

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

WHO IS THIS ?

A Sermon

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“Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken. Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.”—Isaiah lxii. 11, 12; lxiii. 1.

ISRAEL was often in great trouble, frequently oppressed by neighbouring nations. It would not have been so if they had been faithful to Jehovah; but as a chastisement for their idolatry they were given over into the hands of adversaries. One nation, near akin to them, was very jealous of them. The Edomites, the seed of Esau, were always watching against Israel, and whenever the nation fell on evil times, and powerful kingdoms invaded them, Edom was ever in alliance with the enemy, ready to profit by Israel's sorrows. Hence Edom was the typical adversary of Israel, and is in that manner mentioned here with Bozrah, its capital city.

The Lord God of Israel often interposed to rescue his people. I need not go over the history; but any one of these appearances for the overthrow of Israel's enemies may be represented in the language now before us, in the commencement of the sixty-third chapter. God coming forth in the glory of his strength overthrows Israel's enemies, and is seen in vision returning from their slaughter. I take the text as a representation of those marvellous victories which the Lord wrought for his chosen people when he put forth his power on their behalf. The first verse represents the astonishment of the prophet and of the people, as they beheld the Lord glorious in power, when he had vindicated the cause of his oppressed people, and had crushed the power of their adversaries.

As in God's immediate dealings with men we usually see the Son of God most manifest, this passage may fitly represent the glorious appearances of our Lord Jesus Christ whenever he has come forth to vindicate the cause of his people and to overthrow their enemies. This vision will be astoundingly fulfilled in the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The fourteenth and nineteenth chapters of the Book of Revelation give us parallel passages to this. What astonishment there will be among the sons of men when he shall appear in his vesture dipped in blood, smiting the nations with his iron rod—yea, dashing them in

pieces as potters' vessels! In those last tremendous times, when the day of vengeance shall have arrived, then shall the winepress be trodden without the city, even the great winepress of the wrath of God. No tongue can fully tell the terrors of that day when our Lord shall say, "Ah, I will ease me of mine adversaries." While he shall give victory to the cause of peace, and purity, and truth, and righteousness, and shall save all those who believe in him, he shall bruise Satan under his feet, and crush the powers of darkness. Then shall these words of the prophet be more fully understood: "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?"

The commentators and expositors almost universally deny that this text may be used as referring to our Lord's passion. They tell us that to do so would be to wrest the Scripture from its obvious meaning; at any rate, at the best, it would be a mere accommodation of the passage. Now, I take up the gage of battle, and deny the assertion. The church by a holy instinct has referred the passage to our Lord's first as well as his second coming, and she has not been in error. The very first reference of this text is to the Lord's passion in its spiritual aspect as a battle against the enemies of our souls. I grant you that the text does not speak of our Lord as trampled upon and crushed in the winepress, and the blood which stains his garments is not said to be his own blood, but that of his foes. Such a representation might have been expected had it been the prophet's design to describe the sufferings of our Lord; he does not describe the sufferings themselves, but he does most clearly depict their grand result. If we take a deeply spiritual sight of our Lord's passion, such as a prophet would be likely to have before him in vision, we see upon his garments, as the result of his sufferings, not so much his own blood as the blood of the enemies whom in death he overthrew.

The passage is poetical: the battle is a spiritual one; the conflict is with sin and with the powers of darkness; and the conqueror returns from the fight having utterly destroyed his foes, of which his blood-dyed garments are the surest evidence. Our Lord's passion was the battle of all battles, upon which the whole campaign of his life turned; and had he not there and then vanquished all our adversaries, and had he not at the resurrection come back as one who had trampled down all his foes, then there had been no glorious appearing in the latter days. That first combat is the cause of the ultimate triumph. I look upon this sixty-third of Isaiah as the prophetic statement of the event described by Paul in Colossians ii. 15:—"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." On the resurrection morning it would have been correct poetically to have used the language of our text. Unseen spirits, viewing our Lord after a spiritual manner, might have exclaimed as they beheld the risen Saviour—

"Who is this that comes from Edom,
All his raiment stain'd with blood;
To the slave proclaiming freedom;
Bringing and bestowing good:
Glorious in the garb he wears,
Glorious in the spoils he bears?"

