up to the mountain tops. *The larger vision* of the multitude seemed eclipsed; at least he saw some things more clearly. *He had a clearer vision of Divine manifestation*, of the way of ascent, of the path for human feet, and the way of spiritual uplift.

The first prominent fact which the prophet now sees is Jesus Christ. He sees a new revelation, a new manifestation of God. This is set forth in a very impressive imagery—*The Branch of the Lord*. It is the springing forth of Divine personality upon the earth. He declares that this manifestation is *beautiful and glorious*. While to veiled eyes He was as a root out of dry ground, without beauty;

yet to open eyes He was "The chiefest among ten thousand and the One altogether lovely." Isaiah's eyes were so anointed that he saw that though He was wounded, bruised, beaten and dumb before His slayers, yet in His lowly, gentle, humble heart, and in His sacrificial sufferings, so freely giving Himself, the just for the unjust, was a beauty and glory beyond all description or thought. He saw that He was Emmanuel, that the government was upon His shoulders, and that His name was Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. There came upon his vision something of the bursting forth into this world, of the glory of God in His Son Jesus Christ.

He saw also that the fruit of the earth was to be excellent and comely for them that were escaped (for the escaping) of Israel. That the way of Israel's escape is excellent and comely. He clearly indicates that he speaks of *the way of holiness*. The following verse makes this clear, "He that is left in Ziòn and he that remaineth in Jerusalem shall be called holy,"—shall be holy. This is the excellent and comely way of Israel's escape. Israel was conquered, scattered and peeled, but her deliverance her escape, her strength, her power is *the way of holiness*. This which is called by the great Apostle, "the more excellent way," is the way of holiness. There is a way of complete deliverance, of strength and of power, and that is the way of holiness. This is a fact which the blind eyes can not see, and the deaf ears can not hear. But it

is still true that "holiness becometh thy house, O Lord," and that the strength of God's people is in Himself.

Without holiness and the presence of Him who dwells only in holy hearts, the Church is soon a conquered Church driveling for show; a beggar holding out its dirty hand for the world's pittance; or a ballet girl dancing and singing for the world's amusement and pay, or a blind old Samson grinding at a mill, brought out occasionally for the amusement of the Philistines. God's holy people are neither players for the world's amusement, nor caterers to the world's tastes. They stand in the height of their resplendent spiritual beauty, the prophets—the messengers of God to men.

Nothing can be more excellent and beautiful than the way God provides for His own. Those who are His own are already blest. Their sins are removed as far as the east is from the west. They are born from above, they are already His own. The way and the inheritance are most marvelous; for the all freedom from all sin (the thing every new born soul hates) through the blood of the Lamb of God, and inheritance with the Son of God. This way is so glorious that I never wonder when I see one from before whose eyes the veil has been lifted running for the fountain of cleansing. I only wonder that any of us are so blind as not to thus run.

The ideal which the Holy Spirit reveals to Isaiah here is that *the real church of God is a remnant of holy people*. They that remain in Jerusalem, that are left in Zion—written among the living—written into life—are called *holy*,

or are holy. How strong that figure. Every one "*written unto life.*" There is no way of life but the way of holiness. No name "*written unto life*" but by the way of holiness. We are foreordained unto eternal life through holiness and are made partakers of the Divine nature through sanctification by the Spirit. The New Testament corroborates this strong statement—"Without holiness no man shall see the Lord."

Isaiah deals also with methods and results. There is the washing away of the filth of the daughters of Zion, and the purging of the blood of Jerusalem. Isaiah sees that this remnant—these who abide in Jerusalem, written unto life—are holy through the cleansing away of this filth and the purging of their very being from iniquity. *And he tells us how it is to be accomplished*—"By the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." God's people are made holy by His own judicial act. He is faithful and just, when there is proper confession, to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness. It is the act of God and is judicially done for, and to, every man. The forgiveness of sins is a special divine act in the court of heaven. The eyes of the Lord search through the case and God Himself gives judgment that the conditions are met, and for the sake of His Son He forgives all of a man's sins. And the judicial act of forgiveness is attended by the divine act of washing away of the filth of human sins. The festering corruption of our own sins is washed away—"though they be as crimson they are made as white as snow." This is the imperial act of God. This is the

measureless act of His power, wisdom and love; all concentrating in, and finding expression through the sacrifice of His Son. So we see here the spirit of judgment. But this is not the end of the judicial work—The prince of this world is also judged. The prince of this world still lays claim to a part of the nature of this forgiven, and in some sense, cleansed soul. There is in this soul, though his own sins are cleansed, an inheritance of sin. In the Scriptures it is termed “the carnal mind,” “the old man,” “the body of sin,” “the sin that doth so easily beset us.” That there remains in the soul, after conversion, the inherited sinful conditions is clearly taught in the Bible. That man needs, after conversion a further purging from this inherited sin is urged in the Word of God.

This somewhat of sin in the converted man, is of Satan, and is controlled by him. The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; for it is enmity against God. Satan owns, possesses, and controls carnality. So the new life of God and carnality can not long dwell in the same soul. Carnality is dominated by the new life, but is in constant rebellion, and Satan makes carnality largely his field of battle. There is no difference in reference to these facts among the churches or in the history of Christian doctrine which amounts to anything. In reference to this further work of grace—virtually all churches agree to its necessity—they do not agree on the how and when. It seems to me very clear that the Pauline method, so clearly and strongly emphasized by John Wesley, is that carnality, which is “the sin of the world,” is

dealt with in a way similar to the way our individual sins were dealt with. That Christ gave Himself to sanctify and cleanse the Church that it might be holy. In response to human need, and faith, another judicial act is done, and Satan—the prince of this world—is judged in regard to his property in men, and is debarred, and his property in man is confiscated and destroyed. And this destruction is accomplished by God's method of a deeper cleansing or purging, which is by fire. Isaiah saw that it was done by the spirit of burning. It is the baptism with the Holy Ghost. So Isaiah had here, in vision, the names written unto life through holiness, made thus by judgment, and cleansing through washing, and judgment and purging through fire. It is so today, the judicial act of God and the cleansing and purifying by His power.

This new doctrine—so called—is the old doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, of patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs and the fathers. God creates upon every dwelling place of Mount Zion and upon His assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and a shining of a flame of fire by night. That is a continued new creation. "The Lord will *create* upon every dwelling place."

The testimony of holy people is the continued breath of God. The uprising of a human soul in devotion or testimony would be nothing, or next to nothing, but when God breathes through the soul His Own Spirit He creates a cloud upon that spirit, a bright, snowy, golden cloud and a pillar of smoke that tells the world that here is one of "His own."

And so also upon the assemblies of Zion. There the cloud of glory rests, there the smoke of holy incense rises. The assemblies of God's holy people are different from all other gatherings. Perhaps not in the place in which they gather. Not so much that the people are dressed different. Not altogether that they seem to do so differently. They are different in that there walks among them one like unto the Son of God, and that their hearts burn within them as He talks to them, and the cloud of incense rises and the smoke of testimony ascends. And when the earth grows dark, there is one place all luminous, and that is about the assemblies of holy people, for God creates upon them the flaming fire. And the glory is their defence. There is one kind of people that nothing can really harm—those covered with the Divine glory.

THE BAPTISM WITH FIRE

TEXT: *"And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me, for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged"* (Isaiah 6:4-7).

ISAIAH was a young man, and yet for some little time he had been a prophet. He was perhaps educated in the school of the prophets. His ardent young life seems to have been given to God and His work. Previous to this epoch in his life the Spirit of prophecy had been upon him, but it is evident that he had seen only dimly. His vision had been hindered by several things. One was the glare of the great prosperity of Uzziah's reign which led him to look for the hope of Israel in a wrong direction. Another was that his own spiritual nature had not been so fully transformed as to enable him to see spiritual things clearly, and to be the vehicle of the transmission of the clearest and greatest truths.

It is a law as old as humanity that pure hearts see God,

and tongues tipped with flame tell His great truths. But Isaiah's young life was devoted to God, and according to the light he had he was faithful to his high calling. It is unto such that the richer things of a better experience come—not to the careless and disobedient.

So amid the wreck of the things in which he had hoped, and the darkening of the multiplying problems about him, God had revealed Himself to Isaiah and taught him something further in reference to his own character, and the nature of true worship. Also that the hope of Israel lay in this personal relation to God. That holiness of heart and seraphic devotion were Israel's success and that all other lines were dark and hopeless.

This revelation to Isaiah was so sudden, vast, and deep, and so far-reaching that it overwhelmed him. It is difficult for us to appreciate his situation, for these things have come to us gradually. We spell out these great truths syllable by syllable, and we can hardly conceive the bursting of this full-orbed sun upon his twilight, like a glowing, shining, burning revelation by the personal appearance of the Divine Christ. He says, "the house was filled with smoke"—it was really the darkness of eyes turned suddenly toward the sunlight. It was the confusion of the conflict in his own soul. Probably few men ever got a view of their greater need of a more perfect transformation. But the first effect was dimness of vision in his own soul as his own spiritual temple was filled with smoke. But Isaiah abode in the vision and his eyes began to get accustomed to the new light—and he began to see some

things, and those things were in reference to himself. He says, "Woe is me! for I am undone." O Isaiah, what is the matter? Have you not been a servant of the Lord for these years? Have you not had some very blessed visions of the glory of Jerusalem. Have you not been able by the Spirit to utter some very clear moral teachings? O yes, and I have tried to be right, but in this clearer light I see I can not stand. I have heard a new word, and that word is "holy." I have heard it uttered with an awful, glorious emphasis. It fills this new vision and its echo is all about me. In the presence of this utterance, and of that glorious light which comes from the face of the Lord I am unclean.

Mark the concentration of this conviction. Pain gathers at some point, and thought gathers at the place of pain. Isaiah was a prophet, His life work concentrated in his utterances. Here was his life, being, work, all concentrated. "I am not the echo of the Seraphs' cry. The people about me are in the same condition. I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." The lips, no doubt, stand for the blossom of life, the final results of living, the worship offered unto God. "The people among whom I dwell are not holy in their very devotions, they are callous in heart, careless in life, selfish in spirit, and yet they tread thy temple." How natural this experience. How often have I seen it re-enacted in the lives of men.

The Lord reveals Himself only to honest, earnest, reverent, longing spirits. He never stoops to answer irreverence or to convince careless skepticism; in the days of His in-

carnation He made no utterances and wrought no miracles for such. In their presence He was dumb, or His utterances were rebukes. It is always so. If a man is careless and heedless, or if he scoffs and blasphemes he may expect no extraordinary manifestation to startle, convince, or change him. One great sign has been given—the Cross—enough to awaken men's thought, earnest longing and reverent inquiry. But if men do not seek after God, God is nothing to them. If men do not feel their need of Him, He is no supply to them. If men seek darkness He is to *them no light*. If men plead to be excused from the blessedness of fealty and fellowship God excuses them.

But to men who feel their need and who reverently and earnestly seek after God, to them He reveals Himself. To such, light springs up in darkness. But to such the revelation of His light is gradual. And that light is first a revelation of one's own self. A sense of need of salvation from without himself. And then a direct sense of pardon and adoption into the family of God. Thus far I suppose Isaiah had come before this marvelous vision.

The next great revelation which comes into our lives as men and women of God, which comes from the very pressing of ourselves up against the heart of God, is a great surprise, for it is a further revelation of ourselves and our need. It comes not to listless souls or worldly spirits, but unto men hungering and thirsting after God. It comes from a new manifestation of Himself through His Word and by His Spirit. It brings a deep sense of unlikeness to God, such a lack of spiritual conformity to His

Divine nature, such a realization of lack of devotion and fullness of love. What moments, and perhaps days, of confusion, of longing, and of heart-searching. People come to me and say, "I fear I am backsliding, I don't know what is the matter." It is the smoke that fills the temple. Isaiah became utterly self-despondent, "Woe is me." One thing was certain to Isaiah, he could not continue to go along as he had been going. He saw, as he had never seen before, the holiness of the Divine character, and the perfect devotion and fervor of real worship. He can never more turn his eyes to the Divine Lord and worship without a new conformity to His likeness. How true this is to Christian experience. As there comes to us the new revelation of the Divine presence and our lack of conformity, and the possibility of a more perfect conformity to the Divine Spirit. How true it is that we can never go on as we have been—light unaccepted. Truth ungrasped and unentered upon leaves the soul dead and barren, and the light which did abide goes out. There are many backsliders in the churches, and the main cause is that they have not been honestly loyal to the new revelations that have come to them. There is a wide-spread prejudice in the Church today against what they consider excessive piety. And by that they mean an all-embracing salvation that makes soul, body, and spirit all the Lord's. I want to ask you this question, "Have you been true to the new light which has shone upon your hearts from the face of Jesus Christ as the Holy Ghost has revealed Him unto you?"

Isaiah stood confounded but loyal. We are likely to be so afraid of the way we do not know. We stand and shake our heads and say that we do not understand it. The Holy Ghost takes of the deep things of God and shows them unto us—the necessity for a clean heart, the power of the blood of Jesus, the fulness of love, a seraphic devotion—and we stand shivering near the shore. We hear the testimony of Fletcher, Bramwell, Carvosso—and of men and women among us whose lips the holy fire has touched, and we are like the bather who stands dipping his feet in the surf while others are out in the breakers enjoying the fulness. We say, "I don't understand it. This little about my feet is about all I can bear, but I will reach down and try to wet my face with it." But by the time we reach after it the waves have receded from us. You do not understand it, but God's voice calls you out into the deep. Isaiah did not understand it, but how he clung to the vision. He finished the confession of his condition and need with a re-statement of the facts before him, "Mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." Hold on to the light, to the revealed possibility which has come to thy soul. Turn not thy gaze away from the promises of God. There are no impossibilities with God. He has His own way of accomplishing His ends. Faith sees the promises and looks to them alone. If God requires holiness in the inner parts, if He has promised that the blood will cleanse your heart, He will fulfil His promise.

As Isaiah lingered on his need and the vision, Jewish

ritual and service were left far behind. Forms and ceremonies were lost. His soul stood face to face with the Lord. There was but one emblem that remained; it was God's abiding emblem—an altar with fire. It was the same emblem that was present when He spoke to Moses in the wilderness. A fire that did not consume nor even singe a single leaf, but leaped, and glowed, and burned, and brightened, and told of His presence. As He spoke from Sinai it was fire rolling and leaping in untold glory about its brow. When He would answer His prophet in such a way as to confound his enemies, it was by fire leaping from the skies. And when John the Baptist came crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord," when he spoke of His work he said—"He shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire." And when the time had come to present to the world a completed Church which should make of living men and women what was emblemized on Horeb in the bush, the emblem—the purifying, anointing, transforming, power-imparting emblem of the Divine Presence was fire, tongues of fire. So it was with Isaiah. He was touching God's infinite, eternal, law of love finding vent through the revelation of his soul.

Isaiah stood face to face with Divine love and power. He pressed his needy spirit up to God. And that thing occurred which always will occur when human need and Divine love meet and mingle in the revelation of Jesus Christ. The fire touched him. The seraph flew bearing a live coal from off the altar, and, touching his lips said,

“Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin is purged.”

O the *mystery, the power, and the glory of that touch of fire!* How it kissed Isaiah's soul into new and nearer relation unto God! How it whitened the dark lines out of his being! How it burned in its purifying power through his spirit! How it cleared the clouds of smoke away! How it prepared him to stand for God witnessing to His great salvation! Isaiah trod the way just before us. He entered into the Holy of Holies just ahead of us, but we too are come unto Him who baptizes with fire.

THE GAZE INTO HEAVEN

TEXT: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me" (Isaiah 6: 8).

THIS text seems at first to come in a little abruptly. If we were looking at this passage from a literary standpoint we would be led to say that there had been no indication of this in what had preceded it, and that there is a wide transition from the one to the other. But really this is not the case. The vision of the Lord of glory, the revelation of the seraphic devotion of true worship, the realization of his own lack of harmony with the divine will, and the touch of fire by which he was cleansed and anointed, had a very close relationship to the service he was to render.

Every revelation of truth, every divine manifestation, every baptism with the Spirit means impulse to save the world which lieth and dieth in wickedness. The men who see farthest into the heavens, see farthest into human need. And the hearts which are most fully cleansed with atoning blood and burn most intensely with the fire of seraphic devotion are those whose arms are strongest to bear men to the Cross. So, while there would seem to be no immediate connection between the vision preceding this text and

the text itself, yet it is universal Christian experience that there is the closest and most necessary connection.

"I heard the voice of the Lord"—"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," "For the Lord hath spoken." The very necessities of men are the Divine voice to us. The wail of the need of a sin-cursed earth—a need so great and universal, which nothing but the gospel of the Son of God can supply, is a call from God to everyone who has received the heavenly treasure in his own soul. And the Holy Spirit is filling the Church of God 365 days of the year with the clear strong voice, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"

Every heaven-born messenger of the love of God is such by his own consecration to that service. God has no draft men for His workmen. God's workmen are such as hear His voice, and respond out of their own free will, "Here am I, send me." That answer, "Here am I," means a great deal. That ready response to the divine call means relationship. You remember that when Adam had transgressed, and the Lord talked, it was, "Where art thou?" When Elijah had given way, when he broke down in the conflict the Lord said, "Elijah, where art thou?" But the moment Isaiah heard the voice saying, "Whom shall I send?" he did not wait for personal pressure, for the Lord to argue with him, or to urge him and make promises to him. His answer was worthy of the revelations which had preceded it, and of the touch of celestial fire which had come to him. It indicated the height, and depth, and length, and breadth of his consecration. Also the intensity

of his piety. There was no looking for excuses, no pleading his own inability, no suggesting that some body else could do better. So many characters break down here. Even Moses gave way at this point. He had been preserved alive, educated, filled with inspiration for many years, and God led him into deepest meditation and thought; yet when the hour came and God called him out of the burning bush, he was reluctant about going. How many of us break down at that point.

A harmony and unity with God had come into the soul of Isaiah so that his whole being was an echo of the Divine call. There is in the soul that God anoints the very elements of the commission inwrought in the very being. No one can really go unless he is the embodiment of the commission itself. Could Christ have been Christ and have been different from what He was? If He had loved less, if the conditions of soul had not been in Him which impelled Him to weep over Jerusalem and to weep at the grave of Lazarus, and to reach out His hands to touch the suffering and bring relief, and that made Him continue all night in prayer and pray on Calvary, "Father, forgive them," could He have been the Christ? If Paul had not had these same elements, in his measure, in his own soul could he have been the Apostle to the Gentiles? The fact that his soul was permeated with the Divine Spirit, and that it was the cry of his being, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," enabled him to be the great Apostle to the Gentiles.

No man can be the real messenger of the Lord and represent Him unless his spirit is so filled with the Divine Spirit that his will, desire, longing, and passion be one with Him. Here in Isaiah is this complete consecration to God and this perfect harmony and unity with Him that put his life with whatever resources or forces he might possess or that might come to him, into this his great life-mission. A consecration that never shrank, a faith in God that never staggered at His promises. A trust that all the whirlwinds and billows that were about him and that beat upon him could not move put Isaiah's family life into this great commission. He married a prophetess and named his children after the providences of God which were about him. This is the experience described in the song when we sing, "Since my eyes were fixed on Jesus, I've lost sight of all beside."

Look a moment at the close connection, the unity of the soul elements and the work done. It has the relation of cause and effect. I wish that I could uncover here today the spirit of the man, who, hearing the divine voice saying, "Who will go for us?" says, "Here am I, send me." The spirit of an Isaiah, a Paul, a Coke, or a Whitefield, that we might see the essential unity between the spirit of man and his work, the all-pervading Christliness that is in the spirit of His messenger.

