

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

A CLARION CALL TO SAINTS AND SINNERS.

A Sermon

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DELIVERED BY

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“Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.”—Micah ii. 10.

THERE is a miserable tendency in men to cling to things that are seen. Though that which we behold is only temporal and shadowy, lacking any true substance or permanence; though the things round about us can only endure for a little while, and then will vanish away; yet we give our hearts to them, and are ensnared by their false glitter and glamour. Like the poor birds that light on bird-lime and cannot get away, we are entangled by the things of time and sense, instead of rising, as on eagle wings, to a higher sphere. Forgetting that the soul of man cannot be satisfied with the poor baubles of earth, nor his yearning heart filled with the fleeting joys of time, we often put away from us the things that are unseen and eternal. One of the most needful words for us to hear at such a time is this, “Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest.”

Suppose that the children of Israel, when they came out of Egypt, and were on the way to Canaan, instead of living in tents, and moving as the fiery cloudy pillar guided them, had taken it into their heads to build houses and cities and temples wherever they halted, as if they were to stop in the wilderness for ever; would they not have missed much by such a plan? In the wilderness, not only would all who came out of Egypt have perished, but their children and their children's children would also have found graves in the desert, nor ever have seen the goodly land promised to their fathers. On the contrary, as you know, they lived in their canvas cities: when the cloud moved, every tent was struck, and they began the march; when the cloud halted, they rested under canvas still, never knowing how long they would continue in any one place, always expecting that they would be on the move again, seeing that they had not yet come to the land

that flowed with milk and honey. Well they knew that in the wilderness was no abiding place for them; for the sand which was all around them yielded them no meat; and if their food had not dropped from above, they would have had no supply from the barren desert. They were strangers and pilgrims with God, and sojourners, as were their fathers.

Now, our sad tendency is to be building cities, digging out foundations, laying courses of brick, and saying, "Here I am going to rest. I have journeyed long enough; and now I have come to a place where I can say, 'Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.'" It is a sorry business when the heirs of heaven wish to dwell in the wilderness, and when men who have an inheritance on the other side of Jordan forget the land that God hath given them by covenant, and seek to enjoy their portion in this life. We do not wonder that the ungodly do so: they may well make as much as they can of their little enjoyment here; for, unless they repent of their evil way, that is all that they will ever have. I do not wonder that such as have their lot in this life should seek after carnal merriment, fleshly pleasures, and the giddy dance. What have they more? It is not astonishing to see the swine greedy at the trough, pushing one another aside as they struggle to get their wash. But when those who have been redeemed with a strong hand and an outstretched arm sink into worldly conformity, worse, because more deadening, than the slavery of Egypt, then indeed we see the sad havoc sin can work, and mourn because of it.

Unawakened men have not a thought above these minor things; and yet if they could for once shake off the spell that has lulled to sleep their immortal spirits, and turned them into comrades of the brutes, they would begin to feel that this is not their rest, and would hear a voice saying to them, "Arise ye, and depart." Perchance they would even answer, "I will arise, and go to my Father. I will leave the husks with which I fain would have filled myself, and I will eat of the bread, whereof in my Father's house there is enough and to spare." But the trumpet call to "arise" is not only needed by prodigals in the far country. Careless professors, who once ran well, but have been hindered, and who now rest content with the world, as if they were to stay here for ever, require to be roused from their slumber. "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." God means his church to be a separated people on the earth. Our citizenship is in heaven; yet too many of us, and, perhaps, all of us at times, fall into the ways of the unregenerate, and have fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, even if we do them not ourselves. Because of this slothful and carnal tendency, even in the best of us, it is continually necessary that the rousing call should come, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

I am going to talk, first, to God's people, and sound an alarm for them. Then I shall have a word for awakened sinners, and shall sound the trumpet also in their midst.

I. First, I shall view the text as A CLARION NOTE FOR BELIEVERS IN CHRIST. As a soldier hears the bugle in the early morning, and starts

up ready for the duty of the day, so may every servant of Christ, who hears these words, arise girded for service! The soldier, at the sound of the awakening call, must forsake the warmest couch, and turn out to take his place in the ranks. With hope of a similar result would I sound the trumpet to-day. Let the clarion note ring out shrill and clear, "Arise ye, and depart."

To begin, I remark that *there are occasions when this call comes especially to us*. It may be heard in our everyday life above the din and bustle, but it is most needed when perhaps we are least inclined to listen to it. "Arise ye, and depart."