I mean so to use the passage this morning, with a consciousness that I am not accommodating it, nor taking it from its natural sense at all ; but rather placing it in the light of its first great fulfilment. I have not concealed from you its relation to the Second Advent, when the Lord Jesus shall appear in victory "clothed with a vesture dipped in blood" ; but at the same time this is a picture of salvation rather than destruction, and its hero appears as "mighty to save," in fulfilment of a divine proclamation : "Behold, thy salvation cometh." The scene before us describes an interposition of the Messiah ; the return of the divinely appointed champion from the defeat of his enemies. As it is evidently a picture of salvation rather than of damnation ; as the main feature in it is that he is mighty to save ; as the great and chief element of the whole thing is that the year of his redeemed is come, and that the warrior's own arm has brought salvation to his people ; I cannot for a moment question that this text is applicable to the first coming of Christ. Then he did battle with the hosts of sin and death and hell, and so vanquished them that in his resurrection he returned with the keys of death and of hell at his girdle. Then was he seen as "mighty to save." Now lend me your hearts as well as your ears, while I proceed to the great subject before us, and may the Holy Spirit grant us his gracious aid !

I. First, in my text there is A PROCLAMATION : "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold, thy salvation cometh ; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord : and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." The commentators as a whole can see no connection between the sixty-third chapter and the preceding part of the Book of Isaiah ; but surely that connection is plain enough to the common reader. In these verses the coming of the Saviour is proclaimed, and in the next chapter that coming is seen in vision, and the evangelical prophet beholds the Saviour so vividly that he is startled, and enquires, "Who is this?"

Let us consider this proclamation broadly ; for we have no time to dwell upon its details. I desire to apply its spiritual lessons as I go on, aiming chiefly at the comfort of those who are in soul trouble. Are any of you oppressed with a sense of sin ? Do you see sin to be an enemy too powerful for you to overcome ? Are you unable to escape out of the hand of the enemy ? Here is a proclamation. God, the ever-gracious One, demands your attention while, as a King, he proclaims his word of mercy to the daughter of Zion : "Behold, thy salvation cometh."

This great announcement tells you that *there is a salvation from without*. Within your heart there is nothing that can save you : all within you is carnal, sold under sin. Out of bondage only bondage can arise. The proclamation is, "Behold, thy salvation cometh." It comes to you from a source beyond yourself ; it does not arise from within you, for it could not do so. Salvation comes from God himself. What a blessing, that when there was no salvation in you, nor the possibility of its coming from within, it came from above ! Salvation comes not from man's will, or merit, or efforts. "Salvation is of the Lord." "It is not

of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." O soul, if the Lord God comes to save you, Edom and Bozrah, sin and hell, will soon be broken in pieces! The power of your sins, and the tyranny of your sinful habits, the cords of your companionships, and the bondage of Satan himself, must speedily yield when salvation comes from the eternal throne, and the mighty One of Israel hastens to the rescue.

It is a salvation which comes through a person. "Thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." The great salvation which we have to proclaim is salvation by Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Jesus of Nazareth, who died on the cross, is also the Son of the Highest. Him hath God set forth to be the propitiation for sin, to be the deliverer of mankind from the bondage of evil. Behold him, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world! Behold him, the beloved of the Father! Power to save unto the uttermost is laid upon him; he is a Saviour, and a great one. Remember this, and do not look to rites and ceremonies, or to creeds and doctrines, but to the person of Jesus, who is God and man. Simeon said, when he beheld our Lord as a babe, "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation": truly we may say the same with emphasis when we see him in his resurrection.

This salvation leads to holiness; for the text says of those who receive the Saviour, "They shall call them, The holy people." If, dear friend, you are to be saved, you are also to be sanctified; indeed, that sanctification is the essence of salvation. This will give you great joy, I know; for no man really desires salvation, rightly understanding what he desires, without meaning by it that he may be saved from the power of sin, and may no longer be in servitude to his own lusts, or to the wicked customs of the world. Sinners, rejoice; the great Jehovah proclaims to you a salvation which shall so purify you that you shall be saved from your sins, and shall be called "The holy people." Is not that the best news you have ever heard?