I may not analyze a consecrated soul, sent by the Master or receiving all the time that fresh commission from Him which He pours forth to men, but I may look upon him and mark the streams as they flow. The attitude of

such a soul is toward the throne. His gaze is into the heavens. It seems to me a marvelous thing that the Lord Jesus Christ gazed so intently into the heavens. How often were His eyes upturned and the Father's name upon his lips. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "I and my Father are one." "I do the works of Him that sent me."

Often when He was about to do some of His great works, He gazed into the heavens. When He was about to heal one deaf and dumb, He looked up into heaven and sighed. When He stood at the grave of Lazarus and the stone had been taken away, He looked up and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me." He did not say it simply for Himself, but He pressed that hand of power which He always felt. He put His foot down anew upon the rock which was always there. And then with a new grasp upon that power He speaks, and all His utterances seem more in heaven than in earth. And it seems as if the power of a glance of His towards us is what it is because it has been so long turned towards the throne. His words to men are few but they shine, and glow, and burn because He wraps the human soul ever anew with the divine presence.

The depths of our gaze into heaven is the measure of our strength to do God's work. Nothing but the light and fire of the divine presence which comes along this soul-gaze into the heavens can so fuse the soul that it can burn up the drift-wood of worldliness and sin and pour its streams of power to save out among men. Our

organizations, our communions, our very work, becomes choked with the sand, drift-wood and rocks until the rivers of life are turned into new channels as rivers are turned out of their beds. It is strange how organizations tend to get choked with worldliness and the grace of God ever pushing catches the upturned gaze of men and women and opens through them new channels. We have come to the testing time. If the channels are kept open God's grace will continue to flow through us to men.

It was after Christ had gazed into the heavens through all the weary hours of the night that with the morning light the multitudes gathered about to hear the most wondrous words that ever vibrated in earthly atmosphere. Heaven has great surprises for us. Jesus Christ can make the fishes leap to the right side of the ship, and tips of fire turn the world upside down. We talk about activities in the Church of God. A man is never quite so active as when he is gathering into his bosom the lightnings which play around the throne.

There will be 40,000 sermons preached today in the churches of America, but little will be accomplished only where there is such gazing into heaven that Pentecostal fires come down.

This gazing into the heavens fills us with the Christly sympathy for men. As it was the heavenward look that filled the heart of Jesus with such unutterable longing for men, and filled His eyes with tears, so the heavenward gaze will fill man with the deepest sympathy for the lost and perishing. They measure the expected fruitfulness of

Egypt by the height of the Nile floods. You can measure the fruitfulness of a soul by the measure of this divine sympathy for men that he feels. If you think that this is all joy you make a great mistake. Humanity is reflected in the heavens and is seen there as nowhere else. As a man gazes up to the throne before which is the Lamb slain, he will see human needs, sorrows and woes as never before. There will come into his vision something of that awful aggregate of sin and need which Jesus bore in His life and in His death. He becomes so filled that to minister to the lowest, poorest, and meanest human being, and to lift him heavenward is an unspeakable delight.

My brethren, do you want to be filled with compassion? Do you want a measuring line to measure the deep needs of men? Men who have not the gospel. Do you want to feel how utter is the failure of human life that is Godless, so that you can gather into your bosom that part of my text which is an overflowing sympathy for men? Look into the heavens. Would you be not discouraged? Would you go out feeling that there is a remedy for human ills? Look into the heavens. I have seen the rivers of these lands flow a little way and lose themselves in the sand. So it will be with you unless the fountains of your life are in the heavens. The daughter of Caleb came and said, "Give me a blessing: for thou hast given me a southland; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs."

But there is in this a *going* as well. The going forth as the mission of God, proclaiming salvation in the name of

the Lord. Standing beside the needy and perishing and pointing them to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. This going for the Lord Jesus Christ seems to me to have a peculiar meaning. To go to them and lay our hands upon them and help and bless them with all of His love and tenderness.

There is something peculiar in the way that Jesus got near to men and touched them. How He laid His hands on the sick. How He took little children in His arms and blessed them. He put His fingers on the eyes of the blind. He touched the lepers. What does Jesus mean in this for us? He says, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart." Are we not to get near to men, as far as possible to get associated in their thinking and feeling, and with their need, that we may pour the life-giving streams of heaven into their souls?

O, my brethren, we are linked for a little time to this world, to the races of men, to these individual hearts. To us has come the privilege of gazing into the face of Jesus Christ and in turn to become a blessing to man. To us is given to build between the Cross and the Judgment. Let us build on the Rock with rock. There are long weary ages between the first utterance of "It is finished," and the last one when the cap-stone is brought forth.

Jesus says, "I send you forth to reap the harvests whereon ye bestowed no labor." O the labor of the Son of God! The labor of the waiting years wherein the work was so largely wrought out, the labor that carried so long the heavy load, the labor of Gethsemane and Calvary! I

have sown, I have broken up the hard ground and scattered the seed. The fruitful word has been planted. I send you to put in the sickles and reap. Go and show everywhere the signs which you have seen and felt, how that dead souls are made alive. Sin-sick spirits are healed. Satan is cast out of the souls of men and the gospel is preached unto the poor and needy.

FIDELITY IS BETTER THAN FRUIT

TEXT: And he said, Go and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed (Isaiah 6: 9, 10).

ISAIAH had been prepared to tell the truth of God. He had seen the Lord. The vision had dimmed his sight, but had tarried in it. He had seen his own need of heart cleansing. Had cried unto God in his need and the coal off the altar had been laid upon his lips, and the voice of God had declared in his inmost soul that his iniquity was cleansed and his sin purged. After this marvelous transformation the voice of God had been heard saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" and Isaiah said, "Here am I; send me." And the Lord sent him forth. His commission was given him and he went forth to carry it out. The commission is, "Go tell this people, Hearing ye shall hear but not understand, and seeing ye shall see but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat and their ears heavy. Smear their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn again and be healed." No commission more awful than this could be given. It seems

to me altogether probable that this commission did not come to Isaiah at once in all the fulness here stated. It seems to me that it would have been a moral impossibility for a young man with the vision of righteousness and love in his heart, fresh from the glory of a vision of the Lord, and with the throbbing of a heart newly cleansed with refining fire, to hear and take in such a commission. He could not have understood what it meant, and could hardly have gone forth to fulfill it. It seems to me to have been impossible for an infinitely loving Father to have given such a commission in its entirety to a young, loving, earnest, eager servant. The same Spirit which led Jesus to say, "I have many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now," would have kept the dear Father from pouring such a commission in its entirety upon this youthful prophet.

And yet it only needs a little longer gaze and a little more steady thought to see how it was given and how true it was, and is, forever. Let us refer just a moment to Isaiah's call. He was prepared for his work by a clear vision of the truth and the touch of fire upon his lips. He was called to stand for God, to declare the will of God. He was not called to succeed as the world counts success, he was not called to popularity. He was called to find his work in being true to God, to find his success in the divine favor, to do God's work for God's sake, and leave his work and himself in God's hands.

This is Christian devotion and service. Many of us are such children that we have to be petted with success.

We must have the following and acclaim of the multitude. Sometimes, governed in our course by public sentiment, some of us look to results rather than to God.

The divine voice is our guide and not the voice of the multitude. Our reward is the divine favor—that we did what God would have us do. To do that is the greatest possible success. The great pattern is beyond our vision and comprehension. We work upon an isolated piece, which, of itself may mean little, but when put into the great plan it will have its appropriate place. This same fact was true of Jesus Himself—though the Chief Cornerstone He was considered a stone of stumbling. So our work may be trampled under feet of men, but it will have its place at last.

It is ours to learn the will of God, to listen intently to the utterances of His Word and to the voice of His Spirit, and to do His will earnestly, lovingly, trustingly, knowing that results are in His hands. Divine favor and approval are to you and to me the very best possible results. Christ's "well done" is infinitely more than all else.

What was Isaiah's commission as here written? "Go to this people, say, Hear ye, indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not." Isaiah wrote this history some time after he was first sent and evidently embraces in it not only the message of truth which he was to utter, the proclamation of the divine will, but the effects of that message upon those to whom it came. When he wrote this he was still in the midst of the struggle. He is proclaiming to them God's way of safety through right-

eousness by faith in Him. He is warning them against every other hope. He is seeing them turn away from his message, disregarding the will. The truth he brings makes their rebellious hearts harder. Jesus, as He drew near the end of His ministry, found Himself confronted by the same fact. Paul also, after presenting the truth to the Jews at Rome, cried out, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Neither of them spoke of it as an isolated instance. That truth blinds the eyes of men and hardens the hearts of those who will not be loyal to it, is a fact that not only Isaiah, and Paul, and the Great Teacher Himself have found to be true, but that every one who has gone forth with the words of eternal truth to proclaim in the ears of men has also learned. The fire which melts the gold and silver makes the clay harder. The truth which melts and refines the loyal, truthful spirit, hardens into intense hardness the heart that rejects it.

The Word of God has not only a saving power, but even in its gentlest pleadings, and purest gospels, even from the mouth of Him who came not to condemn but to save, has a judicial, a hardening, condemning power. When God's servant—His real prophet—stands up to proclaim

His Word, we know his power is very great. Truth itself is mighty. He is panoplied by the Holy Ghost. The Mediator stands pleading that the hearer make the truth his own; but there are other forces at work in that assembly, and there is a perversity in the hearts of men, a perversity which comes from the inherited trend and tendency to evil and disloyalty to God which misunderstands His simplest signs and misconstrues His plainest utterances.

And then I have not a virgin soil in which to cast the seed. It is full of seed already sown. No preacher of righteousness can cast the seed into an unoccupied heart. How full the heart is already at his coming! There is a life back of every face we look into—a life which we cannot see, but which has been growing stronger every day. It is a plant which is deeply rooted and which sends out its fibrous life through every part. It does not make so much difference what I say or with what unction I say it. It does not make so much difference how strong the tides of spiritual power roll about you, this life holds you. You sway in the tempest, you are moved, somewhat, but the winds pass over you and you straighten up as you were before—no, not altogether, the old life is stronger than ever, in you and over you.

This old life in you is willing you shall be amused, interested, that your sensibilities shall be stirred, but when it comes to your life being changed by these utterances it stretches out its fibrous life through twenty, thirty, or forty years of habit and holds you as with an iron chain. There is a life in you which, so far as you are concerned, is more

powerful over your life than is the gospel. I have seen a great forest and the tempest sweeping over it. I have seen the great trees bend before a great movement in that forest. When it had passed nearly all stood as before. Possibly not all, here and there a tree which had yielded to the arms of the wind and gone down.

And yet the gospel will not be without influence upon you. If it does not win you, you will be stronger in sin. If it does not melt you it will harden you. If it can not illuminate you and fill you with the divine beauty, it will blind your eyes and fill you with darkness.

If the songs of divine joy may not be heard they will roll on in their glory until the ear be deaf. It is in this sense that God says to Isaiah "make them deaf and blind, harden their hearts lest they be converted."

Let me this morning, emphasize this universal law. That the infinitely tender gospel of the loving God carries with it, necessarily, a moving, transforming, glorifying power to those who accept it; and a blinding, hardening power to those who reject it. What its effect shall be upon us is decided by our own will, and is strongly influenced by our habits. In looking at this matter this morning a few things impress me. One is the mysterious glory of life. A German author says, "To me also has come the mysterious glory of being alive." To be alive with a free will; with the sun of truth shining above me in meridian splendor; with the infinite Spirit pressing the doors of my being that they may be opened, and that eternal truth and love come in and fill my being with the light

and glory of heaven: and at the same time a perversity in me that would lock and bar the door, close every window, shut the blinds, pull down the curtains, shutting out that light and love. My character, my destiny, my all, depends upon my own free choice of light or darkness, purity or corruption, harmony with God or dissonance with Him and all that it means.

I see also how much of Christian life is necessarily made up of struggle against the powers of darkness and the conditions of society which sin has brought about. And so far as seeming success is concerned, it is an unavailing struggle. I have already said that we are not called unto success, but the writing out of this whole commission comes not all at once. Isaiah had heard and experienced the blessed facts of salvation and realized that the same experiences were for his fellows. He went forth with the vision glowing in his soul, and the touch of fire upon his lips, to tell to men the new word, the new experience. Of men accepting it he had no question. That it would burn and glow in human experiences and fill the land he had no doubt. He was an optimist, and why should he not be? has he not seen the king? has not the Lord high and lifted up appeared to him? had he not seen his own need in the light of His face? and had not the live coal been taken from the sacred altar and been placed upon his lips? and had not the divine voice said, "Thine iniquity is cleansed and thy sin is purged"? That word which he had heard had been his experience.

But what a disappointed man Isaiah was! Many of us

have gone forth as Isaiah went, with our souls filled with the heavenly vision, and with the precious touch of the live coal on our lips; feeling, I have fire enough in my bosom to burn up the sins of the world, and light enough to shine away the darkness, and triumph enough to break down opposition and prejudice, and to capture the strongholds and bring them into captivity to Jesus Christ. And we too have found that prejudice grew stronger as we poured out our love upon it, and that our prayers and tears and testimonies only made the defences stronger. And instead of men yielding to the word of the Lord baptized with atoning blood and saturated with our prayers and tears and experiences, they grew harder and more rebellious against God. How often have I for a moment grown sick at heart and faint of spirit. The very ones I thought would stand closest to me, and by their confidence, prayers, and testimony, by their unworldliness and faith help to scale the walls, or shout the victory until the walls would fall down, have turned away, grown formal, or have driven their arrows through my soul until my spirit has quivered with unutterable pain.

I love the cause of Christ with an intensity begotten of the fire off heaven's altar. It drew me from my home in early youth. It has increased and strengthened and become more fervent as the days have gone by. My antagonism to worldliness and formality and earth-seeking becomes more and more intense. My soul looks up to God for heights and depths of anointings such as my earlier ministry knew nothing about; but yet I am continually be-

ing disappointed in the results of my own ministry. As I wait in the armory of divine truth, as I enter into the cloud of the Divine Presence, as my mind is filled with Divine light, as I feel the unction and power in my soul, I feel as if I can level the mountains and fill up the valleys until the highway is prepared for the triumphant coming of my King. And I come forth and pour out my message, lay my hands, stained with the blood of His hands, upon the hearts of men, plead with them to come to God, point to that Cross, the hope of men,

“Oh, the Cross has wondrous glory!

Oft I've proved this to be true;”

I point to that Cross and say, “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world!” I point to that heaven the home of those saved by the power of the Cross. And thus when I have done all and looked to see the people enter in and be blest and be saved, I so often see that the most of them remain as they were, like a rock washed by the ocean, the wave passes over it and it remains in the same place. Nay, not altogether like the rock, but harder and more hopeless than ever.

How often after a week of study and prayer, and preaching from house to house, I come to my pulpit full of this great message, hearing so distinctly the voice of the Master saying, “Lo, I am with you,” and at night go to my bed saying, “O, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” Every Christian knows something of what this means. It is a

part of that which we are permitted to bear in filling full His sufferings. But all this is not altogether without compensation to us. It settles us down upon the everlasting Rock. It deepens our piety. It shuts us up to God. He becomes to us the Alpha and Omega. It leads us, yea, it compels us to draw the mantle about us and look up and see Jesus only.

Our piety is all too shallow. How possible that in the last analysis you may find your motives and ends are selfish. God, who makes all things work together for our good, makes even these untoward circumstances to draw us nearer to His bosom, and to enable us to learn how supremely sweet and blessed is His approval.

What seems to the world success, seems to me to mean less and less. Divine approval of spirit and work seems more and more. I would rather be without success as far as men and angels can see and have for my reward the Divine approval than to have all success for a reward. Isaiah did not have success as far as the people were concerned. They sought help from Egypt, or put their trust in the Assyrians. But he succeeded in standing for God, in being true to his commission.

The great thing for the Church today is to be true to God. Isaiah's life was not a failure. God's plans are wider than our plans. Isaiah's life was a magnificent success because of his fidelity to God. This world could better afford to be without the life of every king and emperor and general and president that ever lived, than without Isaiah's life. There are untold multitudes of people in every coun-

try whose history dies with them just because they were not true to God. They seek their own success, seek their own lives and lose them.

But Isaiah's life was the sweetest success even to himself, finding in his early life the incoming glory. True, he had his disappointments, but these brought him into such close and clear touch with God. The Divine glory so enlarged his thought and filled his heart that the breath of God swept his being as the breezes sweep an æolian harp. His vision was so cleared, his ears were made so acute that God could talk to him and visions of divinest beauty and glory could sweep his soul.

One thing he never lost sight of—*some* hear his voice, *some* are saved. His eye was on the remnant. Fidelity to God will not go wholly without fruit. Some will hear the truth. Some will see the dying Lamb.

RIGHTEOUSNESS IN POLITICS

TEXT: And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz the son of Jotham, the son of Uzziah, the king of Judah, that Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah, king of Israel, went up toward Jerusalem to war against it, but could not prevail against it. And it was told the house of David, saying, Syria is confederate with Ephraim. And his heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved with the wind. Then said the Lord unto Isaiah, Go forth now to meet Ahaz, thou, and She-ar-jash-ub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field; and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, Ephraim, and the son of Remaliah, have taken counsel against thee, saying, Let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Tabeal: Thus saith the Lord God, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. For the head of Syria in Damascus is Rezin; and within three score and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people. And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is Remaliah's son. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established (Isaiah 7: 1-9).

AS we regard things, the known world, the world that makes up the history of those times was not very large in Isaiah's day, but it was large enough to take in most of the great questions along the line of which the world has had to contend through all the ages.

Over yonder on the east was Assyria and Babylon, Babylon being held as a province. On the south was Egypt and Ethiopia, the powers of which were about balanced in Isaiah's day. Nearer, on the northeast was Damascus. Closer still was Samaria or Ephraim, Phœnicia, and Philistine cities between Phœnicia and the mouth of the Nile. Moab and Edom were to the southeast. Jerusalem was somewhat out of the great highway of the nations, and not sufficiently rich to especially attract the avarice of the great nations, and being sufficiently strong to resist any ordinary attack seemed tolerably secure. But Damascus and Samaria had made a coalition against Judah, an unnatural coalition it would seem. They came to make war on Jerusalem and the hearts of Ahaz and his people were moved as the trees of the wood in the wind. And the Lord said unto Isaiah, "Go forth now to meet Ahaz . . . and say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted," etc. Hitherto Isaiah had been engaged with his own experiences, his own preparations, the facts of his great commission and the questions of the religious life and morality of his people. He is now called of God to touch the political questions as they affected his people. To touch them with a reverent, godly hand, and to apply to them the great principles of right-

eousness and faith in God. No man is fit to deal with the great questions which affect the lives, the homes and the destiny of men, who has no higher vision than the policy of an hour. In all great questions, not the last thing to be considered is, is it right? The higher law can not be eradicated from politics, nor so far removed from the ballot box as to justify conscienceless voting. The higher law has a way of making itself felt. It is not quite a generation since it was jeered at in the American congress, but was written too deep to be thus put aside.