This note needs to be sounded in the ears of saints, when they begin to be comfortable. When you have been going up the Hill Difficulty with a very heavy pull, you have come to the arbour on the side of the hill, which has a seat very hospitably provided by the Lord of the way; and there is a table put in front of the seat, so that you can sit down, and, if so minded, put your arms on the table, and have a good nap. Now, these arbours are built for the refreshment of pilgrims; but they are not meant for them to sleep in. They may sit still, and gather strength with which to go on up the hill; they may look back, and be grateful that they have climbed so far; but they must not go to sleep. If they do, it will happen to them, as it did to one Christian of whom Mr. Bunyan wrote, who lost his roll of assurance there, and had to come back again and search for it with many tears. If any of you are very comfortable just now, and things are going well with you; if, after a long struggle, the tide has now turned, and you are floating along without needing either oar or sail, I would caution you to beware;—

"For more the treacherous calm I dread
Than tempests bursting o'er my head."

Dear child of God, when you begin to be very comfortable, unless you take care to be very grateful, and sanctify your prosperity, you will be likely to drift into a sad state. I take down the trumpet, and venture to come very close to you, and, though it may seem a rude thing to blow a blast right in your ear, yet I will do it; and this is the sound: "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." God has given you many blessings, but you will turn them into curses if you make them to be your god. Jonah had a gourd, but when he made a god of his gourd, it was very soon withered. Take heed when all things go well with you here below, lest you begin to be glued to this world, and find your comfort here. It will not do; God will not permit it. If you say, like David, in his prosperity, "I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong;" you may soon have to add like him, "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled."

This note, also, is very necessary in the ears of Christian people, when they begin to fraternize with the world. Nothing but evil can come of such association; for "what communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?" But you will say, "We have had some nice company lately; we have invited to our house some very decent people. It is true that we had no family

prayer that night; we could not bring out the Bible, and read a chapter before them, for we did not know if they would like it; yet, in spite of that, they were nice sort of people. We are going to their house another night; we do not quite know how they will propose to spend the evening, but we shall have to put up with their way of doing things, because, you see, if you are in the world you must do as the world does." Now, friends, I shall, without asking your leave, blow my trumpet on both sides of your head; and I shall give a very loud blast, too, as my friend Mr. Manton Smith sometimes does when he uses his silver cornet. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted." Beware when the world loves you, lest that which attracts them towards you be something that ought not to be there. Beware when men of the world are very fond of your society; for then surely you must have got out of touch with your Master, who says, "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." It is well, if consistent with righteousness, to have everybody's love; but when saints begin to be the admiration of the ungodly, depend upon it, there is something about them that God does not admire, an unhallowed conformity that is a signal of danger. When the world patronizes the church, the church will need tenfold grace to maintain her spirituality, just as on an ocean steamer any speed, beyond a certain limit, is only attained by an expenditure of power altogether out of proportion to the increase of the distance travelled. "Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you!" Such praise is not for good soldiers of Jesus Christ. If the enemy begins to love one of the king's generals, the king may half suspect that his general is turning traitor. God save us from such treachery! "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." So again I sound the trumpet: "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

Peradventure, there are some who are neither beginning to be comfortable, nor to fraternize with the world, but to whom this trumpet-note will still come with special emphasis; for the Lord's people need this call when they dream of long life on earth. You may, perhaps, have lived a long time now without any sickness or illness. You are certainly getting a little grey, your hair tells of the passing of years; still, your father lived to a good old age; so did your grandfather; and you reckon that you also will live for a long time to come. You have heard this last week, perhaps, of the deaths of several people who were younger than you are; but you do not reckon upon dying. Far from it: you have not even made your will yet, nor have you anything in order for your departure. A long stretch of health has a tendency to make us think that we are immortal. But though we may imagine this to be the case, the worms do not think so. The wood which will make your coffin may already be sawn, and the linen which will be your shroud may be all ready. There is a spot of land where you must lie, unless the Lord should suddenly come to his temple. Here, certainly, we have no continuing city; and therefore we ought not to make this world our rest. Dear friends who have been here

one Sabbath-day have been called away before the next came round; and some who have seemed to be best in health have been the very persons who have gone first. Wherefore, my soul, stand thou on tiptoe, be not flat-footed, as some beasts are; have thou thy wings always ready for flight, so that, if thy Lord should come at cock-crow, or at daybreak, or at midnight, thou shalt be equally ready, at his bidding, to be up and away! I sound for myself, and for my beloved friends, this clarion note: "Boot and saddle, up and prepare. Arise ye, and depart." To whom that note may come with greatest point I cannot tell, for I am no prophet; but let it come to us all. Let none of us begin to strike root here below, for this is not our rest.