Further, *it is salvation by redemption;* for it is written that they shall be called "The redeemed of the Lord." In the sacred Scriptures there is no salvation for men except by redemption. You have enslaved yourselves, and your heritage is under bond; and therefore you and it must be ransomed. Behold, your Redeemer pays your ransom. His own heart's blood Messiah pours forth, that men who have been enslaved may be set free. Redemption by substitution is the gospel. Christ stands in your stead, a sufferer because of your sins: you are set in Christ's stead, rewarded because of his righteousness, accepted because of his acceptableness with God. This is a sure and satisfactory salvation; a salvation which satisfies the conscience of man as well as the justice of God. This salvation is to you without money and without price; but it cost the Redeemer nothing less than himself. Behold in him the ransom paid in full, so that he bids you go free. He saith, "Fear not: for I have redeemed thee." Tell it out among the heathen, tell it out among the fallen, that there is salvation, salvation by a great redemption, full and free. All that lost ones have to do is joyfully to accept the purchased freedom, and go forth in joy and peace.

This salvation is complete. "Thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." See the beginning of it : "Thou shalt be called, Sought out." See the end of it : thou shalt be called, "Not forsaken." You will not begin with God, but God will begin with you. You shall be sought out, and then you will seek him. He seeks you even now. You shall be known as one that was sought out, a sheep that wandered, a piece of money that fell into the dust ; but, behold, you are sought out till the Saviour says, "Rejoice with me ; for I have found my sheep which was lost." This is the gracious beginning of salvation. But suppose the Lord found you, and then left you ; you would perish after all. But it shall not be so ; for the same Lord who calls you "Sought out" also calls you "Not forsaken." You shall never be forsaken of the grace of God, nor of the God of grace. Whatever you may be, notwithstanding your weakness and your waywardness, you shall be known in heaven by these two names—first, that you were "sought out," and next, that you were "not forsaken." It makes my eyes sparkle with delight to think how fully those two names describe myself. I delight to sing :—

"Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God ;
He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed his precious blood."

Equally true is that other word, "not forsaken." Notwithstanding all my provocations and rebellions, I believe in him who hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I shall not die but live, because he is with me.

This salvation which we have to proclaim to you, then, is one that comes to you who lie despairing at hell's dark door. You shall be sought out according to the sovereign grace of God. Jesus comes to you when you are afraid to come to him. You fear that if you were to commence the march to heaven you would faint by the way ; but he who travels in the greatness of his strength is come that you may lean on him. You that are smitten with faintness of heart because you know your own weakness and changeableness, you shall be helped and sustained to the end. He that begins the good work of grace in the heart is no changeling, but he will carry it on and carry it out to the praise of the glory of his grace. Oh, this is worth proclaiming ! Oh, for a silver trumpet with which to blow a blast that might awaken all who slumber ! There is salvation ; salvation by a glorious person ; salvation unto holiness ; salvation by redemption ; a salvation so perfect that those who receive it shall never be forsaken. O dear hearer, do you not wish to have this salvation ? Do you not desire to obtain it at once ? If you do, I beg you to follow me now, while I direct you to him who is the salvation of his people. While we fix our eyes upon the glorious person raised up and upheld by God, by whom this salvation is brought to the sons of men, I pray that you may believe in him unto eternal life.

II. To introduce this person, I now come to consider THE QUESTION "Who is this that cometh from Edom ?" The prophet beholds in vision the Captain of salvation, returning from battle, arrayed like the warriors of whom we read, "the valiant men are in scarlet." He

beholds the majestic march of this mighty Conqueror, and he cries, "Who is this?" Now, when a soul first hears the proclamation of God's salvation, and then sees Jesus coming to him, he says, "Who is this?" *The question in part arises from anxiety*, as if he said, "Who is this that espouses my cause? Is he able to save? Has he really conquered my enemies?" The heart enquires, "You preach to me a Saviour, but what sort of a Saviour is he? Is he able? Is he willing? Is he tender? Is he strong?" What *you* are, dear friend, is easily told, for you are lost and ruined; but the great question you need to consider, is—Who is *he* that comes to save you? And you may well with anxiety put the question, because it concerns your own personal welfare—"Is he such a Saviour as will be able to save me?"