Who cares most for the people and their interests? Those who believe in the higher law, or those who slight and reject it? It is those who believe that God cares for the widow and the orphan and will avenge their wrongs. Those who believe that God means it when He said, "Woe to him that putteth his bottle to his neighbor's lips." This cry against the prophets of God having anything to do with the great questions which involve the welfare of the people is as old as the Church of God. It has been a sore difficulty with the time-serving and self-seeking politicians that eternal righteousness should be preached right across their pathway. Old Ahab resented Elijah's preaching. Some of you are old enough to remember back to the days before the Civil War. How strenuously it was insisted on that the pulpit should not meddle with politics. My first baptism of persecution was for preaching against slavery. And the first time that my life was ever seriously threatened was for preaching the duty of men to uphold the government. The men who are opposed to

the destruction of the liquor traffic have from the time the conflict assumed serious proportions taken up the same strain. This battle in which we are engaged is only a part of the great battle against the liquor traffic. This war to break down the law is not in the interest of temperance. The men who advocate it are not known as apostles of temperance in any sense. They may try to cover themselves with the pretense of seeking the suppression of the traffic. There has not been in the last ten years a conflict on this question but that the liquor league has tried to cover up its work by an appeal for the interests of the dear people, and the great fear that the flood-gates of intemperance would be opened wide. Have these men ever tried to stop the traffic? Have they given their personal influence? Have they been willing to give us the information they profess to have? License is not today a temperance measure. The first thing in this business is free whisky, then license, then high license. It is the last ditch of the liquor power. What these men desire is license. That is, the open sale of liquor at public bars for which the city shall receive a revenue. The specious argument which is set forth, by which they hope to break down our laws is that this is in the interest of temperance. They say it will be sold any way. They advertise to us that they will not help us to prevent it. They tell us that it is the duty of the friends of the law to enforce it. They have thrown many barriers in the way of its enforcement. Have tried to make public sentiment against its enforcement in the daily press, and in other ways. They

have discouraged and in some cases, scandalously abused the agents by whom the nefarious business has been tracked to its hiding places. But notwithstanding all this effort to make odious and break down the law, there has been a good degree of success attained in its enforcement. Doubtless, it might have been complete if the men who now put themselves forward as the patrons of temperance had given as much influence to uphold the law as they have given directly and indirectly to the law breakers.

If it has not been fully enforced the failure lies at the door of these men who are seeking now to do away with the law so they can step in and show you what can be done in the temperance line by themselves. Let them mend their ways and show themselves as on the side of law, before they are entrusted with the sacred duty of making and enforcing the laws.

Let us see what they propose. They are in favor of license—high license if you please. Evidently not so high as to prohibit, but so high, I presume (for I would give them all the credit I can) that but few could pay it. How they would adjust it I don't know, but say that a few of the richest might pay it. I was never in favor of monopolies and I always regarded this whisky monopoly as no better than any other. Nothing just to a poor man in it. The only just way for a city to farm out the liquor business is for the city fathers to make an estimate of what the business is worth, and what share it will have in it to pay the extra police, for extra jail accommodations, and for the extra poverty that is to be pro-

duced, and then say to the citizens, "We think that if the whisky business is carried on in this city we must have so much pay, and it does not matter to us how few or how many engage in it. We want to give every man a chance. Let all who desire to go into the business report to us and the amount needed will be divided among the number who wish to engage in the business and that will be the license fee."

But a saloon is a saloon, no matter whether it pays five dollars or five hundred dollars for the privilege of being such. A saloon can not be a financial profit to a people. Any court in the land can testify to that fact. But they argue that Pasadena is injured financially by refusing to sell to the traveling public. That the traveling public avoid us because they are so very dry, and we will not sell them the especial luxury of our wines. This is regarded by some at least of the traveling public as a slander upon those who come to this land. It is well known that it has not thus far been the policy of those who have sought the absence of the saloons to prevent respectable hotels from serving wine to their guests at the table. And now strange as it may seem this very fact is laid hold of to defeat the law, they are trying to show that it is of no value—plainly showing one thing, i. e., that it is not the privilege to serve wine they want, but to break down the law and bring back the saloon. In my judgment scarcely a greater financial calamity could befall Pasadena.

But why not modify the law? The law can not be

modified without destroying it. The question which confronts us is: Shall we sustain the law as it is, or shall we have legalized open saloons? Shall we put men into office who believe in reducing the liquor traffic to its minimum, or those who would license it, pamper it and make it a matter of revenue?

But these gentlemen especially urge economy and seem to blame the prohibition ordinance for all the mistakes real or supposed that the council has committed in the past three or four years. I wonder if it has been the cause of all the mistakes that these gentlemen have made in their own business. As far as I know the very things for which they blame the council were urged upon them by these very parties. We are all in favor of economy, but it seems to be taken for granted that nobody but those who favor license are in favor of economy.

But the Lord said to Isaiah, "Take your son with you." In settling this drink question you can not leave out your son. There are some things that stare you in the face as we go to the ballot box to vote—the mothers and the children. Is there a woman who is a wife and mother, or a loyal sister who has brothers who would have a saloon opened in Pasadena? When Jesus was here He took a little child and set him in the midst of them and said, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." No offence has ever come to the childhood of this land like the open saloon. The Lord directs Isaiah to

encourage Ahaz by a reference to who his enemies are. One is Syria, the head of which is Damascus, the head of which is Rezin. The other is Samaria, the head of which is Remaliah's son. He says that they are the tail of two smoking firebrands.

Who are these men who oppose us? Are they the men who have discouraged liquor drinking? Or who have shown such love of sobriety and righteousness that they should be made the conservators of the people's weal? What are the elements which are united against us, seemingly diverse? One says we drive the people away because they can get nothing to drink. The other says that more liquor is sold than ever before. These are but the tails of the smoking firebrand of the whole land. One cry is that business is destroyed and property interests disregarded and the land made desolate by these fanatics. The other is, these are the enemies of mankind because they have opened the flood-gates of intemperance. You can see the flickering smoke of these two whisky firebrands clearly here in this effort.

Isaiah was to encourage Ahaz to trust in the Lord. No politician will see clearly the real interests of our country, or city, and how to serve them while he is looking through an upturned liquor glass. Real ability has a circumference wider than a liquor goblet.

They say that we do not want men of one idea, but we do want men whose minds are large enough to take in this great interest of the people as well as other interests. Men who neither through ignorance, nor prejudice, nor

subserviency to the liquor traffic will sell the real substantial interests of the country to that Satanic power.

Isaiah encouraged the king that if he was true to God and to his people that his enemies should not prevail. No great reform is established without conflict, nor maintained without great effort. Let there be the high concentration of steady feeling which comes from loyalty to God and the highest good of the people. Let heart be joined to heart in prayer. Let hand be joined with hand in effort. Let wives inform their husbands, and children their fathers. Let fathers, brothers, and sons vote for God and home.

THE PRINCE OF FOUR NAMES .

TEXT: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this (Isaiah 9: 6, 7).

I HAVE stood beside a great river and have seen its moving waters and have heard its murmur as it flowed on toward the sea. And I have stood beside the same river when the sea, moving in its great tides, was pouring itself into the river, filling all its banks.

I stand today beside the open sepulchre of the risen Christ. I hear the murmur of this stream of prophecy flowing slowly through eight hundred years, on towards the sea. I can not help but think how many have drunk of its waters and been buried beside it. But as I wait today I hear the swell of the great ocean pouring itself back into this river until the stream to its first springs is filled with the waters from the ocean of its fulfillment. We can not read this prophecy simply in the light which Isaiah had, but in the light which shines upon the plains of Bethlehem when the angels sing. We read it under

the shadow of Calvary, and in the light of the angel's face as he sits upon the stone rolled back from the door of the sepulchre. In the light of the tongues of fire which glowed in that upper room. We must read it in the midst of the kingdom of God with two thousand years builded upon the Corner Stone.

So as the great sea of fulfillment flows back into these words, I read them again this morning: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." We do not linger today in Bethlehem to gaze upon the new-born King, although we never forget the manger-cradle and the scenes that gather about it. We shall never forget the light from heaven as the eternal God spoke in recognition of His only begotten Son. Neither do we go over the facts of His resurrection. He was born into the world, and His grave is empty, and He is crowned King of kings, and Lord of lords.

What I desire today is to look upon Him, to see His glory and feel His power. These are evidently divinely given names by which He was to be known, and which were the designation of His character. They tell of what He is and what He does. They tell, dimly tell, and shadow forth the Lord of glory.

Wonderful, Counsellor.—In our version the word *Wonderful* stands alone as a name. That of itself would be an appropriate name. He is the One of wondrous birth, works, utterances, sorrow, suffering, glory. If I could come to you this morning and set Him forth as He is and you could take it in how wonderful it would be.

It seems to me that the better rendering is that this

is an adjective of the next word; that these two words stand together as one name, *Wonderful Counsellor*. And in this respect the dear Lord is presented to us with peculiar force. This word counsellor has a wide range of meaning. One who counsels, advises, directs, teaches. It carries one back into a man's thoughts. A man counsels with himself.

Whenever you come into the presence of the Son of man in one of those moments when He seems to be communing with Himself, when His thought is going out along the lines of His work, or His soul is gazing into the heavens; and there is any utterance of His thought, it is always wonderful. You remember when He healed that paralytic in the porch at Bethesda on the Sabbath day. They persecuted Him and sought to slay Him and Jesus was driven back upon Himself, He did not argue with the people, He seems absorbed in a great thought and finally says, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." "For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel." What a wonderful train of thought. You remember when Jesus sat weary on the well curb a woman came and He asks her for a drink. She answers, "How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." He is about to speak, but how His

thoughts roll back upon Himself, and out to men, and up to heaven, and when He spake, what a revelation of wondrous thought, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."

As He stands at the grave of Lazarus there is a pause, a moment of waiting, the thoughts and emotions of His soul are sweeping like billows through His being. He opens the curtains of His lips to utter just this word, "Father, I know that thou hearest me always." How high the crest of that thought, how much deeper than the grave it reaches. So on almost every page of His wonderful life there are given us glimpses of the counsel of His own soul, and they are always *Wonderful*. But when He brings His thought, His knowledge, His vision of truth to bear in direct counsel to inspire the hearts and minds of men, to direct their footsteps and shape their destiny, then the wonderfulness of His counsel becomes more startling. There are many occasions when under different circumstances He especially taught men. He followed lines of thought, He seized hold of circumstances and surroundings in order to make Himself understood. He made clear didactic statements which are so vast in their scope, and which so reflect the eternities in their bosom, that the more one gazes into them the more he must say, "*Wonderful Counsellor!*"

He so seized upon history, He so wove the sensitive threads of allegory, He so used the common life of the

common people, He so filled all these avenues with infinite thought and wisdom, He poured into them such a pathos of heavenly tenderness and love, that no one can study them enough to begin to lay hold of them without exclaiming, "Wonderful Counsellor"

Man needs comfort, help and blessedness. The human soul is longing, struggling after blessedness. One bright beautiful morning He had been all night in prayer and the multitude early pressed upon Him and He opened those lips so touched with celestial glory, and that mind so filled with God's own thought, and counselled the people, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven." O *Wonderful Counsellor*, Thou bringest us so into the light of heaven.

I never cease to wonder at Jesus' teachings along the lines of social science. How amid all the deep, dark labyrinths into which the world had fallen, He brought out that one great law of love, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." And, when asked who is our neighbor, that He should have destroyed all lines, barriers, distances

and differences, and pressed the needy, the suffering, the perishing, up closest to us. And did it all in that marvelous story of the man who fell among thieves, which not only teaches all this, but rings itself with heavenly melody into the soul, where it continues to ring in sweetest music the divinest truth. And then this Wonderful Teacher puts supreme social ethics into a sentence, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

When He looked out upon the great work to be done by His followers, He said, "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." And when He lingered on the border of the two worlds, and was contemplating so many things that pertained to the world, especially to His disciples, and He desired to counsel them not only about their work, but about their departure, as He would point them in the pathway beyond the river, the way through the jewelled gates and along the street beside the river and towards the throne; but as He thinks, He seems to stop and say to Himself they can not see the pathway if I point it out. I will do something better than that, and turning to them He says, "I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

I should not pass from this without referring to the fact that Counsellor, has the meaning of "Advocate." That in this sense also is He the Wonderful Counsellor. He has undertaken our case and that if we will trust Him, and

be obedient unto Him, He will be responsible for its success.

And now come these other names, names which at least try to uncover to us His infinite character, and to reveal to us His eternal existence. Words, which, if it were possible, would tell us of His boundless ministry. It is because I saw that I could not really enter upon their discussion that I lingered so long in the first part.

There is in each one of them a boundless theme. I can speak only of two thoughts, and scarcely more than mention these. One is the Deity of the world's Redeemer. The other is His marvelous reign of peace in the hearts and lives of men. The whole life, death and resurrection, and the nineteen hundred years of personal ministry on the earth pours itself through the empty sepulchre back into these words this morning.

That Jesus Christ is very God is the prime fact of the Christian religion. If that is a fact, then all the other facts of our religion stand. Then the work which He proposes to do will be done and the promises which He made will be fulfilled. Then the death of that human body and the bitter agony of that Soul on the Cross are not in vain. Then the deep, awful utterance, that He tasted death for every man, stands true. Then the Atonement for human sin and guilt abideth forever. Then the preaching of the gospel is not an empty sound. Then ye have not believed in vain. Then it is true that the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin. Then this Son of God spoke truth when He said, "He that eateth

my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him."

That Jesus Christ is very God is the only way to account for Him. One so pure, so unselfish, so gentle, so loving, so holy, so heavenly minded, who claimed unity and equality with the Father, and who died to attest that claim. One who spake as never man spake, who rebuked the winds and the waves; who rebuked the evil spirits and they fled away, who touched the eyes of the blind and the vision returned; who rebuked disease and even stood at the grave of the dead and said, "Come forth," and was obeyed; and who came forth from the grave and went up on high. He who while He tabernacled among us forgave sins, established holiness, founded an empire of truth. He of whom it has been well said that He is the holiest among the mighty and the mightiest among the holy; whose pierced hands have lifted the gates of empire from their hinges and established a kingdom of righteousness. The only way to account for Him is that He is God.

I stand beside this open sepulchre today to proclaim the marvelous fact attested in a thousand ways, that this Christ is God-man, the world's Redeemer, our Savior. He was wounded for our transgressions and by His stripes we are healed.

And then, He is *The Prince of Peace*. He unites in perfect harmony the human to the Divine nature. In that process He remakes men. Cleanses and transforms the human soul until it is in perfect harmony with God. And,

more than that, He brings them into closest fellowship and unity. Did you ever really think in reference to that wonderful expression, "Let the peace of God fill your minds and hearts," and "My peace I give unto you"?

HOLINESS AND CIVIC RIGHTEOUSNESS

TEXT: Wherefore hear the word of the Lord, ye scornful men, that rule this people which is in Jerusalem. Because ye have said, We have made a covenant with death, and with hell are we at agreement, when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, it shall not come unto us: for we have made lies our refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves: Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. Judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place. And your covenant with death shall be disannulled, and your agreement with hell shall not stand: when the overflowing scourge shall pass through, then ye shall be trodden down by it" (Isaiah 28: 14-18).

RECENTLY, at a meeting of the pastors and others of this county, in this city, the pastors of the various churches were invited to call the attention of the people to the great crime of the age—the liquor traffic—on this the last Sabbath of April. It is so often done in this church that we the more readily comply with this request.

As to the measureless iniquity of the liquor traffic, the aggregated wickedness against God and man, there is little

disagreement. All know that it is a consuming blight, bringing mildew and decay to every beautiful thing it touches. Turning joy to sorrow, and hope to despair wherever it comes, emptying out, driving away prosperity, plenty, health and love, to bring in poverty, want, sickness and hate. In the old time the question was asked, "Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?" And it was answered, "They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine." It is the same today, only wine has blossomed out with hellish ferocity into every fiery thing, and the results are intensified. The liquor traffic seduces the young, insiduously attacks unformed character, sets its death-traps for unwary feet; despoils the home, robs womanhood and childhood of their rights, and is deaf to their cry, and crushes out their hopes and lives. It takes away all nobility from every man it touches. It blights every beautiful thing in human life, dethrones the intellect, blasts the heart, destroys the life and damns the soul. There is not a thing it touches but that it crushes it into blackness and despair. It eats up the wealth of the people, saps their health, weakens their intellect, dethrones the kingly power of volition, often even making man lower than the brutes.

It is that of which you can say no good thing, which has no righteous defense, which is only evil and that continually. It is the promoter of all kinds of criminality. For the hope of gain it would spread ruin everywhere and despoil every beautiful thing. It is by common consent a

thief, a murderer, a robber, an assassin, a frightful outlaw in all civilization.

There is nothing known among men so merciless, so cruel, so destructive, so damning as the liquor traffic. It has long been recognized that the places of its sale are "slaughter pens" and those who deal in it are "poisoners general" of the people. It is a thing which, it would seem, it would be the intention of every decent man to hate, and which demands the skill and strength of every man to kill. This long, sad, fearful, tragic text permeated with but one ray of light and hope is in reference to the drunkards of Ephraim, and the national guilt pertaining thereto.

The priest and the prophet have been caused to err in vision and stumble in judgment through strong drink. They accuse Isaiah of being a crank on this subject, never letting it alone. Precept upon precept, line upon line, here a little and there a little. But Isaiah says, "God will speak. You call me a stammerer, ever going over and over with these common-places. God will stammer so you will understand."

Isaiah said to them, "You say you have an arrangement made. That you are sharp and have outwitted God. You have found a place of rest. You have found deliverances through your diplomacy. You have outwitted Assyria, and are too sharp for Egypt. You will loll in your drunkenness and wallow in your debauchery and abide." Then he tells them what God said. He represents these liquor interests to be saying so long what is so pre-eminently true in this day, "We have made a covenant with death,

and with hell are we at agreement." If there ever was a "covenant with death and an agreement with hell" it is the attitude of the controlling forces of society in regard to the liquor traffic in this country.

Nothing which ever lifted its head where the light of Christian truth made things luminous was so abominable as the licensing of this atrocious crime. Giving standing and opportunity under the law to the sum and aggregation of all criminality. As of old, it makes lies its refuge, and under falsehood it hides itself.

The Lord showed Isaiah that the problem was deeper than drunkenness. That drunkenness was the sore on the surface, the breaking out on the skin, while the disease was in the blood. He especially calls attention to the attitude of the priest and the prophet, to whom so largely was given the keeping of the conscience of the people. They erred in vision, they stumbled in judgment. Here seems to be the fountain of the great evil. The blood disease is the absence of holiness, and the cause is in the moral fountains of the nation.

We are trying to make less saloons, closing up one here and there. It is like rubbing vaseline on some of the sores of a man who has the smallpox. *We* believe in and work for prohibitory legislation. I am thankful for the prohibition party. It gives an opportunity for a Christian man to express his convictions at the ballot box. I believe in what so many churches have declared, "that the sale of liquor as a beverage can not be licensed without sin," and

believing that I can not vote with a whiskey soaked party, under the domination of the liquor business.

It is this error in vision and stumbling in judgment that is the fountain of the difficulty today. Occasionally the priest and prophet in General Assemblies and General Conferences, climb up to the mount of vision, and under the pressure of the world's gaze rise to justness in judgment and utter the truth, but they come down without bringing the mountain down with them, and at once enter into a covenant with death and an agreement with hell.

That judgments have not yet fallen upon the land on account of this terrible and continued villainy, the smoke of whose fires surely fills the nostrils of the God of righteousness, is a matter for great thanksgiving. Of course much of the results of poverty, crime, sorrow and death have come. The wreck of manhood and of homes, the untold agony and untimely deaths have been a great price to pay for our sin. That 100,000 men recruited from the boys go down to drunkard's graves every year with untold sorrow and despair, is surely a blighting scourge.

The tide of drunkenness which rolls over the land bears with it a tide of agony untold and untellable, which stifles memory and blots out hope. It forbids us to look back, it forbids us to look forward, and draws its mantle of darkness closer and closer about us.