Having thus sounded this note, I make a second remark. *There is an argument by which this call is greatly strengthened.* The bugle-note "Arise ye, and depart," is made doubly shrill by the statement that follows, "This is not your rest." You see, that is given as a reason for our action; the word "for", which joins these two clauses of the text, being used in the sense of "because." At times this argument appeals to us with special force. Of this reason and these seasons let me now speak.

Remember, child of God, that you have a rest of another sort. "This is not your rest." "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." That happy home, that flourishing business, is not to be your abiding place. You would not like the change, I am sure, if the best portion here below might be yours for ever instead of your dwelling-place up above.

" Oh, the delights, the heavenly joys,
The glories of the place
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace!"

What must it be to be there, where saints and angels find a heaven in beholding the face of the Lord of glory, and paying their humble adoration before him! O sirs, if we had a palace here below, and parks and gardens reaching too far for a man to travel through them in a day; yea, if we had all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them, we would not even then say, "This is our rest," nor consent to change heaven for such things as these. What is there that we could possess on this round globe, with all its treasures, at all comparable with the eternal felicity, the rivers of pleasure that are at God's right hand for evermore? As you attempt to make the comparison, you will each one of you say, "I must not and I cannot cleave to these poor things below; for my rest is not here. Thank God that it is not here!"

I think you will hear this call very distinctly when troubles come. When a man begins to have pain of body; when the one who is dearer to him than his life sickens before him, and is carried to the grave; when everything goes amiss with him in business and daily life; he does not then so much need my trumpet; for already he has heard the call sounding very loudly, and there are many things saying to him, "This is not your rest." He knows that it is not; he is so troubled, that he begins to sit loose to all earthly things. He is like

one at sea, tossed up and down with the billows; wave upon wave comes rolling over him, and he says, "Now I clearly see that this is not my rest." Come, then, tried child of God, at this moment, let this word sound as sweet music to you rather than as a disturbing trumpet-blast. Let it be as a heart-note that can lull you to peace. "This is not your rest." Do not wonder, therefore, if you find thorns and thistles growing here; your paradise lies in another land, where no thorn or trial shall be brought forth to trouble and annoy you.

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers :
Death, like a narrow sea, divides
This heavenly land from ours."

The troubles of this life cause us to hasten forward to cross that Jordan, and the call is thus all the more powerful. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

We hear this same note when success is enjoyed. I think that the time in which I have been most humbled before God, and in which I have been lowest in spirit, is the time when mercies have been multiplied, and I have met with some great success. Though it seems very strange, I look back upon the hours which have immediately followed some great triumph in the service of my Lord as the saddest which I have spent. I could fight my Lord's battles with both hands; but when the day was won, those same hands seemed nerveless. When this house was in building, I was able to face every difficulty, as it arose, full of earnestness and zeal, and with unshaken confidence; but when the place was opened, and the work completed, I felt like Elijah, who was faint after he had done the Master's service with the priests of Baal. Ah, dear friends, God has only to give you what you want, to make you feel the emptiness of it! If you are his child, the more you have the less you will see in it. The child of God, who has possessions in this life, is just the man who says, "Vanity of vanities; all is vanity." When you look at that which has been bestowed, you say, "Why was I so troubled to get this? I thank God for it, as his gift; but there is nothing in it apart from his giving it to me. Toil and trouble and care come with increase of goods. This, this is not my rest." If any young man here thinks that if he gets on in business, and reaches a point when he can retire upon a competence, he will then have reached his rest, he is very greatly mistaken. If he is a child of God, and if he gets all that his heart wishes for, he will find that there is nothing satisfying in it whatsoever. There is, in God, an all-sufficiency; but in all the things of this life, apart from the grace of God, there is no solid satisfaction or rest.