The question arose from anxiety, but *it also indicates ignorance*. We do not any of us know our Lord Jesus to the full yet. "Who is this?" is a question we may still put to the sacred oracle. Paul, after he had known Christ fifteen years, yet desired that he might know him; for his love passeth knowledge. If this passage refers to our Saviour's resurrection, it is a remarkable truth that even his disciples did not know him when he had arisen. Launcelot Andrewes, in a famous sermon on this text, enlarges on this point, and I am content to borrow from him. Magdalene, of all the women in the world, ought to have known him, but she supposed him to be the gardener. The two disciples that walked with him to Emmaus were with him long enough to have spied him out, and yet in all that long walk they did not know him. Do you wonder that they did not discern their Lord? Would it have been a marvel had they said, "Who is this? Behold him travelling in the greatness of his strength, and yet a few hours ago we saw him dead, and helped to lay his lifeless body in Joseph's tomb! Who is this? We saw him stripped! They took his garments from him on the cross, and now he is 'glorious in his apparel.' Who is this? His enemies made nothing of him, they spat in his face, they nailed him to the tree; but, lo, his garments are dyed with the blood of his foes, and he comes back more than conqueror! Who is this?" I do not wonder that when the person of Christ first flashes on the sinner's eye, he thinks to himself: He was once a babe at Bethlehem, a weary man before his foes, scourged, spat upon; is this the Saviour? And does he come to me and propose that I should put my trust in him as having overthrown all my adversaries? "Who is this?"

As the sinner looks, and looks again, he cries, "Who is this?" *in delighted amazement*. Is it indeed the Son of God? Does he intervene to save me? The God whom I offended, does he stoop to fight and rout my sins? He without whom was not anything made, heaven's darling, and the delight of angels, can it be he? The soul is astonished, and scarce believes for joy. Yet, beloved, it is even he. This same Jesus is both Lord and God. When he ascended up on high he led captivity captive, and made an open show of his vanquished foes. He nailed the handwriting of ordinances that was against us to his cross; he brake the head of the serpent, and destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. How could he be less than God? It is he, and none other than he, God over all, blessed for ever, who took upon himself the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and

became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. It is he whom God hath highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow. No wonder that the soul enquires, "Who is this?"

I think *the question is asked, also, by way of adoration.* Such a question is elsewhere so used. Here is an instance—"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?" So that, as the soul begins to see Jesus, its anxiety is removed by knowledge, and is replaced by an astonishment which ripens into worship. Adoringly the spirit cries, "Who is this?" What a Saviour I have! How could it have come about that he should die for me? What a Saviour is he in his death! What a Saviour in his rising again! What a Saviour in his ascension up to heaven! What a Saviour in his enthronement! What a Saviour in his glorious advent, when he shall come to gather together his own! Who is this? We are lost in wonder as we bow before the infinite majesty of the Son of God, and adore him as God, our Saviour, for ever and ever.

It appears from the question that the person asking it knows whence the Conqueror came; for it is written, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?" Yes, our Redeemer has returned from death, as said the Psalmist, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." He came again from the land of the enemy. He died and descended into the regions of the dead; but he loosed the bands of death, for he could not be holden of them. He went forth to fight with all the adversaries of our souls, even with all the powers of darkness. It was a terrible battle. How thick and fast the shafts flew at the commencement of the fight! Our hero soon knew the garments rolled in blood, for he became covered with a bloody sweat. He flinched not from the horrible conflict, although his body had become one bleeding wound. How sharp were the swords that wounded him, when his friends proved cowards, and one of them betrayed him! How terrible were the blades that sheathed themselves in his body and mind! They pierced his hands and his feet: they laid open his very heart. His head was bleeding with the thorns, and his back with the knotted scourges; but he ceased not to grapple with the evil powers. He said, "This is your hour," and full well he found it so. He had in the midst of the fight to groan as well as sweat; that cry was forced from him, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But quickly followed the victorious shout of "It is finished," and there and then he hurled his tremendous adversary headlong, crushed his head, and left him fallen, no more to rise!

"'Tis finished,' said his dying breath,
And shook the gates of hell."