The pressure and the agony are very great, but perhaps the iniquity is not yet full. God will find a way to hurl it to the ground and grind it to powder. God will find a way to destroy the destroyer. He will lay judgment to

the line, and righteousness to the plummet. The covenant with death He will disannul, and the agreement with hell He will break up. How, I may not know. The hail that sweepeth away the refuge of lies, and the waters that overflow the hiding places and the scourge that treadeth down, I do not know, but God has the forces in His own hands. The surprises of history are very great. Pride, power and wickedness have been hurled down together in a day when the Lord has risen up. He found a way to deal with the giants in sin, and to blot out slavery. He will find a way to blot out this darker crime as His people cry day and night unto Him.

In the mean time what is our duty? There is one peculiarity about this utterance of the Word of God. Right between the confession of these drunkards of Ephraim that they had made a covenant with death and an agreement with hell and the statement of the Lord that He will lay judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet and that the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies; right between these, He says, "therefore, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation; he that believeth shall not make haste." There is that which in God's order precedes the breaking up of this covenant, and that is the laying in Zion for a foundation a stone, a precious corner stone; and those who are believers, build upon it. And whosoever shall be so united to Him "shall not make haste," or be ashamed or counfounded. Who shall not fear nor flee. What does

this mean? Recognize the awful curse with which we have to deal, but preach Jesus Christ.

We are something more than politicians. We are something more than dealers in moral suasion. We ally ourselves with the almightiness of God, and preach Jesus Christ. Political action is as uncertain as the weathervane. It moves with the wind of public sentiment. To get abiding righteous conditions we must go down to the foundations. We must build upon the Rock of Ages. There is but one way to roll back the fearful tide of the liquor curse and save this country, and that is to meet it with the Cross. To lay deep and wide the foundations of that holiness which the blood of Jesus Christ brings.

Before the battle, that will sweep away this curse like a tornado, is really on, the public conscience has to be aroused to a depth and intensity which nothing can accomplish but that Holy Spirit, who, when He comes, convinces men of sin and of righteousness and of judgment. An appeal to the Church of today is futile because it is already worldly, and seeks the favor and the emoluments of the world. It has turned its back upon the foe. The Church of today is already disgraced before heaven and earth in this battle. Having bows, they have turned back and thrown away their bows in the day of conflict. How is this country to be saved? I fully believe that there is to be but one way, and that is to lay this corner stone anew. The cry of John the Baptist must go up again, "Behold the the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." The army must be reformed on a basis of experience that

knows no fear or compromise. There must be a blood-washed army of holy men and women who fear God and hate evil, who can neither be cajoled nor bought. The Huguenots, Cromwell's Ironsides, and the Anti-slavery Crusaders are our fore-runners. But the time has come when it needs a clearer vision and a stronger faith, and a more perfect spiritual discernment even than that our predecessors had. We come nearer the close of the dispensation, when the battle will rage sore, when it is especially against principalities and powers in high places. We are especially in a dark hour when the knights errant are few. When men value an ass's head more than a child's heart. Jesus, today sets the little child in the midst of our legislators and city councils, and they say, "Let the Devil take the child, it is the gold coin we are after." And the multitude of the people say, "Amen." Every vote cast for the licensing of the saloon thunders, "amen," to the covenant with death.

What are we to do? Get nigh unto God, take shelter under His wings of might, feel after and find the pillars of His strength. Get into the pavilion of His holiness. The way of battle just now is by way of the throne. The way to make voters for God is by way of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in awakening, saving and sanctifying power. God can depend upon a holy man to go into a voting booth and vote against the saloon. What we must have is a great, deep, wide and mighty revival of righteousness.

England was saved from the darkness and blood of the

revolution that swept over France by the preaching of holiness by John Wesley and his coadjutors.

This country, if saved from the overwhelming curse and disaster to which the liquor traffic is dooming it, will be saved by a mighty wave of righteousness coming down through the Cross of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ saving and sanctifying men and women and lifting them into the clear light and power of God, who will bring on the battle, and will have no compromise, but will move heaven and earth until this covenant with death and agreement with hell is swept from us.

THE JOY AND ASSURANCE OF FULL SALVATION

TEXT: *"In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength"* (Isaiah 24: 1-4).

WRECK and ruin, exile and poverty, slavery and suffering had come to Israel. It is difficult, perhaps impossible for us to realize what captivity and slavery meant to the Jews. We know very well its cause. Being God's people, peculiarly favored with truth and light, with manifestations of His presence and revelations of His will, enjoying His peculiar favor and blessing, they virtually forgot Him and yielded to the pagan influences about them. They sought to be like other nations, sought after their gods and corrupted themselves with their idolatries. Though they kept up the forms of worship, yet their hearts were not in it. After repeated warnings they were given over to their enemies and carried away into captivity. It was not a race of barbarians, without refined feelings, and who had never known anything better, but cultured, refined men and women driven from homes of luxury, to be driven as cattle, beaten,

insulted, enslaved, with their lives only given and that a prey. They were driven barefoot and uncovered across the deserts and over the mountains, away to the Euphrates to be slaves or to subsist as best they could. The land was utterly emptied and the exiles were in utter poverty. Isaiah dwells upon this in much of the two preceding chapters.

Poverty to these people meant much more than to us. To the Jews poverty and exile meant more than misfortune, more than the absence of necessities, more even than the oppression and pain inflicted by the oppressors. It meant *the displeasure of God*. The Greek Stoic could look upon these things with indifference, but the Jew had a conscience, and he recognized that these things came upon him because of sin. It was because of the conscience of the Jew that God was able to transform these things into spiritual conditions of blessedness. His poverty, his heart-hunger, his home-sickness, his hunger after divine favor could be transformed into elements of great moral excellence, until poverty became poverty of spirit; heart hunger, home-sickness and desire for divine favor became real longing for pardon and for spiritual worship and divine communion. They hung their harps on the willows and cried, "How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." And when these outward things were made spiritual conditions, they were prepared to be led back to the homes and worship from whence they came, and to

more spiritual things—for the temple was to be the center of their life as never before.

And now Isaiah sees them returning from their captivity to find a home again, in and about Jerusalem, at and near the Altar of God. But in and through it all he sees spiritual things. Righteousness, peace and safety in the arms and love of God.

Isaiah looks through the local and the typical and sees the general and universal, that man is at home on the bosom of God. It is with this fact before him, absorbing him, filling him, that he utters these words, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." This is a personal song. No one can sing it but an inhabitant. "We have," is the song of experience. A song is valueless only as it is *the breath of the heart*. Song as a performance is an empty sound, as a hired singer in the house of the Lord whose eye is on the pay he is to get for the performance. This song wells up from the heart. A child who does not know a note of music can sing it. An old man, whose voice has grown thin and quavering, or an old lady with a squeaky voice can sing it. It is an experience. It is melody in the heart which sets the nerves tingling.

There are a few things in this song to which I desire to call your attention. The city of God, the dwelling-place of God's people, is a place of peace, safety, and plenty. I desire to emphasize who they are who dwell in the city of God. "Open ye the gates, that the righteous

nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." The way back from Babylon to Jerusalem was a way of righteousness. Deserts had to be passed and wildernesses gone through. Hostile tribes had to be passed. But as the prophet looked at it he saw righteousness, which made the way possible. As he saw them go out because of sin, sin-burdened, the way paved with sin, and they scourged on by sin,—So now he saw them returning because of righteousness. Their very path was righteousness. Righteousness on their brows and in their hearts. They seem to be winged with righteousness. Speaking of this return, so intense was the moral side of it, that he said, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness." The way to the dwelling-place of God's people is a way of holiness. I mean to their dwelling-place down here. The New Jerusalem which fulfills the prophecy of the typical Jerusalem, came down from God out of heaven. I may not tell how high it reaches, but one thing I know—its twelve foundations which bear the names of the twelve Apostles are laid down here. Its pearly gates open to human souls down here. The branches of the tree of life spread out over human souls down here. That Face—the light of which outshines the sun, shines into human souls down here. That overmastering statement of no temple to worship in, that the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it, is true down here.

This city is something more than locality, it is state. It is so living that locality or conditions make little differ-

ence. The entrance is a way of holiness. Men say, "Must I then be holy to be a Christian?" They ask it as though they feared to be holy; as if it were something they could not brook; something they could not pay—to be holy. It is a normal thing for a Christian to be holy. God is holy, so also is His law, His Gospel, His blood, His Spirit, and His people. The abode of God's people is in the Holy City, washed by the blood, nourished by the holy life of Jesus. And I do not mean studying about Jesus, I mean that you eat His very life. He is the true Bread of Life.

One of the features of this dwelling-place of the saints, this *City of God* is the *wealth of provision*. Isaiah says in this same prophecy, in this connection, "In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast." This is put over against the poverty of the captivity which was so much deeper than the hunger for bread. A hunger for pardon, a hunger for God. An Arctic explorer was asked whether he and his comrades suffered much from the pangs of hunger during the months of slow starvation to which they were exposed. He said, "No, we lost them in the sense of abandonment, in the feeling that our countrymen had abandoned and forgotten us. It was not until we were rescued and looked into human faces that we felt how hungry we were." So with lost humanity. There is a poverty of soul, a hunger, a longing of spirit after infinite things that swallows up all other needs. Outward need is but as the weeds of the heart's widowhood. Over against this is this divine supply. It is of God—it is God—His favor, His love, His presence which makes all other

conditions blessed. Prisons become palaces, winter becomes spring-time, the place of exile becomes home, and hell is turned into heaven.

The wines on the lees, the oldest, choicest richest wine is the heart blood of the Lamb of God, the infinite love of God put into the winepress of incarnation, and distilled for men. It is the manifestation of the infinite love of God to a human soul to its satisfaction. "O love, love found me." Fat things, the best things under or above the heavens are for God's redeemed children. Charles Wesley's songs, "'Twas a heaven below, my Redeemer to know," and "Jesus all the day long, was my joy and my song," express something of the raptures of this experience.

One of the foremost utterances of this text, if not the foremost, is *safety*. Great walls and mighty bulwarks. Riches are of little value if the enemy may come in at any moment and dispossess us. The reason men have hard times is because they feel there is an enemy abroad who will dispossess them. That is the difficulty with earthly things, and what makes me care so little for them, there is an enemy who may take them away. Even the privilege of divine love is of little value if I am likely to be despoiled of it tomorrow.

What is the strength of the Church, or of an individual soul? We say of a church that it is a very strong church. In what does its strength consist? It is a very large church, the largest in the city. It has a great deal of wealth. There are several millionaires in it. They have a great deal of culture and they seek the most cultured and

brilliant preachers. You ought to see what a brilliant assemblage it is. You ought to have heard the eloquent sermon on, "The Inherent Nobility of Manhood." Some little things about him that are not altogether beautiful, but these will slough off under the development of the noblest part of his nature. I never went home from church feeling so comfortable. You ought to have seen the brilliant audience on Sunday night as they attended our wonderful concert.—The common idea of the strength of a church is *numbers, wealth, culture*.

Far be it from me to unqualifiedly condemn any of these. They may all be very desirable under certain conditions. I wish for more men and women to spread scriptural holiness. I wish for money to carry on God's work. I wish for men and women of the best ability. But these are not what God has appointed for the strength of the Church. Salvation hath God appointed for walls and bulwarks. What is salvation but a saved people, and what is a saved people but a people made holy through the blood of the Lamb? Salvation is the wall of strength and power in God's church. Salvation does not need great numbers to be strong, for the soul trusts in the Lord Jehovah in whom is everlasting strength. Gideon's army reduced to three hundred—with the power of God—was invincible. What was it that made the powerful tribes of the land fear and tremble? Because they had heard that God was with Israel.

The bulwarks of this city are something more than its walls of strength. The Holy Ghost is our bulwark and He is an aggressive force.

JESUS, THE PEERLESS ONE

TEXT: *"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a Branch shall grow out of his roots; And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11: 1-9).*

A FEW words in reference to the Christ; the atmosphere He breathed, the graces of the Spirit which crowned Him, and the effects of His influence.

Isaiah has been describing the power of Assyria, the oncoming of the all conquering army under Sennacherib. He speaks of it as a mighty forest. A forest of cedars of Lebanon. He speaks of the iron of the Lord felling these mighty ones and their glory passes away. He turns from this to tell of a tender twig or shoot springing out of a fallen and decaying tree, a Branch out of a more than half dead root. A new personage, a new King out of the ruins of the falling house of Jesse. A man—a man of marvelous endowments, of wonderful spirit, whose presence and influence was to fill the world with new life and beauty. The house of Jesse was not, in Isaiah's day what it was when David and Solomon were on the throne, but he saw that it would fall lower and lower until it would be a stump whose root was wasting away.

You have doubtless marked the law of deterioration among men. Whatever may be said of the beginnings, every student of ancient history must feel that there is an ever present law of deterioration. Tribes and nations are reinforced, sometimes one way and sometimes another, but immediately the work begins again. Man has to be reinforced, upheld, and enlarged by the Divine presence or his tendency is downward. Evolution, even of man from lower to higher conditions seems to me to not be able to stand the test of history. It seems to me to have been

appropriate that the greatest infidel historian should have made the great work of his life to write of the decline and fall of the greatest empire that human hands have been permitted to rear.

Decline and fall is written upon human institutions; and humanity does not carry in its bosom the power of continued advancement. It soon reaches the maximum of its God-given impulse, and retrogression becomes the law.

Modern nations which are purely pagan have made no history which compares to that of Christian nations. Every advance which has been made among the ancient people, so far as we know, was made by their coming, consciously or unconsciously, into nearer harmony with God. Among the Hebrew people, of whose history we are more fully informed, every new infusion of power came from a new approach to God, and an infusion of the spirit of holiness into their lives. But they, like the heathen about them, had too feeble a hold upon God to keep them from degeneracy in every way.

Isaiah looked down through the years and saw springing, seemingly, from the degenerate and decaying house of Jesse this new Prince of whom he proceeds to tell us. He has heard and told us before a little in reference to Him. Once he heard a whisper that a virgin should conceive and bring forth a Son, and then again He had crossed his vision's pathway as the Prince of the four names. But now there comes a nearer view in which character, life, and influence are brought out somewhat and described.

The reason that I preach Jesus Christ is that He is

identified with us, that in Him we live, that in Him center the hopes and the destinies of men. His character, wherever He is longingly beheld, lifts the soul into something of the same altitude, and into His own life and experience. As the Greeks who came up to the feast and said to Philip, "Sirs, we would see Jesus," so we would come to this prophecy this morning, to see Jesus. It is the one cry of our being, in all worship, in all life, to see Him who is the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to reveal Him unto us. He is here revealing Him to Isaiah, so we come to study his words that the glory of his Christ may be revealed unto us.

Isaiah saw Him as a man, a human Christ. The richer glory of the incarnation had not yet dawned upon him. The Prince as he saw Him was a man wonderfully endowed for a marvelous work. We know, under the light of clearer revelation, that He is God as well as man. And this makes Him what He is to us, and it is this that gives us the enlarged profit of studying His manhood. Christ is not simply our pattern, example, or teacher, the great philosopher and moralist, whose teachings are better than those of Pliny or Seneca, who lived a purer life and died a more heroic death than Socrates. Jesus can not be compared even as the superlative of men. He is the one great example, the one great teacher, but He is far more than this. He is our Redeemer, Savior, Lord. His words are the revelation of God. His life is the manifestation of the Father. His death is the Father's own sacrifice for sin.

His resurrection and ascension are vindications and further revelations of His glory. It is because of all this that His manhood has such a glory to us.

Of the natural attributes of Christ as a man little is said, here or elsewhere. Of the spiritual enduements which formed His character and moulded His life much is said. We are not to be led by this to undervalue natural attributes, but we are taught that the real things which make manhood and which make life effective are the spiritual enduements.

Isaiah says of Him, The Spirit of the Lord rests upon Him. About this wondrous fact we know but little. How little we know about spiritual life, especially about the Infinite Spirit, of His touch upon the human soul, and of how He envelops a human life. Who shall tell of His softest kiss upon the spirit of Jesus, of His infant and boyhood days under the unspeakable loving touch of the Holy of the Holiest. How the Spirit helped and strengthened him as the eyes of His soul began to discern that He was the embodiment of an incarnation. How He panoplied Him in the conflicts with the enemy. How He stayed Him in His utter loneliness. How He breathed into Him endurance under the shadows of Gethsemane, and patience on Calvary. We only get a little glimpse at His baptism when for a moment the veil is withdrawn and the white dove descends and abides upon Him. John the Baptist declares that the Father giveth not the Spirit unto Him by measure.

This one thing we know, that since our humanity in His

person has been so anointed by the Holy Spirit the way has been opened up for His ministry among men, and His touch comes to childhood and youth. His enveloping arms are about manhood's strength and weakness. This white-winged Dove of heaven dwells in us.

It is further said that the Spirit of the Lord resting upon Him should be the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, knowledge and the fear of the Lord. In other words, ripeness and sharpness of mind, moral decision and heroic energy. Piety in its two forms of knowing the will of God and feeling the constraint to perform it. We know how fully this was all accomplished in Jesus Christ. How ripe and full were His mental endowments. How sharp His intellect. No mind could cope with Him. His enemies soon left off questioning Him. No difficulties or obstacles of an intellectual kind ever surrounded Him that He was at loss for resources. Especially in His teaching and the methods of it, the ripeness and richness of His mind is seen. Also in the clear didactic statements and in taking the great jewels of His truth and wrapping them in the beautiful analogy of history or scenes of the home life. And how full His moral decision and heroic energy. To appreciate this there has to be a somewhat careful study of His life. His decisions are so quiet, He moves to the accomplishment of His purposes with so little demonstration that we read of it in wonder and amazement.

The temptation to short cuts in His work was upon Him every where. That temptation of the devil in the

wilderness only images forth a temptation that must have been with Him every moment of His ministry. It seems to me that the great moral heroism of Jesus Christ is seen in His simply looking in the face His own duty to meet the difficulties which came to Him in His own work, and to restrain Himself simply within the boundaries of that work. There were so many wrongs to be redressed and things that needed righting, that only the decision of Christ held Him to His own one work. With the might of unmeasured power throbbing in His breast, and with oppression everywhere on the throne, how strong must have been the temptation to have stepped aside to right human wrongs. There seems to be the sound of falling tears in that reply, "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?" When waiting in the shadows of Gethsemane, and the tread of the multitude is heard, and their lanterns flash through the darkness, and the traitor kisses His cheek, and He turns His eye toward them and they fall backward to the ground, how strong must have been the temptation to have but waved His hand and they would have fled. And on the Cross when they said, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe him." What magnificent moral heroism kept His eyes fixed on the one great object?

And then the piety of the man Christ Jesus. The longing, the cry of that human soul God-ward is one of the wonders, one of the glories of our humanity. The most of His midnight vigils to us are voiceless. We have

seen Him when the shadows were gathering going up into the mountain solitudes; but it was alone: we were not permitted to follow Him. But with the early morning we have heard His voice telling us of the glory and blessedness of spiritual and eternal benedictions. One time He took three of our brothers up with Him, and as He prayed he was transfigured before them. My brethren, have you noticed in all this how the Holy Spirit stirs the mind, moves the intellect, enlightens the understanding, fills the whole intellectual being with vigor, gives clearness and precision to the judgment. It is the Holy Spirit that gives firmness and tenacity of purpose. Great purposes and great persistency in holy work are heaven-born in the soul. Moral heroism is God struggling in a human soul to get His feet down upon the earth.

The deep and mighty cry of a soul God-ward until it forgets all else, is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." The ministry which goes forth to save men, which brings the heavens down to human souls, and which lifts human souls up to heaven is by the Holy Ghost. Stephen, a layman in the early Church, stands as an example and a way-mark as he stood in the midst of an unbelieving multitude and poured forth the Church's history, and the manifestations of divine power were because he was filled with the Holy Ghost.