Beloved, I am sure that we feel that this is not our rest when we have gracious seasons. Do we not sometimes sit in this house of prayer and feel as if we would like to sit here for ever? Last Sunday morning, when I had done preaching, Brother Stott said that he did not want to go; he said that his willing soul would stay in such a frame as this; and I suspect that there were a great many more in the congregation who, like the preacher, felt the same. A brother was describing to me the effect of a certain amusement upon him—a very

proper amusement, in which there was no wrong whatever; but he said, "Well, you know, I felt like a man who had gone out of a warm house into the cold. There was nothing in it for me, though I saw others very much enjoying it; but I have been used to better things than that, and I cannot get on with it." I believe that such is the experience of all God's people, who delight themselves in him, with reference to the pleasures of the worldly. You will generally notice that when the believer gets near to God, and tastes the unseen joys, and eats the bread that was made in heaven, all the feasts of earth, all its amusements, and all its glories seem very flat, stale, and unprofitable. It is like drinking ditch-water after having slaked your thirst from the cool brooks that come from the snows of Lebanon. After having laid our heads in Jesus' bosom, we feel, with regard to the world, "No, this is not our rest." We have laid hold on something better, more substantial, more satisfying and enduring; and when we come to the best the world can give, we, somehow, turn our backs upon it, and cry, "This is not our rest."

Surely we feel this strongly, and hear very clearly the clarion note, "Arise ye, and depart," when our many friends are taken home. I can scarcely look upon any part of the Tabernacle without saying to myself, "Such a friend used to sit there, and such a friend there; and here, behind me, certain of my kind and good elders and deacons used to sit." I cannot look round without missing many. When you get well on in years, you will find that your best friends are on the other side of the river, and that some of the dearest you have had are gone before you. When you think of it, you say to yourself, "I, too, must arise and depart; for this is not my rest." I have heard that sailors, when they leave England, drink to the health of those they leave behind them, till they get a certain distance on, and within so many weeks of the port to which they are sailing; then they change the toast, and drink to the health of those that are before them, whom they hope soon to see. It might be better for the sailors, and none the worse for their friends, if they grasped the idea that such drinking tends to the health of neither; but such I understand is their custom, and undoubtedly there is such a change of outlook in the Christian life. I have nearly reached that state in which I am thinking more of those before me than of those behind me or with me. We are looking forward to the grand reunion, when those who went before us shall again appear, and we shall, with them, be welcomed by our Lord into everlasting habitations. With such anticipations, we can rejoice to hear the bugle sound again and again, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

In the third place, notice that *there is a fact by which this call is further enforced*. In the text there is another expression which puts confidence into this bugle-note, and gives us a new reason for continuing our pilgrim march. The reasons which exist in ourselves for answering the trumpet-call are not the only ones; others may be found all around us, and I ask your attention to this for a moment. "This is not your rest: because it is polluted." You cannot go out into the world without feeling that it is polluted; therefore heed well the word which comes to you, "Arise ye, and depart."

The call receives new strength by the pollution which is around us. Where do you live? You are a very happy man if you live in a part of London which is not defiled. Can you go down any of our streets without hearing conversation that makes you feel that the place is polluted? This region, indeed, I may say with deep sorrow, is polluted; and there are lower depths still. The newspapers bear daily testimony to the awful extent the pollution has reached; and the terrible poison seems to be continually spreading. Do you not feel, if you know anything of the grace of God, that you cannot for ever live in the midst of such evil? Even Lot, amongst the people of Sodom, "dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds." To him one day there came, by angelic messengers, the call to arise and depart. In his heart of hearts he must have been glad to get away. We, too, because of the pollution that surrounds us, should learn that this is not our rest.

But what shall I say of the way in which the call is enforced by the pollution which comes home to us, even the defilement of our own house, of our own business, and of our own daily experience? I am sure that, if you look well into it, you will see sin in even your holy things; and if there is sin in your holy things, certainly there will be much that grieves God, and should grieve you, in your ordinary daily life. Within your domestic circle you may have those that make you feel, "This is not your rest: because it is polluted." You have those whom you love, for whom you pray with deep anxiety, who make you often realize that your relationships in life are both strained and stained. How many a godly man has to say with David, "Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure"! Yes, this is not our rest: the evil comes into such close contact with us, that we long to be away from it all. We seek to arise, and depart from the pollution which seems to cling to us like a wet garment. Thus the call is greatly enforced.

It becomes more forcible because of the holiness for which we sigh. Look at your own heart; examine your own thoughts, your own words, and even those actions which are right in motive. How often pride comes in! You say to yourselves, "I did that very well indeed," and then the good deed becomes polluted; or you trust in yourself, and distrust God; and the little self-confidence, or the little want of faith in God, will soon pollute that which you bring to the Lord. Oh, no, we can never rest till we get where there is no sin!

"Then shall I see, and hear, and know
All I desired or wished below;"

but we shall never be content until we get up where Satan cannot tempt, and where corruption will be done with for ever;—

"Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in."