As on this Resurrection day we see our Lord come back to us, we perceive his garments sprinkled with the blood of all who strove against us. I beseech you to lay hold of this, and trust my blessed Lord; for he has fought with all the enemies of our souls, and he has returned from the enemy's country, leading captivity captive. We may look at him this day right trustfully, for his fight is over, and his enemies are crushed,

as grapes in the winefat. We not only trust our Lord, but we worship him this day as King of kings and Lord of lords.

“Bruisèd is the serpent's head,
Hell is vanquish'd, death is dead,
And to Christ gone up on high,
Captive is captivity. Alleluia!”

Next notice that *the prophet in vision observes the colour of the Conqueror's garments*: “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah?” Red is not Christ's colour; hence the question arises, “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel?” Our Beloved's garments are whiter than any fuller can make them. The glory of his purity is such that we say to ourselves, “Red, why, that is the colour of Edom, the adversary! Red, that is the colour of the earth of our manhood! Red is the colour of our scarlet sins.” Why is he red? Brethren, although the text treats of the blood of his adversaries, yet I would have you devoutly think of our Lord literally as shedding his own blood, for his victory was thus accomplished. The text sets forth the result of that blood-shedding in the overthrow of his enemies and ours; but we cannot separate the effect from the cause. As a matter of fact, when our Lord's own blood was shed, sin and death and hell were trodden down and destroyed as grapes in the winepress. When he was suffering he was then smiting down his enemies. By the shedding of his own blood he was shedding the blood of his foes. The life of the powers of darkness was taken away by his death. When I see Jesus coming back literally covered with his own blood, I discern him spiritually as encrimsoned with the slaughter of evil and its abettors. Glory be to his name! I shall never cease to look upon my Lord in the red colours as in the prime of his beauty. The blood-red colours are the colours of victory. He never looks so lovely as when he appears as “a Lamb that has been slain.” I remember how Rutherford seems to glow and burn when in his prose poetry he talks of “the bonnie red man.” That crimson vest is his most royal garment. He hath taken away all our transgressions and iniquities, and covered all our scarlet sins, and we see the blood of them in his blood. Glory be to the bleeding Christ, I say! If there be one hallelujah louder than any other, let it be unto him who wears the vesture dipped in blood. His own blood is the token and proof that the blood of all his spiritual foes has been shed. Our warfare is accomplished and our sin is pardoned. Behold the colours of atonement, for they are the ensigns of eternal victory.

“Why that blood his raiment staining?
’Tis the blood of many slain;
Of his foes there's none remaining,
None the contest to maintain:
Fallen they are no more to rise,
All their glory prostrate lies.”

But yet the question comes from one who perceives that the Conqueror is royally arrayed. “This that is glorious in his apparel.” O dear hearers, the Jesus we have to preach to you is no mean Saviour; he is clothed with glory and honour because of the suffering of death. He wears to-day a greater splendour than adorned the sons

of Aaron ; our great High Priest hath put on all his jewels. He wears also the majesty of his kingship : " On his head are many crowns." He is this day arrayed in light and glory. His majesty is too bright for mortal eyes to gaze upon. When the beloved John beheld him he fell at his feet as dead. He is "glorious in his apparel."

The question ends with "travelling in the greatness of his strength." He did not come back from slaughtering our enemies feeble and wounded, but he returned in majestic march, like a victor who would have all men know that his force is irresistible. The earth shook beneath our Lord's feet on the resurrection morning, for "there was a great earthquake." The Roman guards became as dead men at his appearing. Beloved, the Lord Jesus Christ is no petty, puny Saviour. He is travelling to meet poor sinners ; but he is travelling in the greatness of his strength. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" said he. As he travels through the nations it is as a strong man against whom none can stand, mighty to rescue every soul that puts its trust in him.

There is the question. I leave it with you, praying that every soul here that is oppressed by the powers of hell, may ask the question, "Who is this that cometh from Edom ?"