There is one further thing in reference to Him brought out here—He breathed the air of heaven. It here says that this spirit which rests upon Him shall make Him of

quick understanding in the fear of the Lord. The real meaning is that He shall draw His breath in the fear of the Lord. It is a very strong expression of the sinlessness which is Christ's alone. We draw our breath in earth's polluted atmosphere. Everything about us has *tended to chill our warmest feelings and to influence our passions, and to make us incapable of real worship or holiest praise.* We could not help it, it was the atmosphere into which we were born. But Christ alone is free. He was His own atmosphere. Living in the world He was never infected by the world's sin. Man's unbelief never chilled Him. Man's cruelty never caused in Him unholy wrath. When surrounded by thickest temptation His heart felt no thrill of unholy ambition. Is there anything in this for us? We who sicken at the tainted breath of a sin-cursed, worldly atmosphere, or for men and women who are grieved to see how the inner fire of evil leaps to the worldly atmosphere without. The same Holy Spirit is come, He rests upon those who seek Him through the grace of Him of whom I speak. And we too, may breathe the pure air of His love in His fear. *Out of the impure, infected, noxious air of sin into the sweet, pure air of the fear of the Lord.* In the most sin-cursed atmosphere prayer will bring the air of heaven about us. On the wings of praise the poorest soul may rise above the minions of temptation and sing forth her song with the angels.

THE VERITIES OF SALVATION

TEXT: *"Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men: Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid. Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be turned into a fruitful field, and the fruitful field shall be esteemed a forest? But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel"* (Isaiah 29: 13, 14, 17, 23).

REALITY is the word upon which Isaiah insists—not ritual, forms, words, or pretense. Religion was conventional, and rested on custom and usage. It was second-handed, resting in the common speech of men about it. It was a form and did not affect largely the heart and life. It was local, confined to a sacred place and given times, and was an emotion or an orthodoxy. And, passing out of the sacred place, or the emotion of the moment passing away, their religion was laid to one side and their own ways and the ways of the world possessed them.

In the temple they listened to one another until their spirits were wearied and their consciences were stifled, and they went out with little real thought or profit, to the same selfish, worldly life. The learned and the unlearned were alike blind and unable to read God's revelation.

Isaiah pleads for originality in religion. That men shall not simply be repeating the words they hear from each other and go through a ritual called divine worship, but shall themselves have an open vision discerning the divine presence. Seeing God everywhere in human life, working in the consciences, lives, and characters of men—turning every spot into an altar, making every place holy, and sacred by His presence, and surrounding every longing, struggling heart with the everlasting arms.

In order to this originality in religion, and in order that divine worship shall not be mere form and the repetition of human words; and in order that human life may be lifted out of its selfishness and off from its self-center, and the vision of God in all human life be clear; the Lord said He would proceed to do a marvelous work, a wonder. It was a work that should cause to perish the wisdom of the wise, and the cleverness of the clever should be obscured.

God's great works are not along the lines which we ordinarily call miracles. Once the Divine Christ made a few gallons of wine. Once or twice He fed a few thousand people with a few loaves. A few times He caused life to come back into inanimate corpses. Every day He causes tens of thousands to live who never lived before.

He said to the little, raging and tempest tossed sea, "be still," but how often does He say to the great ocean as it lifts its awful waves on high, "cease your troubling"?

We are always misreading history even in reference to the greatness of human acts. We talk of the great decisive battles and of great generals who have led their armies and accomplished great results. And yet the truth is that these were but the foam on the surf. The real decisive agencies are far back. Moses and the words which he uttered are a mightier agency in deciding the world's destiny than all the Alexanders, Cæsars, Hannibals, Napoleons and Wellingtons.

So God's great works in the world are not on the surface. They do not belong to the class of works which we call miracles. God's great work is the manifestation of Himself in Human consciousness. And the quickening of the conscience, the dispersion of ignorance, the awakening of poor humanity to the fact that God is nigh with the blessings of care and love. What is the making of all worlds, or the waging of all conflicts as compared to this?

Isaiah does not bring us into the temple, he does not lead us to the altar, he does not bid us join in the magnificent ritual service which is there performed. He looks through and beyond all that and sees individual men lifted into divine light and life. The Church of God at its zenith was not to be a ritualistic or priestly church, where individuals are lost in the mass, but a Church where the individual is taught to walk alone with God. The Church of God, in its highest forms on earth, and in heaven has

its gatherings, teachings and united worship but it is all to help the individual to worship God and to be transformed into the likeness of His Son. For this purpose God works, and we are to look for Him in events and deeds. To this end He sends forth His Spirit to quicken our consciences and to open our eyes to see Him. We are not to look for doctrines and teachings simply, but for the divine manifestations. For God Himself working in human life, grandly, gloriously, blessedly and in a way worthy of Himself.

God has given us three theatres of His activities, upon or into which we look and mark His marvelous works: (1) His Word, the inspired record of Himself; (2) Human history as it comes nearer about us; and (3) to each one his own life. There is one great, supreme purpose with which we look into them all, and that is to see God and to know His marvelous works, which make the wisdom of the wise foolishness and the cleverness of the clever to be obscured. We look into the Bible not for doctrine and teaching so much as to see God. To see Him in the characters in which He there dwells and which He molds. To see Him in the hearts which He there inspires and fills, and especially to see the great fact of His incarnation in Jesus Christ. To see that in Jesus Christ God did dwell and speak to men, and men were redeemed, converted, saved. These are real facts—to see them is more than all ritualism and forms, more than all songs and prayers. God has put into these divine manifestations a work which is a

marvelous wonder, which to really see is to open the doors of paradise upon the soul.

The history of a man's own country and the age in which he lives is one of the theatres of the divine movements in which we are to see God. Every nation, every people, has a new revelation of God in their own history. It seems to me that a man can scarcely stand in the light of Anglo-Saxon and American civilization and not see the light of God's presence and providence.

The raising up of these people and putting the Divine Word into their language, and from their little island home sending them out to inherit the world with the gospel of the Son of God wrought into the very texture of language and life.

No one can look at the history of our own country as a part of this Anglo-Saxon people, the uprising and severance from the mother country, the giving of such men as Washington and Lincoln, without seeing God in it all. Who can look at the life and part our own church has in this civilization without hearing the footsteps of the Lord?

The other theatre of divine activity is in our own lives. I suppose everyone of you has looked more or less intently into the mystery of your own life. You have more than wondered at the strange, unplanned for things which have come to you, the turns and lanes into which your life has gone, and the surprises which have come to you. You know well the struggles which have gone on in your own being. And when you have been able to say yes to the

voice which has spoken to you in conscience, how sweetly the divine voice has spoken to thy soul.

It is marvelous how God touches our lives through the lives of others. The hidings of God's power have so often been underneath a human hand. God touches human hearts sometimes through agencies or in connection with those who are not loyal to Him. At one of the colleges in India the Hindu tract society made such attacks against the Bible and missions that a number of students were aroused to study the Bible. They formed a society with certain rules one of which was that they were to read the Bible together without discussion or the asking of any hard questions. The president of the little society was a young man who had been a devout student of the sacred literature of the Hindus and concluded that the only way for him to be saved was to make a pilgrimage to Benares on foot and as a beggar. He had disappeared from home and performed a part of the journey when his friends found him and sent him to this college to learn English. He says they tried to rid him of all religion and in doing so brought him to the feet of Christ, for they were soon moved to spend fifteen minutes together in prayer which brought them into touch with God.

“Therefore thus saith the Lord, who redeemed Abraham, concerning the house of Jacob, Jacob shall not now be ashamed, neither shall his face now wax pale. But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel.”

We are not ashamed of the God of the Bible. We are not ashamed of God in history. We are not ashamed of God in our lives. I am often ashamed of myself for my failures and shortcomings. But the light of God crowns all that is glorious in human life. Whatever in us is of any good is of His grace. And we come with His true Israel to hallow His name.

JESUS, OUR SHELTERING ROCK

TEXT: *"And 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, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"* (Isaiah 32: 2).

GREATER things than all imagery are spoken through images. It is one of the marvels of human speech and of the constitution of the human mind, that by the use of a figure, a whole volume of truth flashes before the vision. One of the reasons of the inexhaustibility of the Word of God is that it is so filled with imagery. The whole ritual of the Jewish church was imagery. The prophets spoke through figures of speech. Their visions were often couched in imagery of the vastest proportions. Sometimes in a single picture there would come before their vision truths that would stretch through decades of centuries. And Jesus spoke through figures which were like a forest wrapped in an acorn. Thus when we read Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Jesus, we hear all nature and all time uttering the great truths of God. The deserts, the mountains, the rivers, the oceans, the sunshine, the tempest, civilization, barbarism, the cry of the multitude, and the voice of silence, all proclaiming the truth of God. All, like a cathedral organ, as vast as the universe, speaking with human speech but with unmeasured tones, the words of the Lord.

Hold your ear to God's Word and you will hear the splashing of waves, the trembling of the earthquake, the roll of thunders, the roar of the tempest, the cry of the wilderness, the wail of the desert, the voices of the snow-capped mountains, the whispering of the lily and the rose, and the singing of the birds; all articulate with human speech uttering the unutterable things of God.

It is a note of this great organ that I would touch this morning. I read of one of the great masters that when a very little child he wandered into the great cathedral and was lost. By and by they heard the great organ, but they could see no one in the organ loft. They went up into the loft and found the little child standing on the pedals reaching up and recklessly playing. I began trying to preach the gospel when I was very young. Then I would have pulled out every stop and swept every key. It may not be gain altogether, but I have come to where I uncover one key with diffidence, and press it with reverential awe. It is with this feeling that I have read this text this morning. There is in it the voice of the desert, the cry of the tempest, the sheltering rock, and the refreshing river.

There is in this text what men call the philosophy of history, but especially the gospel to humanity, with the privileges and duties of men. Here is the picture of the desert, but also of the river which bears in its bosom fertility, vegetation, and life. The rain which the river produces, or the percolation of the water causes the grass to grow and to spring up through the sand, promising refresh-

ment and vigor, but not to be fulfilled. The desert winds blow, the sands drift in and cover and parch the blades. The desert's drift and death prevail over the river's life. But yonder is a great rock, and as the drift strikes it it is turned aside. The sand drifts off yonder, and yonder, but here is a protected place. Vegetation flourishes, a human home is built. There is life and labor, food and rest. The wayfarer fleeing from the desert storm, finds a refuge. The hot sandstorm beats upon that rock, but behind it in its shadow there is refreshment and life.

There is here, as I have said, a philosophy of history. That human character, great human character, enriched and ennobled, is a protection and a defence to humanity. The desert with its barrenness, its beating winds and drifting sands is a fit picture of much of human life as we know its history. It would have been nothing else, but that God has lifted up, here and there, a great character, into whom He has put something of His own purpose and love, and who has stood as a rock in the desert and has stayed, at least in some measure, the storms and tempests and the drifting sands, and has made something of a shelter for men. The sandstorms may have ultimately swept over their graves and covered the green earth with barrenness and death, but for a time they stayed the drifts and formed a shelter for men.

Such a rock in the desert was Abraham, the friend of God, the friend of man; lifted up to stay the storm of idolatry that was sweeping over the earth. Though at last, over his venerated grave, the storms made their way, yet

the drift has never been as heavy this side Abraham as it was before.

Such a rock in the desert was Daniel. The drift of idolatry was still heavy, but God set Daniel in its way, and three times a day, with his windows opened toward Jerusalem he poured out his soul to the God of heaven. And this side of that praying form, and of that den of lions to which he was consigned, and of that morning when he was drawn out without harm, the drift has not been quite so heavy. At least, there has been a large eddy that the world has not fully gotten over.

Such a rock was John the Baptist. A man whom God raised up, and who set his back against the drift of forms, superstitions and liturgies, and against the all-consuming ceremonial of a dead church, and who preached righteousness through repentance and the forgiveness of sins. Though the drift swept over his headless body, yet it has never been so deep since the coming of the "voice crying in the wilderness."

Paul was raised up as a rock to set his back against the drift of Judaism into gentile Christianity, and you can, to this day, see where the great drift was stayed.

Martin Luther was raised up, and set his back against the sacerdotalism, impurity, and indulgences in the church. At the time when the storm was beating about him he said, "Here I stand, I can do no other, God help me." And the Scarlet Woman has never been quite what she was before.

John Wesley was raised up when the desert drift of in-

fidelity was burning and blasting every green thing. When Europe was swept by the storm and there were 40,000 infidel clubs in France. The preaching of righteousness and true holiness under Wesley saved England, and the world will never get over his influence.

This is the philosophy of history. Great characters set up by divine grace to stay in some measure, the raging storms of tyranny, oppression, ungodliness and unbelief that sweep human hearts into hopelessness and despair, into ruin and destruction. But the storms are heavy. The prince of the power of the air stirs up the elements, the raging tempests beat on, and the desert sands reach beyond these great characters, and close up again almost as if they had not been.

But these human characters are only the "lower lights" which tell of the Central Sun. They are but the outposts, the out-runners of the great truth Isaiah saw in connection with this law of great and noble characters. Possibly he saw this law as a result, but he saw dimly and yet with a good degree of clearness, "A man as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, . . . the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

There is a man, if it be lawful to call Him a man, whose golden shadow falls back through all the ages of this old world, and the light and glory of whose face fills all these newer centuries. A man, He is a man, made of a woman, cradled in a manger, with a childhood full of grace and beauty, with a manhood full of earnestness, care and toil. He was weary, hungry, thirsty, loving, weeping,

sorrowing, suffering and dying. He was a man, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," "tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin," "the Son of man." But He was more than this, far more than this. He was the Son of God, begotten of the Holy Ghost, declared in power, filled with all the fulness of the God-head bodily. He touched humanity with the divine touch, healing her diseases, raising her dead, forgiving her sins, dying for her awful need, and rising again for her justification and glory "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed."

It is this man who is a hiding place from the wind, a covert from the tempest, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The great drift in this world is sin. It is the longest, heaviest drift in human history. It arose in the beginning and has swept everything before it. Men have tried in vain to stay it. They have lifted before it government, education, philosophy, and systems of religion, but all in vain. Christ lifted up Himself. He lifts His nature above it. He alone is the sinless one. The drifting sands of iniquity were all about Him, but He lifted His soul above it all, untainted, unspotted, and undefiled. He rose up encumbered with our frailty, surrounded by all temptations, but where all others have risen to fall, He arose to stand. Sin could never be the same after the sinless Christ, After the banner of His sinless manhood was lifted up. Life on the heaven side of Calvary is far different from life on the hell side of it.

He who flees to Him, who believes on Him finds that there is one place, even beneath the stars, where the storms of sin are stayed, and where the tempest can not reach him. Jesus Christ is a place of refuge from the tempest. He is a safe hiding place. He is a place of peaceful rest. He is a place of sweet refreshment.

The longest, hardest drift is sin. Sin overtakes man with its sad results like a hot sand-storm. Man is like a desert traveler. He is often like a desert wanderer—no path but the burning sand, the hot sun blazing above him his tongue swollen for want of water, his head already half dizzy and faint. Yonder is the awful sand storm, the sky is black as a thunder-cloud. It is hot, hissing, whirling, sweeping with the besom of death any living thing that it may overtake. Just yonder is a river with palm trees and rocks. He will fly for refuge, but as he struggles on, some way, he sees that it is farther away—he awakes to the fact that it is a mirage. He lifts his head to look once more across the plain and die. He sees what he had not before discovered in the eagerness of his chase, just to the right of him a rock, a great rock. It is not far away—if he can but reach it. He is exhausted, the breath of the storm is almost upon him. He arouses himself for one desperate effort. He struggles on, the hot storm fans his brow, but he reaches the rock. He falls helplessly beneath it, and though the storm sweeps on, he is safe. He comes to himself to find that there is a pool of water from which he drinks and is revived.

So it is with a human soul. The saddest piece of litera-

ture I ever saw is an English classic describing a girl in London going out one night to cast herself into the Thames. As she came and stood on the pier she mused. She looked down into its filthy polluted water and said, "How like myself."

I stood one day in this city beside the beautiful form of a woman who had thus drifted until she put a bullet through her brain. Is there no hope for such? Men, weak men comparatively defenseless men, cursed with hereditary appetites and weak wills, made the victims of rum. Is there hope for them? Brother, sister, if you are within the sound of my voice, right here is the Rock of Ages. Jesus is a Rock in a weary land.

Men and women of pride and place, who scorn the drunkard, and who gather your robes about you in the presence of the harlot, your pride, your worldliness, your hatred to holiness, is as soul-destroying as what to you are the viler sins of your sisters and brothers. From the heights of your pride, and social position and larger possibilities, you sink deeper into ruin. The hot storms of sin and ungodliness are upon the earth. Rum, impurity, bribes and falseness, pride and earth-seeking. Humanity has fallen so low that a brutal prize fight causes more general interest than all of the good things of the world. Men putrefying their own vileness over the debauchery of the public conscience.

But for the individual men there is salvation through the blood of Christ. Who is as the shadow of a great rock for them.

“A man shall be as rivers of water in a dry place.” What makes the sheltered place beautiful? What makes it a fit dwelling place for man? What makes it a place for a city? Yonder is the river. The waters of the river percolate through the sand and make the place fruitful. The river satisfies the thirsty lips with pools of water. The river opens the way to the world’s supply. It is the highway of the world’s commerce. The river is the figure of the fullness of the salvation of God. Out of the heart of him that believeth shall flow rivers of living water. It flows out of the heart of him that believeth because it flows out of the heart of Him upon whom he believeth, and Who gives the Holy Ghost. The baptism with the Holy Ghost is the river that fills the Church of God with plenty and with delight.

THE DEFENSE OF THE SANCTIFIED

TEXT: *"But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams; wherein shall go no galley with oars, neither shall gallant ship pass thereby. For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us"* (Isaiah 33: 21, 22).

NEARLY all of the trouble of Europe arises from the fact that yonder, on the Bosphorus, is a city so commanding in position because situated by the waters. I used to hear it said when I was a boy that the Russian bear would long ago have eaten the Turkey but for the roar of the British lion and the scream of the French eagle. The paws of the bear seem to be closer about it, perhaps, at any rate the roar of the British lion and the scream of the French eagle seem to mean little. It seems evident that the lion is caged and the eagle is caged, but the struggle goes on, because each is unwilling that the other should have the city by the sea.

Jerusalem was a dry rock. No ocean rolled at her feet. No great rivers flowed by her doors. Seas and rivers could neither be her defense nor wealth. Isaiah stood on the outer edge of the world's politics. He saw that commerce was to be king, declaring war and dictating peace. He saw that Jerusalem was in no sense situated for a commercial center. Not like Syria, washed by the waters of the Mediterranean, nor like Babylon with its great

Euphrates, nor yet as Egypt with its Nile. It had no defense from the laws of commerce, no defense from ocean or river. Assyria is determined to crush Jerusalem. Her great armies are contending against it. But to Isaiah there is something better than commerce; better than an ocean rolling at their feet; better than a great river where the *galleys might play or contend*. And that was the presence of the glorious Lord. He said to them, "He is to us a place of broad rivers and streams. There is no need of war ships. The Lord is all in all. He is our judge, law-giver, and king. He will save us." There was in all Isaiah's prophecies one great foundation fact. That fact was with him every where; it was in and about every thing. It was, "God with us." The eyes of the people were dim. The eyes of men are still dim. There is a veil over most faces. Many are blind. Some see through a glass darkly. There are a few prophets, who, through hearts made pure, see God. The one great fact in the world men scarcely see at all. If there were before you a burning city and you looked through a colored glass that hid the brightness of the flame and you saw the crumbling stone, the twisting pillars, the curling beams, the falling structures, but saw not nor knew the cause, you would be in the same condition that we are as we look at this world.