Blow the bugle again. Ring out the note with clarion clearness: "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted."

In the fourth place, we must not forget that *there is a danger by which this call is rendered loudest*. There is one more note that gives new intensity to it, when it is added. "Because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction." Upon this I will say to the children of God that the things of this world are our destruction. There is nothing here that helps us on our way to God. It is a wilderness at the very best.

" Pricking thorns through all the ground,
And mortal poisons grow ;
And all the rivers that are found
With dangerous waters flow."

God keeps his own and preserves them to the end, but they get nothing out of this world save the discipline of avoiding it. Vain world! It is no friend to grace; it does not help us on to God. Were it not for grace, it would be our destruction.

Look at the temptations around you. Are you never forced to cry, "Good Lord, help me"? Remember Bunyan's pilgrim, Mr. Stand-fast, when Madame Bubble encountered him. It was on the Enchanted Ground that she met him, and offered him her purse, and all manner of carnal delights. What did poor Stand-fast do? In an agony, he fell down and prayed. Because he was poor, he was tempted by her purse, and his heart began to go after vanity: what could he do but kneel down and pray? Ah, this is not your rest! It is a place for wrestling rather than for resting; a place for prayer, not for sleep. It is not your rest, for it is polluted; and "because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction," unless the grace of God shall prevent. Does not this consideration make the call become very loud?

Have you not felt the deadening influence of the world? Can you busy people be up and down the city, or in your shops all day, without feeling that these things tend to harden you? Grace comes in and raises you above it; but the thing itself, and the care and the thought that you are obliged to give to it, have a tendency to make you sink instead of rise. How grateful you ought to be for your Sabbaths! and how thankful you should be for this little sanctuary in the middle of the week, this appointed evening, when you can steal away, and shake the earth off your feet, and brush the dust from your clothes, and go back to your toil refreshed and strengthened! God grant us grace to live above the world! The world itself will not help us: it will be our destruction if we do not arise, and join the company who "Ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." Thus the call waxes long and loud.

But it becomes loudest of all when we have to mourn over the fatal effect of worldliness in others. When I look over the church-book, I cannot help shedding tears sometimes. There is the name of a brother who used to pray so sweetly: where has he gone? There is the name of a sister who used to be one of the most earnest followers of Christ: where is she now? I should hardly like to know where they are; and yet they did once seem to run well. I remember a brother who

fell into gross sin, of whom I never heard any more; and one said, "If that man is not a child of God, I am not one myself." I could not help saying, "Hush, hush! do not talk of staking your soul against any other man's. You know but little about yourself, and you do not know anything about him." I did not like to hear such a thing said; and yet I have known some of whom I could almost have said the same. We have thought, "He must be a child of God;" but, after all, the man has turned aside to crooked ways, and proved that he never had the grace of God in his heart. Ah! dear friends, while these things happen, "this is not your rest." As well seek for shelter in an enemy's country, or seek for rest in a storm at sea, as expect to find anything like rest here. No; "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest: because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction," unless the God of infinite love and mercy shall keep you as the apple of his eye.

Thus I have spoken to those who are believers in Christ. God bless them! Now I turn to others for the few minutes that remain.

II. Secondly, my text may be viewed as AN AROUSING NOTE FOR AWAKENED SINNERS. "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." In dealing with this head, I want to say a word to those who are thoughtful, but are not yet believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. I desire to take my silver trumpet, and come to each one of you, and sound in your ear that same note which I tried to sound in the ears of God's people. "Arise ye, and depart." Get up. Sleep no more. Lie in indifference no longer. God help you to say, "I will arise, and go to my Father"! You must clear out of your present position, or you will be lost. The name of the place where you now dwell is the City of Destruction, and if you would escape, you must run for it. Flee from the wrath to come.

You are called upon to depart from sin and self. You must, through divine grace, be ready to quit self, and the righteousness that is of self, and sin, and the follies that go with sin. "Arise ye, and depart." O man, or woman, if you stay where you are by nature, you stay in a land which, like Sodom and Gomorrah, is given up to destruction by fire from heaven! "Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed." Ye that are in a state of nature, a state of guilt and condemnation, arise ye, and depart. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

And here is the reason why you should thus arise and depart: *you have found no rest in the world*: "This is not your rest." I put it to you, have you found any true peace in the ways of sin? Ah! if you have been aroused to see your state before God, you know that you are not happy. How can you be? An immortal soul content with mortal things! "Too low they build who build beneath the stars." He has a poor treasury who has not a treasury in heaven. If all your possessions be here, it is a poor all; for you lose it when you die; or it may at any moment be taken from you while you live. You have no

rest now. You know many men and women who may enjoy themselves as much as they can, so far as means are concerned; but they never really enjoy themselves at all. They used to get pleasure when they were younger; but now they go to the same places, and they come away dissatisfied. I am glad of it; I am glad that the Lord will not allow them to find satisfaction in the joys of this life.