III. Thirdly, let us consider THE ANSWER. Upon this I must be brief.

No one can answer for Jesus : *he must speak for himself.* Like the sun, he can only be seen by his own light. He is his own interpreter. Not even the angels could explain the Saviour: they get no further than desiring to look into the things which are in him. He himself answers the question "Who is this ?" His personality comes out : "I, the Lord Jesus. It is none other than myself who has come forth to overthrow the adversary." The speaker was too modest to ask the mighty Saviour who he was ; but that Saviour was not too lofty to give him the information which was desired. O poor heart ! Jesus will show himself to you if you desire to know him. He will come near to you when you dare not come nigh to him. In his own light you will see him, and if you are bewildered and befogged, but yet truly anxious, he will manifest himself to you in his great love, and say to you, "It is I ; be not afraid."

The answer which our Lord gives is twofold. He describes himself first as a *speaker* : "I that speak in righteousness." Is he not the Word ? Every word that Christ speaks is true: he speaks not in falsehood, but in righteousness. The gospel which he proclaims is a just and righteous one, meeting both the claims of God and the demands of conscience. O soul, if thou wilt hearken to Jesus thou shalt hear that from him which thou couldst never hear from any other lip ! "Never man spake like this man." He will speak of God's holiness, and yet he will speak to thy comfort. He will reveal God's justice, and yet God's love to thee. Oh, hear thou what the Christ has to say, and believe every word of it without a cavil, for therein lies salvation. "Hear, and your soul shall live."

Our Lord also describes himself as a *Saviour* : "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Now, observe that the word "mighty" is joined with his saving, and not with his destroying. Although he

can crush his foes as easily as a man can crush with his feet the berries of the grape, the prophet does not speak of him as "mighty to tread down his enemies." He will prove himself thus mighty in that day of vengeance which is in his heart; but just now he reveals himself in the year of his redeemed as "mighty to save." Rejoice in this, O my hearers! The Lord Jesus Christ is a Saviour, and he is grand in that capacity. Nothing is beyond his power in the line of salvation. He saith, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." There is no manner of sin which he cannot forgive; there is no sort of hardness of heart which he cannot remove; there are no spiritual difficulties which he cannot surmount. "His reward is with him, and his work before him." "He shall not fail, nor be discouraged." Oh that he stood here this morning instead of me! I do but prattle concerning him, and yet it is the best that I can do. If you use the eyes of faith, my Lord, who hath overcome the foes of his redeemed, stands before you to-day; and if you ask who he is, he proclaims himself, for he would have you know himself. To know Jesus is the first, the chief, the highest piece of human knowledge. He is your teacher, and this is your lesson. He answers the question of the prophetic catechism, and when it is asked, "Who is this?" he replies, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Fall at his feet, and love and adore him this day, and then your heaven shall begin below.

Thus have we gone through the text in a very poor and hurried way; for I want just a few minutes to make practical use of the subject ere I send you away.

May the Holy Ghost now apply the truth with power! Poor troubled one! thy sins are many, and they grievously oppress thee. Thou seest no hope of escape from the justice of God, or from the power of evil within thy nature. Harken to the proclamation, as I dwell upon it again. "Behold, thy salvation cometh." Jesus can save you, for he is "mighty to save"!

He can save *you*; for he has saved others like you. He has these many years kept his hand at this work. Your case will not perplex him; he is at home at the business of saving sinners. The chief of sinners was saved long ago; and if the chief, then you, although you may be the next greatest, can be saved. Jesus has never been put to a nonplus yet. He that conquered Edom and Bozrah, he that led captivity captive and vanquished all the hosts of hell shall never be defeated. Do not tell me that his arm is shortened, that he cannot save. He can save *you*, you who now desire to be made holy. You with the hard heart, who desire to have it softened, he can do the mighty deed. He can raise the spiritually dead and even restore those who have become corrupt. He can do it, though nobody else can.

He can overthrow all your enemies. Satan has you now in his grasp, and you are not able to war with him. One evil passion or another binds you. You seem watched like Peter in prison, and bound even as he was; but he who loosed Peter can release you. Jesus can say to the prisoners, "Go forth," and forth they shall go. There is no temptation, no sin, no infernal influence from which he cannot rescue his chosen. He is so mighty to save that he can deliver every soul that trusts in him, however great its extremity. Leave your enemies to Jesus; they baffle you,

but he can rout them. His garment is already dyed with their blood, wherefore be not afraid!