We see society, the individual, the state, the Church. We see the outer acts, the struggle, the results. We see the shoulders bend but see not the burden. We see the face grow dark but see not the shadow. We see the eye

sparkle but see not the light. We see fortunes rising and falling or individuals coming up and going down. We call it the struggle for existence. We so largely regard life as a battle in which the strongest prevail. By this men would explain everything. If one national type disappears, the historian says that it went down in the struggle. If there are depressions and failures in the financial world, fevers of speculation and chills of reverses, the economist says that so many went to the wall. Even the results of living on moral character are put down in the same category. If one have commercial excellences the battle was favorable.

If he have defeat, the battle was too hot for him. This formula, "Struggle for existence," acts upon our vision exactly as the glass was supposed to do when looking at the fire. We see only the actors, as though they contended in a vacuum. We do not deny the struggle, that men act upon each other, but men do not fight in a vacuum. Around us, and through us, without and within, is the all-pervading righteousness of God, affecting the results of human living far more than we affect each other. In Isaiah's day the people said, as they say today, that the battle is to the strong and success to the cunning. So they made alliances with Egypt, and were greedy to fight the Assyrians, or to flee in panic if the battle was turning against them. We say today that the educated ones succeed, that the sharp men win. The difference between Isaiah and all this was that he saw all about these actors, like fire about a burning building, acting upon the hearts of men and upon their lives, controlling the final result as fire controls the

result of the burning city, was the righteousness of God.

Isaiah had heard the whisper in his early ministry, "God with us." It meant *not only love, pity, tenderness and mercy, but holiness, righteousness and justice.* He had seen the eyes of God's holiness, like two balls of fire, searching through every human consciousness. He had seen that God, as a flaming fire of eternal righteousness, was about and through every life, that this is the very air in which men live. It was this that made him ask "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" Not the future, but who wins in this environment? Who stands like the bush that burned and was not consumed? And he goes on to tell us who these are. "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly: he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him: his water shall be sure."

This is what makes the prophet of every age. He sees that God's righteousness, like a flame of fire, is about and through every life: that it envelops the earth as its real atmosphere: that in it men are working out their little lives and immortal destiny. This brings the assurance that wickedness will fail, and that God has a plan in this universe, and while men are working out their little ways He is subjecting all to the one great plan.

This divine pressure which Isaiah calls a consuming fire

is also a glory and a defense. In order to make men see it he changed the figure to what was more within the possibilities of their thought and said that the glorious Lord was broad rivers and streams.

These words were uttered at the moment of the triumph of *Isaiah's faith*. Forty years ago he began his mission. It has been a long cry. Often a seemingly hopeless cry, a cry in a dark and dreary wilderness. His work has seemed in vain and his ministry useless or worse. He has cried out against sin. He has proclaimed the avenging rod of his God in the coming of the Assyrian army. He had decried their trust in Egypt. And yet when he had looked upon Jerusalem, he had always said that God would spare it from the Assyrian power.

At last the dark cloud burst upon the land. Sennacherib's army enclosed Jerusalem. The Egyptian army has been defeated. The last hope of the beleagured city has been cut off. The people have had religiousness before this. They have kept their sacrificial altars burning, but with their eye fixed on Egypt. When there was no hope from Egypt, their religion sank out of sight. How like so many in this day!

Isaiah's heart sank within him. With the assurance that God would save the city it seemed to him, for a little, that it was not worth saving. But, remembering the remnant, he gathered together his forces and continued his work. He secured a change in the administration. Under Hezekiah he preached righteousness, and made a treaty with Sennacherib. A great price was paid to ransom Je-

rusalem; 300 talents of silver and 30 talents of gold, but Jerusalem was redeemed. Isaiah was vindicated and with it a great moral change came over the people, who fell at the feet of their Lord who had become their deliverer. In connection with this change came great revival. Isaiah proclaimed forgiveness of sin. It was in that same year that he had proclaimed, "Come now and quit your reasoning. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." The people came to penitence, and Isaiah to the gospel of forgiveness. If any man is to have a future there is where it begins. Men scoff at forgiveness, and a new life, but if a man is to have a new life, it must begin with forgiveness. The beginning of a new life makes forgiveness reasonable and just under atoning grace.

The forgiveness of God is a marvellous thing, for with it He gives a new nature, a new life and a new hope. With it He gives Himself. Yesterday this people were glutted with iniquity, covered with scarlet. The prophet sat in sackcloth, knowing how the yesterdays project themselves into the tomorrows. He is saying, surely their iniquity shall not be purged from them until they die; but through their penitence there came to him a new light. An old Greek miniature represents this scene. It represents the prophet with night behind him, veiled and sullen, holding a reversed torch. Before him stands dawn and innocence, a little child with bright face and forward step, and with torch erect and burning. From above a hand pours light upon the upturned face of the prophet. It is the

message of divine pardon. It is probable that at this point Isaiah wrote that forty-sixth Psalm, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble."

Pardon divorces the past from the future, and pours the light of God upon a human soul. The same hand puts away the night and opens heaven with a new dawn. The darkness and despair is put behind us and a little child, Immanuel, leads us amid the dawning glory of a new life. When sin is done away, God can not be kept away. How blessedly this is brought out in the New Testament, where pardoned sinners eat of His flesh and drink of His blood. Sinners are forgiven in a way that they become righteous. Look at Jerome, from vanity, recklessness, despair, and dissipation to humility, discipline, and leaning upon God, led up to confidence and exultation. So it is with every soul. God is rivers of water in salvation to penitent men.

There is one thing which possibly is made too little account of. That is that pardon does not change the course of events round about us. Our course is changed and that fact makes the course of events bear harder upon us. Though forgiven and a new life given to us, many of the old conditions remain. Many tendencies and pre-dispositions remain; such as cowardly and selfish impulses. How temptations return to buffet us. Jerusalem, forgiven and a new life given, found her old enemy returning to attempt her destruction. And not only without, but those within are ready to make terms with the enemy. Sennacherib's army returns and invests the city,

and with it Assyria's great statesman Rabshakeh. He comes near and approaches close to the wall. He speaks the language of those within. With eloquence, with plausible words, with sophistry, with threatening, with derision, he persuades them to surrender. He is self-confident, subtle, wordy; backed by the power of the Assyrian army.

It will pay you to study this struggle. It is much more than the conflict of a single generation. It is the parable of the everlasting struggle of faith with the powers of darkness, with doubt and despair between them. On the one side is the great statesman of Assyria with the Assyrian army to support him. On the other side is an old prophet silently leaning on the promises of God. On the one side is Rabshakeh, strutting down from the center of civilization with all earthly power at his back, and with the temper of worldly power upon him to twist this little foe around his finger. He spoke well. He spoke the devil's arguments which fill all time. He told them of their own past. It had not been satisfactory. He made offers of what he would do for them. He spoke of the impossibility of deliverance.

All this you have heard. The devil has told you that. He has said, "Your past has been a failure." He has told you of the uselessness of the struggle. He has told you of the narrowness of your creed. Of the fanaticism to which all this leads. He has told you of what he would do for you in the broader world. The world is generous. *In it there is breadth and freedom of thought.* No use to be narrow, bigoted and fanatical.

On the wall and close behind were some soldiers and

some civilians that were ready to listen and were ready to go over to Rabshakeh. But they were commanded to make no word of reply—the true way to treat the Devil. A little farther in is a king, full of faith in God, not knowing how to make it effective. Penetrate a little farther and you find the prophet with his eyes fixed on the promises of God.

O brothers, this is thine own struggle. Converted, born into the kingdom of God, the enemy of redemption and salvation is upon you. The powers of earth, the forces of an ungodly civilization rise up against thy soul. The *pre-disposition with habit and inclination are within to listen*. There sits the king—Will—with hands stretched out to God but sees not the way. Penetrate a little deeper and there is the prophet—Conscience—gazing at the promises of God. Jerusalem must have a second deliverance. Not like the first, but one wrought out by the presence and power of God in a more comprehensive and powerful way. The Lord Himself broods over that conflict. The eye on the promise of God never fails. Heaven and earth may pass away, but His promise will not fail. Let the pillars of heaven fall if they will. Let the universe tumble into ruin if it must, but that Word has the light from the sun, from behind the sun, on it. The infinite God has His hand upon it. It can not fail. I sit secure amid the reeling universe. God answers that faith. The Holy Ghost broods over Jerusalem. The power of God smites the foe. It is always so. The Rabshakeh of hell is driven back. The baptism with the Holy Ghost purifies all within.

WAR AND VICTORY

TEXT: "*Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way thou camest. For thus saith the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength: and ye would not*" (Isaiah 37: 29; 30: 15).

THE battle is one continued conflict. It never has been fought out. It never will be fought out until some new dispensation brings in altogether new forces and new conditions. There are glimpses in this book of such a time. To hasty, and perhaps it might be said, shallow thought that might seem an easy thing, but to more continued and profounder thought which takes in the deep problems of existence it seems to be entirely beyond the grasp of human thought, and yet not beyond the range of human hope. But it comes within the range of human knowledge *that the war goes on*, and that each dispensation it becomes deeper and more intense, and with each dispensation it becomes more vitally spiritual and more exceedingly fearful. Yet all along the ages the battle is the same. There are times when the battle is peculiarly fierce, when all of the forces stand out before us and we see distinctly their relationship. We are to give special attention to such crucial times, for the

forces are always the same, though sometimes under cover and in ambush. We need to know and as far as possible to understand the war. For our destiny is involved, as well as that of others.

We have here a scene, a battle scene where all the forces are in action. A kind of Waterloo of human struggle. It is so illustrative of the ages, especially of today, that I call your special attention to it. Not for literary purposes, nor simply for your mental furnishing, but for help, present help in the mighty struggle. I call attention to this epoch this morning for myself and for every warrior. *The battle presses sore.*

“My soul be on thy guard,
Ten thousand foes arise,
The hosts of sin are pressing hard
To draw thee from the skies.

“O watch, and fight, and pray,
The battle ne'er give o'er,
Renew it boldly every day,
And help divine implore.”

I do not ask you to fight over an old battle today. This battle which we have here in Isaiah is the battle of today, here in this city.

The children of Israel were the Church of God. There had been among them a great falling away. Ten-twelfths of the tribes had gone into idolatry. And as a result,

God had given them over to the sword and into captivity. Some years before this (8 years, Samaria taken after 3 years) the Assyrian army had devastated their country and carried them away captive. And now the great army of that empire has marched against Judah, and many of the fenced cities had been taken, and the great army was near Jerusalem itself. But it was still engaged in besieging one of the strong fenced cities when a delegation was sent to negotiate the surrender of the capital. At the head of this delegation was the Chief Minister of Sennacherib, Rabshakeh, one of the most striking and typical characters of history. He was evidently a great man. His acquirements were great. He was a great politician. Doubtless he supplied the brains for the government. He was the Bismarck of the Assyrian Empire. He understood the languages of the people. He was acquainted with the details of the internal affairs of the government with which he had to do. He was great, strong, knowing, eloquent and proud. He thoroughly despised this little people living upon a rock. But it was an opportunity to show his skill in diplomacy. He could conquer this little people with a little skill. And so he comes strutting down, the representative of Assyria, to twist around his little finger King Hezekiah. Hezekiah sent three of his principal men to confer with him, outside the walls. Rabshakeh made a great address, not only to the delegates but to the people who thronged the walls and all about. Evidently it was a great and impressive address. He took the ground that their case was hopeless. Egypt had failed them. It was

vain to trust in God, for had not Hezekiah himself removed many of His altars. The thing for them to do was to give a pledge of two thousand men. He even declared that he came against this country under divine orders, saying, "The Lord said unto me, Go up against this land and destroy it." When asked to speak Syrian so that the people would not understand what he was saying, he spoke louder in the language of the Jews in order that the people might hear him. He said that it was to the people he had come to speak, that they might not let Hezekiah deceive them, as deepest suffering would be the result. He declared that their God would not be able to deliver them, and asked, "Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?" He was through at last and there was no answer. The delegates, of course were to report to the king and the people were commanded to not answer a word. Hezekiah rent his clothes, put on sackcloth, sent word to the prophet Isaiah. Hezekiah cried, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy." Isaiah's answer was full of assurance from the Lord.

Again came messengers with a letter full of blasphemy, in warnings to not deceive himself by trusting in God. Hezekiah took the letter and spread it out before the Lord and prayed, saying, "O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth." Then, after reciting what the Assyrians had said and done, he prayed, "Now, there-

fore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the Lord, even thou only."

Then Isaiah sent word to Hezekiah saying, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria I have heard. This is the word that the Lord hath spoken concerning him; The virgin the daughter of Zion hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee. Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel. By thy messengers thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots I am come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon, and will cut down the tall cedar trees thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the lodgings of his borders, and into the forest of his Carmel. I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of besieged places. Hast thou not heard long ago how I have done it, and of ancient times that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the house tops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up. But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in,

and thy rage against me. Because thy rage against me and thy tumult is come up into mine ears, therefore I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way which thou camest."

And that night the angel of the Lord went out and smote a hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians. "And when they arose early in the morning, behold they were all dead corpses."

And yet that did not end the fight. It was a victory of faith such as God loves to give. And Jesus taught that greater victories await the faith of God's people. But faith is seemingly so rare that Jesus asks, "When the Son of man cometh shall he find faith on earth?" It was only a little more than one hundred years until, for lack of the faith of a *Hezekiah* or an *Isaiah*, on account of sin, that city was swept away by the enemy.

But it is this battle that we are fighting today. Assyria is the worldliness of today that attacks the Church on every side. Ten-twelfths have already surrendered and have been carried into captivity. Any decent worldling can consistently do, what ten-twelfths of the church are doing, which is called church work. This is not only admitted, but the great effort is to allure the world to help them do it. This Rabshakeh, this cultured, knowing, worldly-wise, eloquent Rabshakeh, is the culture of the day, challenging the faith of the Church of God which is left. It comes strutting down from the civilization of the twentieth century to tell us that faith in God is vain, that all other faiths have gone down before scientific re-

search and critical thought, and there is no hope for yours. The narrowness of Christianity must give way to the broader things of the world. Why fight the world for an idea? You starve on an idea when the world is so generous, so free, so tolerant so unhampered by authority. This is the pretense of promising selfishness whether made under the walls of Jerusalem 2600 years ago, or under the walls of the Church of God today. Many of the fenced cities have been taken. This Rabshakeh with the powers of worldliness at his back scoffs down simple faith and trust in God to save men's souls.

Hezekiah, as he prays says, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy, for the children are come to the birth and there is not strength to bring them forth. Here is a people found capable of conceiving hope and confidences. Here is a people great with the world's light and life, but there is not strength to bring them forth, for faith is not the substance of things hoped for. At the moment when her subjective assurances ought to be realized as facts, she is powerless to bring them forth.

That is the condition of what there is left of the Church today. We thrill with the pangs of inability. He who takes his faith easily, knows nothing about this. But you do, beloved, who look beneath the surface, who know Jesus as a Prophet, who know the light of hope that shines from His face for men and women, and then face the conditions of humanity. Is this prophecy only for the imagination, is it not to be wrought out in life? Is Jesus not King as well as Prophet?

Go out into this city today, it is full of the miasma of death, it is full of the breath of hell, streets that challenge Sodom. The multitudes of fast-rushing feet tread down the tender tendrils of the holy Sabbath, the fountains of hell are carefully walled up and cared for that they may poison and destroy. The tides of damnation are sweeping over the city, red with the blood of the thousands slain. And we have the conception and prophecy of a land where lion and lamb lie down together. We are pregnant with a great hope for men to be born again, sanctified and made holy through the blood of the Lamb. And yet to translate it into human life until the city would be filled with the life and glory of saved men and women, we can only cover our faces at the altar of God and cry, "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy, the children are come to the birth and there is not strength to bring them forth." It is a time for tears, for putting on sackcloth, and for rending garments, for broken hearts and contrite spirits. And yet God lives. There is a place of power. This battle is fought in the inner temple, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." That battle for Jerusalem was fought in the temple of God by the king on his knees, by the prophet gazing into the face of God.

In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence is your strength. The battle is fought by alliance of holy men and women with the throne of God. God can bring things to pass. He breaketh the bow and cutteth the spear in sunder. Hezekiah and Isaiah had the

victory at the altar of God. It does not depend upon circumstances, conditions or probabilities. All these are vain. "The Eternal God is our refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

What does this mean? That this battle is a spiritual battle. It is fought out with the powers of darkness, by faith in God. Not by the thousands of Israel. Not by the multitude of chariots. Not by great councils. God can shake the hearts of men. There must be faith some where to make it worth while to shake them. If there is no living faith in God, Assyrian and Jew, Paganism and Churchanity are all one. But if there is faith, God can shake human hearts, hard hearts, and melt them like water. The powers of wickedness are smitten by the wing of the death angel.

Whenever there is real faith, God begins to issue the bulletins of victory from the throne. The news of victory is not first from the battle-field, but from the throne. To Isaiah in the secret chamber comes the message. It is not on the board for the multitude, it is read by those who are in touch with God. The word is Victory! The head of the daughter of Zion is lifted in triumph. A hook is in the nose of Sennacherib and a bit in his lips. The war did not cease, but Israel got a baptism of spirituality it never got over.

I am not expecting the battle to be over. What I ask is that the King may be on his knees in the temple, that thy will the king of thy being, may be at the feet of Jesus with a broken spirit. That the prophet, thy conscience,

shall be gazing up to God so intently that God can issue to you today the bulletin of Victory.

I know not how many will be counted worthy to come up before the throne with the martyrs' scars on our souls or bodies, but with this alliance with God we shall come with palms of victory.

THE AGENCY AND INSTRUMENTALITIES OF HOLY VICTORY

TEXT: *"For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee. Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel"* (Isaiah 41: 13-16).

THE possibilities of a Divinely called agent are beyond my thought. As I meditate upon them my soul is filled with awe, and sometimes with joy; especially as I see how the over-ruling providences of God, bring the most humble and unpromising agencies on to the accomplishment of His purposes. This text is an expression of this divine leading and work.

"Thou worm Jacob." The Jewish people were in captivity, carried away by the armies of Assyria. Humiliated, disgraced, enslaved, they were marched from their native heath many hundred miles to Assyria and Babylon. Thousands and thousands of them were scattered abroad in the lands of the stranger, and of course, mostly in poverty and

need. Enslaved by their necessities, trampled down by their needs, they were sorrowful, dejected and discouraged. History was against them. Civilization was against them; it seemed that God was against them. They seemed of little account in the world. They seemed of themselves to be useless, and to be trampled under feet of men, like a worm in the streets.

Men become accustomed to tyranny, to oppression, even to being trampled upon, and they lose their longing for better things; so that when Cyrus authorized the return of the Jews to their native land, there were but few to respond to the call. Go, ye few men of Israel. Yet these were the men of destiny, in the sense of being called of God. They were to be the light of nations, as well as glorious in the eyes of the Lord. They were to be the light-bearers, and the truth-bearers to men. The figure changes, they were to be God's conquering agents. Mountains of difficulty and opposition were to be before them, but they were to be equipped for conquest and victory.

It is no far fetched figure that God's people are to be in the battle and wage the conflict for righteousness. The battle with sin in its multiplied forms is hard, but God proposes to arm His people for victory. He says to His people here, thou art few and weak and despised, but I will help thee; thy God will hold thy right hand and thou shalt conquer not in a small way, but in a way so great as to be beyond thy thought. Here He tells His people something about His method; "I will make thee a sharp threshing instrument, having teeth, and thou shalt thresh the

mountains and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff." This is a startling, almost a confounding statement to be made to this worm Jacob. But we are to remember that they are God's agency, that they are being prepared to do His work, and to be His messengers in the earth. When we recognize this we need not wonder at any provision which He makes.