And if you had a rest here, you would soon have to leave it. What if you had to leave all you have to-night? What if, to-night, instead of my voice, it should be the angel who should sound the trumpet, "Arise ye, and depart"? What if, instead of going home to-night, you went into the eternal state to meet your God and Judge? How would it be with you? How can you rest, if you are unable to give a joyful answer to these questions? You are hanging over the mouth of hell by a single thread, and that thread is breaking. Only a gasp for breath, only a stopping of the heart for a single moment, and you will be in an eternal world, without God, without hope, without forgiveness. Oh, can you face it? I pray God that you may not have a brazen countenance, but may feel that it is time for you to listen to the voice that says, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest."

But another reason why you should hasten to flee is because of the sins of your life. *You have polluted it.* And what happens to you? Why, the older you get the more polluted you are. What a mercy it is that men do not live eight or nine hundred years now as they used to do! What monsters of sin would be on the earth if men kept on doing evil at the rate some of them do now! Living eighty years, sinners get to be quite sufficiently putrid in talk and life. But if they lived eight hundred years, this world would almost be a second hell. Well might God, in the olden days, wash the world clean, when there were sinners upon it so ripe for destruction, so rotten in their lives. Because sin thus fouls your nest, "Arise ye, and depart."

With all the earnestness of my heart would I urge you to arise from your sin, and hasten away from your peril, for *destruction threatens you.* You that have sinned cannot afford to live here always; for, even now, your sins begin to come home to you. They will come home even more as you grow older. When sickness begins to take away your spirits, and departed health leaves you without the possibility of your present joys, your state will be almost too terrible for contemplation. Oh, I would not be the man who has lived a sinful life, and who is about to die without hope! A pack of wolves around a man must be nothing to it. I heard the other day of one, in India, who was thought to be dead; and the Parsee method, you know, is not to bury their dead, they leave them naked in what are called the "Towers of Silence", where there are vultures always waiting; and within three or four hours after a corpse is laid there, there is no flesh left upon the bones. One poor man, who was only in a swoon, was thought to be dead, and was laid out in the tower; the vultures came, and one or two of them tore his flesh so terribly, that he started up as from a dreadful dream. There were the vultures coming to devour him while he was yet alive; and defending himself as best he could, he managed to escape. What a plight to be in, lying in the place of the dead, surrounded by the cruel beaks of those fierce, ravenous birds! But

in a far more awful position is a sinner when his sins come home to him. Only the Lord can drive those vultures away, and restore him to life and safety. He comes for your deliverance, and it is his voice that says to-day, "Arise ye, and depart; for this is not your rest." Fly to him now; for if not, this rest of yours, that you seem to have, will destroy you. You will grow more worldly and more callous as the years go on. He that is filthy will become yet more filthy. As an old man you will say, "It is no use talking to me. If I could have my curly hair back again, and sit on my mother's knee once more, I might feel something, but now I am given up to hardness." The world will ruin you, as the world has ruined its millions, and is ruining its thousands still. Fly to Jesus, fly to Jesus! Sinner, fly this moment! God help you! I shall be well rewarded for having preached if but one soul should be aroused to flee away to Christ my Lord. And why should not many more, in answer to our prayers? The Lord bless you, for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Micah ii.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—854, 847, 848.

The following letter from MR. SPURGEON to the congregation at the Tabernacle, will show friends the progress he is making. He bore the journey well; and at the time this note was sent to the printers, there was, on the whole, a little improvement in his condition:—

"Westwood, Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood,

"Oct. 3, 1891.

"DEAR FRIENDS,—I write a line on Saturday because the bright sun has tempted me to get to the sea-side, and I could not write you in time if I did not write *now*. As I have lost almost entirely my powers of eating, I feel it is time to do something, and I steal away to the sea in the hope that God will there revive me.

"Your sacred unity and zeal are daily a comfort to me. Oh, that I could be well, and serve you without a pause; but perhaps I am worth all the more as a worker because I have so fully been a sufferer!

"I am sure you will continue your prayers for me. May our God bless every one of you!

"Yours most lovingly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."