He can do this alone. If you trust Jesus, and none but Jesus, you have an all-sufficient salvation. "I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me." "I looked, and there was none to help; I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me." Poor sinner! hang on to Jesus and his one salvation. If you have no other sort of hope, if thou canst see no good thing in thyself, if thy prayers die on thy lips, if thou canst not weep, if thou canst not feel, if thou hast not even so much as a jot of anything that is commendable about thee, still cling thou to Jesus, to Jesus only. The great battle of salvation he fought single-handed; and he can save thee single-handed. He is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, and he will not stain his principedom by failing in salvation. I fear I have never done more in my own salvation than rather to hinder than help my Lord, and yet I know that though I believe not, he abideth faithful. He will stand to his office, even though I fail in my pledges. When he saves, he does truly save. He is master of the business. He put himself apprentice to it when he was here below, and set to work to heal all manner of sickness, and he never failed even then; but now that he has gone through death and hell for us, and made himself perfect through suffering, he is a master workman, and he can save in the teeth of all opposition. Do but trust him, and thou shalt find it so.

Let me add to this, dear troubled friend, that he is able to save you *now*. Do you notice that verse, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come"? I leaped with joy at those words as I studied them. Yes, I thought, I will tell these sinners that the day of vengeance is in God's heart, and I will warn them that if they do not turn to him he will destroy them. Ah! but that vengeance is as yet in his heart; he lets it lie there in his long-suffering patience. But *the year of his redeemed is come*: it is present, it is now. It is not, "To-day will I destroy you"; but, "To-day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation." To-day is the day of salvation: "the year of my redeemed is come." We speak of our dates as "*Anno Domini*," and so they are: these days are in the year of our Lord. We live in the years of our Redeemer, years of his redeemed, years of pardoning love. Oh, that *you* would come now that your year is come! Jesus is able to save you at this hour. This morning in February, this cold and bitter morning, when the east wind searches you to the very marrow, the Lord Jesus Christ can warm your hearts with a summertide of love. It was such a morning as this when I first found my Lord: when the snow-flakes fell so abundantly, each one seemed to say that Jesus had made me whiter than snow. Even this cruel east wind will breathe comfort to you if you will look to my Lord dressed in his vesture dipped in blood. Behold the glorious apparel of his love and righteousness. He comes back from death and hell triumphant, so that you may never come under their yoke. He proclaims life to you because your foes are dead. He washes your garments white because his are dyed with blood. You shall live for ever because he died, and you shall triumph because he has won the

battle on your behalf. You shall go forth conquering and to conquer because he conquers.

Jesus has done the work already. There is nothing to be endured by him in order to save you from your sins : the expiation is made, the redemption is paid, the righteousness is wrought out. Of this salvation our Lord said, at the moment when he won the victory, "It is finished"; and finished it is for ever. Without seam, and woven from the top throughout, was the garb the Saviour's body wore, and now he presents a garment like to it to every naked sinner who trusts him, and he says, "Put it on." It is freely given though it was dearly wrought. It cost our Lord his life to weave it, his blood to dye it; but to the sinner it is a free gift, and if he will but have it, he also shall be glorious in his apparel, and Jesus will strengthen him till he also shall travel in the greatness of his strength. Oh that you would believe in Jesus Christ this morning!

It is a sad wonder that men do not believe in Jesus. It is a mournful wonder that you, who have been hearing the gospel for so many years, do not believe in him. What are you at? Why, if somebody were to preach to you any other gospel than what I have delivered, you would grow angry, you would not hear it. Why is it that you delight to hear the gospel, and yet will not accept it to your own salvation? Many of you have a great admiration of my Lord, after a fashion, and you love to hear me praise him; but what is it to you? What can he be to you unless you trust him? "Oh, but I don't feel my sins." Have I not told you many times that salvation does not lie in your feelings? "Oh, but I am not—" Have I not told you over and over again that it is not what *you* are, but what Jesus is? Hearken unto me. Cease from self, and come to Jesus just as you are. Let us finish by each one of us singing this verse from the heart, and all of us together with our tongues:—

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On Christ's kind arms I fall:
He is my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Isaiah lxii.;
lxiii. 1—14.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—317, 315, 563.