I should wait long enough to emphasize the fact that we are a part of this same agency to whom this promise was made. This people who are called, "thou worm Jacob," are traced in prophetic vision through their history in this book as the servant of the Lord, and we are a part of the abiding servant of the Lord, to whom this promise is made. This weapon of conquest which the Lord proposes to put in the hands of His servants, which is new, sharp, and strong, which cuts its way to victory, is no other than the divine message—the gospel of God. The figure is the Oriental threshing machine. A kind of a sledge on iron wheels drawn by cows or oxen. Having teeth probably means strength and power. A machine that is sharp and strong and does the work.

I desire to call special attention to His putting into our hands an all conquering instrumentality, before the use of which no mountain can continue to rear its head, and no difficulty can stand. It is the God-given message, enswathed in the strength, power, and glory of the Holy Ghost. It is a sharp instrument. This same servant said, "Thou hast made my mouth a sharp sword." The last time we see Jesus, who is the very heart of this servant

out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword. The apostle says, "The word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The word of God is sharp, and when its edge glows with the fire of the Holy Spirit, it is doubly so.

The instrument is mighty, having teeth. As the jaws of a lion would crush the lamb, so this instrument will crush the difficulties, and open the way to victory. We may, even yet, have little conception of the power of this instrument. We may do well to examine it just a little. Not only the sharpness of its edge, but the strength and power that may be put into the arm that wields it. There is metal in this blade of which men little dream. There is truth, revealed truth—divine truth, truth which leaps from the lips of the Divine Christ, truth which can not return void, but must accomplish the divine pleasure and that for which it was sent. Of this it was said, "Truth crushed to earth will rise again." Truth must conquer. The battle may be long and it may sometimes seem as if truth were dead, as if, "right forever on the scaffold, and wrong forever on the throne." Truth is one of the teeth in this machine, one of the elements in this blade.

Another element is blood; the blood of the Lamb. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony. I do not know how to measure the power of the blood of Jesus. We measure electricity, steam, and even the power of gravitation. But how shall I undertake

to measure the power of the blood of Jesus? The power that stays the hand of eternal justice, that stretches out its wing of mercy over the universe, that can lift a soul over the measureless chasm which is as far as the east is from the west, from guilt to justification, from darkest midnight to brightest morning, from the mouth of hell to the gates of heaven.

The power of testimony. There is put into this instrument, living experience—the certainties of God. The knowledge that God touched me, and lifted me out of the pit. Marvelous certainties of the Word. All of these are melted into unity by the fire of the Holy Ghost. Truth is made as hot as fire: the blood is applied, and makes whiter than snow. Testimony flows like lava from the crater. All these are as fire shut up in the bones, until body soul and spirit, are a wick, about which the Shekinah shines. This instrument, strong, empowered, is given to this worm Jacob. Some say God will take a worm and thrash a mountain. That is not what this says. God's highest service to the world by man is not as an instrument, but as an agent. His agent divinely empowered with an instrument divinely prepared and given. This combination threshes the mountain. Things are brought to pass, the world is turned upside down. The figure is very strong. Thou shalt fan them. The wind shall carry them away. The whirlwind shall scatter them. And thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shall glory in the Holy One of Israel.

They joy before thee, according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

THE CONQUERING WORD

TEXT: "*Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff. Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel*" (Isaiah 41: 14-16).

I AM somewhat impressed with the conflicts which have been going on between nations, and especially in studying what men call decisive battles. The most that men call history is made up of these sanguinary conflicts. But we come gradually to realize that all of these are of small import compared to that colossal conflict which is going on in this world between holiness and sin, the noise of the tread of whose squadrons, and the clashing of whose blades never die away.

All the conflicts of earth soon cease to be of interest to men, only as they touch this great conflict. Take the great conflict which raged for four years in our own country. We have almost ceased to care for that struggle; only for two points, and they in their highest sense are moral and Christian: one, the government was maintained, and what for? To protect virtue and punish sin. The

other was the question of slavery. But along the line where intellectual, moral, and spiritual forces meet, individual life not only contends with individual life, but with principalities, and powers.

To live a Christian life means warfare. Every Christian is along the line where the battle rages, and he fights not only as one of an army interested in the general result, but he fights a personal fight. Every man must conquer or be himself trampled under foot by the powers of darkness. There is no release to man born of woman. He must conquer or perish. He, struggling, must overcome the foe or perish at the hands of the enemy.

Take the book of Revelation alone, where the conflict is somewhat foreshadowed, and see how much depends on Christian victory. "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God" (Rev. 2: 7). "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death" (Rev. 2: 11). "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it" (Rev. 2: 17). "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3: 5). "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down

out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name" (Rev. 3: 12). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Rev. 3: 21). "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Rev. 21: 7). John said (1 John 5: 4), "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Paul exhorted us not to be overcome of evil but to overcome evil with good. So it is evident that we must conquer evil in its varied forms. Conquer the Evil One and conquer the world in its combined powers and forces.

And this means not simply defence; for Jesus says, "As I have overcome," and the whole mission of Jesus Christ is aggressive warfare on the powers of darkness. His incarnation, life, death, resurrection and sending forth His followers was as a conqueror. He is Bozrah's Conqueror. No man overcometh who is not in alliance with Jesus Christ for the overthrow of the powers of darkness. Our victory is bound up with the victory of Jesus Christ. He bore our sins on the Cross. He opened heaven by His victorious death and resurrection. He takes us into His bosom, and binds us to Himself, in His life, His purposes, and His victory. So He says, "As the Father hath sent me so have I sent you." "Go ye and preach the gospel, and lo, I am with you alway." We are allied with Him in the overthrow of every ungodly power, and in filling the world with holiness and blessedness.

So we see that this conflict is a personal conflict, and it is a part of the wider conflict which is going on in the world. The soldier who went into the army felt, "This is my war." More intensely the Christian feels, "This is my fight."

In the text is brought out somewhat the way of this conflict. Here are the strength and power of darkness. They are mountains; so it seems. Look abroad and see the strength and power of ungodliness. How it lifts its unblushing head and absorbs the very life of our great cities. The great facts that meet us everywhere are the sin and crime of men. They seem to be as firmly rooted as the mountains. Against all this the Church is called to contend. This which presses in so many ways upon its very life and which attacks it in every possible way.

Of the weakness of human power against all of these, we need not speak at length. God here speaks of the Church as "Thou worm Jacob." Here is weakness personified. Thou (few) men of Israel. She is no longer a few men. in some sense of worldly power she is not weak, but she stands in the presence of the world's wickedness, and in her own power is as weak as a worm. Human strength can not regenerate or save a world, can not overthrow the mighty forces of evil. All the real work is beyond human power, a miracle, and yet this is her work. God says, "I will make you a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth. Here is human agency and a divinely created and ordained instrumentality, which in the hand of this human agent should be efficient and sufficient to over-

throw the mountains. You know something about the weakness and inability of the agency. But you may be ready to ask, What has God placed in my hands? What has He made for me, that through it or by it I may then do His work. When we look through the Divine teachings, and mark the course of the Savior Himself, I am sure there can be but one answer, and that is, a complete and perfect revelation of Divine truth. This is new. It comes afresh from the armory of heaven to every hand. Every word is as new, bright, and fresh today as it was the first time it was uttered. Indeed, it comes new from the heart of Christ, every time it is uttered into a human soul. No man ever used it to success who did not receive it freshly panoplied with the Holy Ghost. The light from God's sun-shine is new every morning.

Sharp—no weapon is so sharp as the Word of God. It is no simple figure of speech to say, "It is sharper than a two-edged sword." How it cuts through the souls of men. There is nothing that so cuts through the refuge of lies. Nothing that so punctures human philosophy, or that so lays bare the motives and reasonings of men.

Men do not attack with any degree of success, the great evils of society, who do not take the Word of God. Indeed, until the Word of God was given, there was no conflict between right and wrong. There was conflict enough, but it had no more meanings than the struggle of the beasts. God's Word, by the incarnation, which is the center of it, and by the Holy Ghost who makes it ef-

fective, has created, and continues to create, the army of the Redeemer.

This Word is the effective weapon. The wickedness of the wicked, whether it be in the individual heart, or in great systems of wrong, is brought to an end only as it is smitten by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Wickedness is the serpent of unnumbered joints, and it dies by piecemeal, but only as smitten by the Divine Word. You may look at the great army of the redeemed today. In every one of them, wickedness has been smitten by the Word of God.

Look at the great systems of wickedness which have already been cast out. The great system of slavery. No one will now question that it was swallowed up by the waters of Christian civilization. The armies that overthrew it were not the winds from the caves of ordinary worldly thought or wisdom. They were the incarnation of God's truth, and were led on by the Angel of the Covenant.

The great Scarlet Evil of the liquor traffic dyed in deeper crimson than any other villainy, bearing in its bloody tide more dead and dying; reeking with more rotteness and corruption, than all other cesspools of iniquity; it sends out from its reeking bosom the dark, poisonous miasma that goes into every avenue of life to poison and blast. The only weapon that will smite it to death is the Word of God. Let this mighty Damascus blade fall upon it from every side for that is our only hope. Law and material forces against wrong are but the

incarnation of the Word of God in the hearts of the people.

“Which has teeth,” or mouths. This means nothing less than the powers and forces contained in the Divine utterances to smite the powers of darkness. These are no less than the great facts, the Divine thoughts, which stand out in this Word, clothed with a divine emphasis; God over all; Jesus Christ the Eternal Son incarnate; the Holy Ghost; the new birth.

This book is but an instrument. It needs back of it the living agent, the living, thinking, loving representative of its Divine Author. A man whose heart glows and burns with these Divine facts. A man who feels their force, and who knows in his own experience their power. A man who himself burns with their fire and thrills with their life. Such a man takes this gospel and goes forth to conquer. He is at one with the instrument which he bears. He knows its power, and sees clearly the possibilities that lie before its proclamation. He gives it utterance. The utterance of his own consecration, character, administration, and devotion. The utterance of his own and a divine enthusiasm. The greatest enemies the Church has are the “ice-men” at her altars. Such a man sends a chill through all the region around him. No hymn lifts him into rapture. No view of divine truth transfigures him or makes his raiment sparkle. He is outside the fire of the most burning appeal. His theology is formally right, but he is heterodox in soul, a heretic in feeling. I am afraid of coldness. Joseph Parker says, “better two men in burning

earnest than a house full of those whose souls lack enthusiasm." This instrument is run by Divine fire.

Demosthenes could but have felt that he had no weapon in his hand to do his work. His impassioned soul appealed to liberty; but the very name, liberty was as a tinkling cymbal. How sad his eloquence, a sweet dying strain! Or Cicero among the Romans, appealing to traditions and sentiments which had passed away. How different the eloquence of Paul, even when he stood amid the departing glories of Greece, and was as yet unable to get to Rome. The same sense of power was with Justin, Gregory, Basil, Chrysostom, Jerome, Luther, Whitefield and Simpson.

We have but to push this Word every where and it will conquer. Pushed by men who know its power, who feel that above them the heavens are open, and that in this Divine gospel are the hidings of Almighty power, and it must and will conquer.

Let us not make a mistake. Let us not say that God's way is to take a worm and thrash a mountain. He might do that, but that is not what He says. And let us not evade the responsibility, not misinterpret the fact of our own agency. It was a fortunate fact that God placed the finely veined marble at Pentelicus, but ten miles from Athens, but that does not account for the Parthenon. It was a man, or men. So this Word alone does not account for the planting, within a few years, of churches from Jerusalem to Rome. There were men who used and lived the Word. This Word does not account for the ref-

ormation; but the Word with Luther and Wycliff does account for it. Let men take this Word and conquer.

Constantine approached Rome for the first time a little after noon. Just above the sun, which he worshipped, he saw a radiant cross, with the inscription, "En Tonta Vika," In this conquer. The Cross is this gospel. By this we shall conquer.

THE PERPETUAL SERVANT

TEXT: "*Behold my servant, whom I uphold: mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my Spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles*" (Isaiah 42: 1).

NO one can fail to feel as he reads this call to behold the servant that it refers directly to the Lord Jesus. No one can saturate his heart with the New Testament but that he feels that he beholds the Servant of the Lord. Jesus Himself gives a very clear commentary on this text in His remarks to the disciples in reference to James and John. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Today I would stand in the presence of the Master Himself or at least wait with you in a more concentrated gaze upon Him who is, with the greatest emphasis, "The Servant of God." Some years ago a brilliant professor in England wrote a book entitled, "Ecce Homo," which incited Dr. Parker to write a book which he entitled, "Ecce Deus." I have no desire to awaken, in any special sense, any theological discussion. But with you, to behold Him who is indeed the Son of God and the Son of man. Out of the bosom of the Father, out of the deep of humanity, the Servant, Burden-Bearer, Redeemer, Savior of men came.

I could spend the moments this morning, I believe with very great profit, in studying the person of this most Blessed One, as we so often do, and in gazing upon the service rendered to the hearts and lives of men as He came in contact with them during His stay in this world. There are many places where, if we should stop and begin to gaze at the manifestation of His glory, we would tarry all the moments of this hour. Places of His miracles of mercy, and we should see how the sick are healed, the lepers cleansed, the blind see, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised. We could hardly get away. Or, if we saw Him as a teacher, we should excuse our tardiness by saying, "Never man spake as this man." Or, we might see Him in some moment of His rapture, as that night on Hermon, or that day when the seventy returned. Or we might see Him in some hour of peculiar expression of sorrow, entering Jerusalem, or in Gethsemane. Or if we were to wait at the place of His supreme service, at Calvary, we would not be unmoved by these; indeed we would be filled with them. But may we behold Him in His further and crowning service, wherein He Himself brings to bear and applies all this service, in blessing to the individual soul?

Jesus said, "It is essential to you that I go away . . . but I will come again. A little while . . . and you shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you." Jesus identifies Himself with the Holy Ghost, "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." That same Divine Person who was in the incarnation serving in atonement, is in the Holy Ghost serving in the distribution of the

gifts of the atonement. The same holy, blessed, divine Christ who walked the hill-sides of Judea, wept over Jerusalem, bled in the Garden, and died on the Cross, is the Holy Ghost here today to save.

It is the Servant in the new incarnation that I desire you to behold. Our Christ is in the world today in the person of the Holy Ghost, in a new incarnation. The Servant was a *people*, then a *remnant* of people, called, held, empowered, used by God; then a *Person*, the ripe fruitage of the people, in whom dwelt all the fulness of God. The Servant became the people, made after the image of the Person, a further incarnation of God. We recognize the divine presence in incarnation. The Father was seen in Jesus Christ. What, "Have I been so long with you and yet hast thou not known me?" He expected them to see in Him. In His miracle? Yes, if they could see no other way. It is in transformed humanity that God is seen. When the Holy Ghost came to take the place in men, as the personal Servant, or making men, in connection with Himself, the Servant, there were certain signs, but left to themselves, or crowded out of their proper place as signs, they mean little or nothing. The real fact was God in transformed men, and that into men God had come to carry on this service to men. The same Spirit is manifest, and the same work is done.

The Son of God is not the atoning Servant without the Son of Mary. It was the Son of God and the Son of man in unity who was the personal Servant. It is the Holy Ghost and the sons of men who are the Servant on earth—

not the Holy Ghost alone, not the sons of men alone—but built into such unity as the Son of God and the Son of Mary.

I would not draw away your attention from that most marvelous personal Servant who poured out His blood on Calvary, but I would call attention to the fact that His life and ministry are continued in this new Servant in whom the Holy Ghost dwells. And that the atoning blood in all its power flows into this new ministry. That Calvary stands forever fresh in this Servant. I would not call attention away from the resurrection of Jesus Christ, that most stupendous, divine attestation of His service, but I would call attention to the fact that the power revealed in that resurrection is borne forward into the Servant, the redeemed and holy people in whom the Holy Ghost dwells. Calvary and the resurrection, enswathed in the Holy Ghost, come in to possess, transform and empower men to form the Servant. The Servant of the Lord is not an ordinary man. He is an ordinary man plus the Holy Ghost. Not an ordinary people, but a people upon whose dwellings and assemblies abide the pillar of cloud by day, and the burning fire by night.

There are a few things in reference to this Servant of these last ages to which I call your attention. "Behold my servant, . . . I have put my spirit upon him." This is the one great fact in reference to the Servant. The presence of the Lord as the great fact is indicated from the call of the Servant. This was the great fact in the call of Abraham. In the call of Moses this was the one

great fact. His hand was on his childhood destiny, His light enabled him to see how much more desirable the afflictions of God's people than the treasures of Egypt. God met him at the back side of the desert, was with him at the Red Sea, on Sinai, and promised, "My presence shall go with thee." To Joshua the promise came. Zacharias and Elizabeth, Simeon and Anna, are likewise examples. When the personal Servant was ushered in, the heavens opened, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him, the voice of God spoke witnessing to His Sonship. The infinite verities seemed nearer than the earthly all through those years. His touch was the touch of God. His voice was the voice of God. The heavens were ever open above Him. He was turning His eye upward and saying, "Father, I know that thou hearest me always." There were voices which talked to Him that made the disciples think that it thundered. There was darkness and earthquake about His Cross. There was trembling and glory about His tomb which was to be forever vacant. There were messengers as if dropped from His wounded hands as He entered the chariot cloud. More than this, there was something in Him, in gentleness, humility, meekness, love; something which made people come to Him in their need. Something which drew them to Him in their deeper heart's cry. Something which caused mothers to bring their children. Young men came saying, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" The richest divine glory was not in the outward things, but in the transformed being of a human soul born of God and made luminous by His

Spirit. And yet He felt that until the atoning work was fulfilled, there was necessarily such a pent-up and shut up condition that divine incarnation could not multiply. But when this should be done like a kernel of wheat cast into the ground it would multiply. When this was accomplished and the Holy Ghost came, and men and women were filled with Him, they were so like Him, so filled with Him, receiving the glory which He received from the Father and gave to them of transformed and anointed being, that they with Him became *the Servant*. The distinguishing fact was the new incarnation. In this enlarged and final service, the one fact that designates the Servant, is the Spirit of God.

Some Characteristics of the Servant are: absence of self-assertion or self advertising. "He shall not cry nor lift up, nor make his voice to be heard in the street." This is not a statement that He shall not every where herald the message of God. The prophet who so reveals the Servant, honors, as no other the proclamation of the message of God. The messenger is a polished arrow, a sharp sword, the tongue of the learner. The command is, "Lift up the voice as a trumpet." The advertising or pushing to the front of anything but salvation hinders. Jesus told those He healed that they should not make Him known.

Another characteristic is gentleness. A reed that is bruised He does not break off. Wherever the Servant touches men it is not the judge, but the Savior, the Redeemer, the Helper. The Servant comes with the gos-

pel; like the Master Himself, when He gave the people that marvelous Sermon on the Mount. He said, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." But He also led them back to the great fountains of their need and stretched His two loving hands over them and said, "Come unto Me."

THE PASSION THAT ABSORBS

TEXT: "*Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not*" (Isaiah 42: 19, 20).

THOUGHFUL passion is the warp of the Christian life. An intensity which makes it impossible for any thing else to get the attention. A clear thoughtfulness which has considered the matter, and has the mind fully made up. The two things over which the prophet Isaiah wept, the conditions against which his prophecies were uttered and that he tried to save his people from, were *thoughtlessness*, or lack of deep, earnest conscientious thought, and *formality*—thoughtless religiousness. These two things go together. If a man thinks deeply, earnestly, and honestly, he can not be a formalist. And if he is an intense worshipper of God he can not be shallow or listless in his thinking.

So the ideal servant of the Lord is blind and deaf. Holy devotion and clear thought mark out a clear way before him; and no side vices, no glittering balls thrown across his track to attract his attention, have any possible power over him. He is blind to every thing but the passion of his soul. He is deaf to everything but the voice which calls him on.

The passion of Jesus comes into the heart of His own, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world." As Paul felt and expressed it he said, "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." This utter abandonment to Jesus Christ, and the searching thoughtfulness in the light of God, which makes us thoroughly right and reliably intense before God and men, is the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense in these days, as ever. A general consecration to God has to be wrought out by most careful searching and devoted thought, or else the consecration will break down or come to nought.

A young man consecrates himself in time of war, to go into the army. It may be a heroic thing, but it is only the open door to things, and if he fights his battles on what he did in that consecration, and on the government's acceptance of him and putting the regimentals on him, he will be a poor soldier. That was the door, but his continued devotement and thoughtful valor, standing in the ranks, charging with his comrades, suffering and dying with them, is a further thing. It was a blessed open door when we gave ourselves in consecration to Jesus Christ. But unless there is continued thoughtful, sacrificial devotement to Him, our previous consecration becomes, not only useless, but a stench in the nostrils of heaven and earth, like every other dead thing.

Now to attempt to hold men to devout, earnest think-

ing until their consecration shall have such activity as to commend itself to men, and especially to God, is sometimes a thankless job. But men's salvation depends upon it. Men are likely to be governed by their notions, their prejudices, their impulses, or by the influences which happen to press them, and they are led into darkness and ruin.

The working out of our entire consecration to God on the daily battle field is the great problem. That is the place where men fail. It is where a few succeed and are able to say, "I have fought a good fight." Our religious life is real. It is made practical by our application of it to the conditions which come to us. It is not ethereal, but must be wrought out by our earnest effort and clear vision. While no part may be represented from the whole, as the Christian life is a unit and can not readily be divided up and its elements fully treated separately, for every part merges into every other; yet by looking at it from different standpoints we may get help. With this understanding I may say that our Christian life is ethical, personal, social, financial, and political.

Let us march through it a little and view it under some of these side lights. I said that it is ethical. It has divinely given laws and regulations. They are clear and plain. Nothing which is essential is left in obscurity. Christian men are not given up to their own ways, nor to be governed by their own impulses, prejudices or notions. Neither are they to be governed by dreams, visions, nor impressions. The great work of God in this world is to give man a comprehensive revelation of His will. By clear

earnest thought it can be applied to every vital condition of life. One of the great difficulties arises from not knowing the Scriptures and thus not knowing the power of God. People seek to their own visions and dreams, and imaginings, as Saul sought to the Witch of Endor, and with similar results. People thus seek their own ways and are given up to them, and people seeking God's way are hindered.

The Christian life is personal. It has relation to myself. It has its end and purpose and life in me. Of course everything pertaining to us goes out to affect others, but some things are primarily personal. "He that is wise is wise for himself." That I am holy; that I have sustaining grace; that I am filled with the peace of God; that at evening time it is light: these are primarily personal.

The Christian life is also social. I might almost say that it is pre-eminently social in that it pours through every power of our personality out upon others. No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel. God sets the redeemed in families, and sends His own with messages of love to every heart in the universe. God's provision is for associated life. Our needs are such in every way that it is not good for man to be alone. We need each other in spiritual fellowship and helpfulness in unnumbered ways. Also, for God's possibilities, few things can be undertaken or accomplished alone. By association together we give and receive benefits and blessings. We are called to undertake enterprises which none could do alone. The early Church and the Church always, is a body of believers.

The Apostle lays special stress upon the body bound together as the human body is united, and Christ the head. This associated life makes some things necessary, which Christian ethics and clear thinking under the light of God make evident. Grant curtailment of personal liberty. That with shallow thinkers, is not a popular utterance. Shallowness prates of personal liberty, as do those who wish to use it as a cloak for wickedness. All association curtails personal liberty. There is a possible condition where you would have unrestrained personal liberty, such as being upon an island where you were the only living creature. The presence of any other living creature would curtail your personal liberty. Church life, so far as local association is concerned, while sacred and carrying many responsibilities with it, is not unchangeable. When all obligations are met and provided for, and it is the clear providence of God that by other associations you can elsewhere glorify God more; in the proper spirit, and with proper arrangements, you can be relieved of responsibility and find your providential place. If there have been obligations assumed in which you are a party, you are to meet your proper part, and secure, if possible, the agreement of representative parties to your course. These things may not necessarily affect us as a people very much. People coming to us are usually careful on these points, and not many go from us. We have been peculiarly protected considering that many of us have had little theological or church training. But we have had experience of the pres-

ence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit who melts us into unity.

We have been peculiarly beset, being a new movement. Every such is likely to be something like Hilkiah, though a nail in a sure place, had so many things hung upon him that the nail gave away. So many fads of various kinds try to hang themselves on a new movement, and thus break it down. Then, too, in this section of the country we are peculiarly infected with every spiritual plague. But being in unity with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ, and praying God to help them all, and trying in the best way to co-operate with all, and having an intense devotion to Christ who is head over all, God has preserved us. There will necessarily be the intensest love for those closest about us, and peculiar enthusiasm for the work given us to do.

A soldier, a soldierly soldier, a true soldier, loves the cause. He is not an hireling. He *loves*, and is much interested in the whole army. Every defeat is his defeat. Every triumph is his triumph. But he is especially interested in his own division, still more in his own brigade, and yet more in his own regiment. Its defeat is still more intensely and sadly his own, and its victories are peculiarly his victories. Here is an old soldier. He loves the whole army, every officer, every man. But the general who led him; the colonel who walked or rode right ahead of his company and who fell into his arms when struck by the enemy's bullet; the men who walked beside him, camped and messed with him, and who tied up his wounds or brought him water in his thirst; some whom he had borne

from the field; these are nearest and dearest to him. So it is in the Church of Jesus Christ. I rejoice in the spirit of every department of the church if their end is holiness and the salvation of souls. That is my work and I rejoice in every victory.

I peculiarly love the regiment where the Great Commander has placed me and where He permits me to fight. Once in my life I have been changed from one division to another. I did not say hard things about those from among whom I was removed, but I love them. If I can make the little regiment where I am placed heard of in heaven, and be in its ranks in the great day of triumphal entrance, I shall rejoice. We are allied together. If any man loses his enthusiasm he might as well be buried.

Our religion has a financial or business side. Most of us are to be, in some sense, business men. We are to touch this world on its business side. We are to have business with men, some more, some less. I may not discuss very largely the Christian as a business man. I am not going to stop to apply common ethics to his business life. That he is to be honest all men know. The one point to which I wish to refer is the Christian and capital as regards ownership. The Christian religion regards each man as a steward; that we are not the owners of the capital in our hands, but only managing it for the owner, our Lord. One reason I speak of it is that I have been misunderstood, and I desire to be at least clear on so vital a matter. The right recognition of this principle is vital to Christian life, and equally so whether we have

much or little, one talent or five. I have been understood to insist that in the consecration of our money, which is but a recognition of ownership, that we are to at once dispossess ourselves of it. Now if that understanding comes from an unwillingness to dispossess ourselves of it, if that is the will of the owner, I have only to say that that man has no proper recognition of Christian life. But it might be very wrong to dispossess ourselves of the Lord's money. We are stewards. Somebody must hold it, and manage it for Him, using it for His work and glory.

I have said that there is a political side to Christian life. Paul gave direction in things pertaining to government, even in times when the personal factor counted for little. But in these days when units make up the government, and something like kingly power is in the hands of each, the political side of Christian life, while it may not seem very wide with you and me, is written very deep. Righteousness is as deep as hell and as high as heaven. A man's vote or a woman's political influence is for God or against Him, on the great questions which go to the bottom of things.

We have here in the text a man who can see only God, who can hear only His voice. A man, a Christian man, who sees only God, and who is absorbed in Him, is a most magnificent sight. He is trusting God, conversing with God, filled with God, living in God, God is living in him and he is a light in this dark world.

THE TEMPLE OF GOD

TEXT: "*But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine*" (Isaiah 43: 1).

WHEN we begin to think about the work of creation we never get back to its beginning, and the end is not yet. When scientific research has told us all that it can; when revelation has rung its grand anthem of creation; when we have learned all we can about species and their progress; when the historian has told us all he can of the races of men; we know but little. The fountains of creative energy are out of sight. We can see how the creative forces are still working in the world.

It is especially in that oldest and newest universe of mind or spirit that we can see the creative hand of God most clearly. It is in the unfinished temple of human society that we can trace most definitely this creating hand. A man can not be properly viewed as an isolated being. He is a fraction of a whole. How large that whole may be is difficult to tell. He is a single stone of a vast temple. There is such a thing as society, as civilization, though it may be difficult to say or to see just what it is. To build a spiritual temple, a living temple, a growing temple, that shall illuminate society, purify, sweeten, and

transform human living, and turn this world of strife and despair into brotherhood and hope, is the creative work which we are called to study more especially.

I shall not attempt to solve the mysteries of Providence. We know but a few things and it behooves us to keep close to them. But we can see that to create a universe that is morally good, i. e., good because those of whom it is created will that it shall be; is a very different thing from creating a physical universe.

Without going back to discuss causes or reasons, we find that a little less than 4,000 years ago, upon this earth were races of men, creatures in some sense like ourselves. Moral agents somewhat conscious of obligations; free to badness, under some possible conditions free to goodness; but bound down by ignorance of spiritual things, and by superstition, and the natural results of their idolatry. The knowledge of Jehovah had nearly become extinct. True moral ideas had nearly ceased.

There were mighty nations upon the earth among whom there was, in certain lines, much intelligence. Some branches of science were deeply studied, and some of the arts carried to great perfection. Great systems of religion or irreligion had grown up, but little of morality and true light. When the time seemed ripe there seems to have been the necessity to begin laying the foundations of that temple whose walls should slowly rise through the ages, shining with the light of the glory of God, until it fills the world with its golden beams. Of this great temple God is the architect. Everything that ever exists, exists

first in thought. As the architect closes his eyes he sees the walls rise stone after stone, sees the arches spring, looks upon the dome and spire, walks in the aisles, feels the pillars, sees the sculptured forms, looks on the frescoes, sees the mellow light coming through stained windows, sees thousands of faces, hears the tones of the great organ and the voice of the multitude in worship.

So God held in His infinite mind this great temple. He saw its rising and lengthening walls, its arches, turrets, domes, and pinnacles, after a thousand generations. He saw its multitudes of worshippers whom no man could number. He heard their song, like the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunders filling the earth and heavens. He saw it all before the first stone was laid, e'er He spoke to Abram in Ur of the Chaldees to come out of his father's country to follow Him.

When a great building is to be constructed, and the material begins to be gathered, there seems to be much confusion, little order, little planning. The man who excavates the earth, or squares a massive stone sees little. The on-looker sees little. If this is true of a temple that is to be erected of marble, how much more of a temple which is to be built of souls. A temple of thought, love, purity, and hope.

God tried to impart some idea of the temple to Abram. He led him forth at night and said, "Look now towards the heavens, count the stars, if thou be able to number them: So shall thy seed be." I will build a temple of

human society out of thee that shall be like the shining heavens.

In the building of this temple, some things seem to have been essential. One of these was temporary isolation. Of all things difficult to attain, the most difficult is good spiritual conditions. We can not appreciate this because our spiritual conditions are built upon ages of spiritual culture. And when we go to the heathen lands, though we may see some of the depths of moral degradation, yet the missionary himself is a representative of better things, and can impart a knowledge of that condition and the manner of its attainment. But 4,000 years ago there was no human teacher. The thought of the one God had faded out of the minds of men. The fountains of human depravity had so coalesced into streams of wickedness that there was no conception of moral goodness. A low, base idolatry which was in harmony with human sin and passion prevailed. In order to enlighten and teach the race, to uplift character until there should be a conception of spiritual things, a knowledge of the true God, and of moral goodness, it was necessary to isolate a people, to place them as far as possible out of the influence of all contaminating streams of idolatry and heathen rites. It was also necessary that they be brought into peculiar relations to God. That there might be given unto them revelation. That they be taught by signal manifestations of Divine justice the difference between sin and holiness, and the relation of each to God.

Thus came the call of Abram to a land he knew not of.

Thus the revelation of the law with awful manifestations, calculated to affect and impress minds with their responsibility to God. Thus the awful visitations of justice upon the wrong-doer. Thus the opening of the sea and the river. Thus the sending into captivity, and the restoration. Thus the giving of the pattern for tabernacle and temple, and directions for rites and ceremonies. Thus the altar and the sacrifices, the holy and most holy places, the sprinkled blood and Divine Shekinah.

All of these were that they might come to a knowledge of the One Jehovah. All that they might have a knowledge of sin and holiness, and begin to learn the way to escape the one and to possess the other. But all this was to be preparatory, the laying of the foundation of that temple which He was to build. But the foundations are all-important. They must be laid in the right place. A temple of thought, of moral influence, and spiritual life must be built where it will touch the lives of men. He who was infinitely wise laid the foundations. "Come into a land which I will give thee." On the shore of what to the nations was the great sea, between the mountains and the deserts. On the great highway of the nations. Not very far away from the great valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Not far from the valley of the Nile and northern Africa. And with the possibilities of Europe. We can hardly appreciate today how the world gathered around the land of Canaan.

Upon the foundation must rest the superstructure. Such a foundation as is fit. In a temple of thought, of

spiritual life, and of moral conditions the foundation must be germinal, the building must grow out of it. In a living temple, the foundations are the root of the temple out of which the temple itself unfolds. A religion of spiritual life can not be spoken into being in a day. It has to be laid in the fountains of human thinking, to shape into the intuitions and convictions of men. There are those who think they can rub the rust off from their mental machinery and make a religion in an hour or so. But the infinite God took 2,000 years to plant, nourish, and establish in the souls of men those principles, convictions and expressions upon which He could found the temple of revealed religion.

How long the labor and the work before conditions could be brought about, so that a fact could be brought forth, of which God could say, "Upon this rock will I build my church." Into this foundation had to enter many elements, which at first were germinal, but at last were perfected, and the foundation was complete. One of these elements, one that is specially named in my text, one that is primal in the whole temple is, Redemption.

Written upon every stone of the foundation, carved deeper and deeper as the days go by us, "I have redeemed thee." You pick up some stones along our streams or mountain sides, and wipe them off and there appear miniature forests. Split them open, break them up, and everywhere there are trees and thickets. So in every stone put into the foundation was ingrained the Cross. The Church of God rests upon the great fact of redemption.

There were the smoking altars, bleeding victims, ascending incense, and sprinkled blood. There were prophetic symbols, and clear and mighty utterances that told of the coming Redeemer. Almost every fact in their history, every great manifestation of the power of God in their deliverance was made a figure of the greater work of the world's redemption. Their deliverance from Egypt, their triumphant return from captivity, their victory over the great enemies of the East, are all made typical of Bozrah's Conqueror, who is red in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength, mighty to save.

It was the carrying forward and completion of this work that completed the foundation of the new civilization. When the necessary truths and principles had been incarnated through this isolated people; the walls of their isolation having been more and more broken up as the day drew near; when the world was ready by long providential oversight, the blessed Redeemer came. Looking into and through all the foundation thus far reared, He said, "As in the book . . . it is written of me." Seeing all the promises in sacrifices, types, and prophecy, He said, "This day these things are fulfilled in your sight." He gathered unto Himself all the past, and showed its deep spiritual import and power. He brought the unseen and unseeable Jehovah so near to man that they could realize His personal presence. He showed men in His own being, what purity and righteousness are. He declared in Himself, immortality, and infinite relationships.

He bowed His head on the Cross, and seeing all the

effort, all the sacrifices, all the altars and victims, also seeing clearly the divine plan to pay the price of human guilt and thus open a way of life to men, as He saw that the vision was complete, and that now the great sacrifice was made, He said, "It is finished."

We now see clearly that from the beginning to the end of the building of this foundation, it was Jesus Christ. It was the Angel of the Covenant who talked to Abram. He was revealing the God-head. He was teaching purity. He was slowly lifting His cross of redeeming love through the ages. In a word, He was entwining His thoughts, His love, His power to save around the beginnings of history. Deep in the rocks of the ages He began to lead in the beginnings of His eternal truth. Stronger and more unmoveable became these crystallizations of Divine truth as the generations came and went, until at last the foundation is completed. I see something of the strength of that boast of Jesus Christ when He said, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." *No wonder that, as Paul looked with his eagle eye and examined with care, he should say, "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."*

Looking at all this, we may be certain that "the foundation of God standeth sure." We need not fear that the earthquakes or tempests of moral, intellectual or social revolution will affect them. We need not fear that a man with his breath in his nostrils, and his thinking necessarily confined within the narrowest limits, will overthrow the temple. That he should attempt it we need not

wonder, since he has undertaken to rear a tower which should reach unto heaven, and many other as foolish things.

And now the foundation is complete. He who has been in it from the beginning, the Angel of the Covenant, the Son of God, has come in the incarnation, as the world's Redeemer, His immediate associates and witnesses of His life, death and resurrection, are added to it, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone. It is not a mere aggregation, but a living organism, of which the Apostle says, "In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord." "In which ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." The inspired thought of this temple is wonderful. Jesus Christ in the beginning, Jesus Christ in the prophets and apostles. Jesus Christ the corner stone. And now as the temple is reared every stone is laid in Him, built in Him.

And now if we would see clearly, we must see through the figure and make it a help rather than a hindrance to our sight. When I look at a telescope I see little, but when I look through it I see wonderful things. God's revelation of Himself, His education, of the race, His building of His thought and Spirit into the hearts and lives of men, goes on until there rises gradually through the ages an embodiment of spiritual and moral life which stands among the systems and civilizations of men, among the mythologies and philosophies, like a magnificent temple of purest marble, rising amid the mud huts of squalid poverty and ignorance. And yet that is not a complete

statement, for wherever it comes it transforms the mud huts into something of its own beauty, and it is only as you take the broader views that you can see its over-towering magnificence and beauty. So let us look through the figure and see that it means the new life in man, the new civilization. That it means manhood. And we may as well direct our gaze at that, for manhood means life and civilization.

All that has been wrought by our heavenly Father in the earth is to make man. The one thing that is of value in the world is noble manhood. Brick and mortar, jewels, gold or silver, and lands, of themselves are nothing. Bad men are not of value. All this building of the ages is to provide a way by which every man can be made good. To pour down through the ages of men a divine chemistry that should turn society everywhere into a laboratory where without failure men can be made good. To bring into the building of society an architecture that shall make characters righteous, stable, and heroic. A power that should without uncertainty accomplish this end.

And so He who was in all the foundation, is in all the temple. He who laid with his own thought and spirit and life, the very beginnings of the foundation; He who brought life after life by His own divine touch and placed them in the foundation; He who built patriarchs and prophets into Himself to make preparation complete; now builds every soul into Himself, that it may be indeed a part of the great temple, and that there may be no possible failure of manhood. God builds His church

into society and wherever it comes it is possible for every man to be good.

Let us remember that God's Church is a living temple, growing, rescuing, saving, ennobling men, because in it, as the source of its power, as the fountain of its salvation and love is the Lord Jesus Christ, a living personal presence.

The Church is not a society of men with a certain belief, and forms, and ritual, but the Divine Person moving in the hearts of men. And men are built into it by the Divine touch. Here stands the Divine Christ with His arms around every one, yea, His very nature around every one. His heart's blood flowing to every heart. His light and glory filling all hearts.