

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

OUR SYMPATHIZING HIGH PRIEST.

A Sermon

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“Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him; called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.”—Hebrews v. 7—10.

THE Holy Spirit in this chapter reminds us that two things were necessary in a high priest: first, he must be suitable for the men for whom he stood; and next, he must be acceptable with God. “Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God.” He must be fit from both points of view, both man-ward and God-ward. Our Lord Jesus Christ was ordained of God from of old, and did not of himself assume the position of high priest. The prophets spake of him as the Messiah of God, and Jehovah himself declared, “Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” When he came into the world the Holy Ghost bore witness to his being the Son of the Highest. At his baptism there came a voice from heaven saying, “Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased,” and that same voice was thrice heard declaring the same fact. The Father has given further testimony to the mission of Christ, “in that he hath raised him from the dead,” and hath caused him to enter into the heavenly places on our behalf. Moreover, he has given him a pledge that as Melchisedec, being both king and priest, he shall sit at his right hand until he hath made his enemies his footstool. Our Lord Jesus has been chosen, ordained, and glorified as our “great high priest, that has passed into the heavens.” This is the ground-work of our comfort in our Lord Jesus, for we know that he is one with the Father, and that all things are done by him as the messenger of the covenant, the authorized representative of Jehovah our God.

That is not the point to which I call your attention this morning: I would have you follow the text, and consider *the pre-eminent suitability of our Lord Jesus to be a High Priest for us, viewed from the human side.* A high priest must be one “who can have compassion on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way; for that he himself also

is compassed with infirmity." He must be one who has learned compassion in the school of suffering, so that he can succour the afflicted. There is no learning sympathy except by suffering. It cannot be studied from a book, it must be written on the heart. You must go through the fire if you would have sympathy with others who tread the glowing coals; you must yourself bear the cross if you would feel for those whose life is a burden to them. Beloved friends, we live in a world of sin and sorrow, and we ourselves are sinful and sorrowful; we need one who can put away our sin and become a sharer in our sorrow. If he cannot go with us through all the rough places of our pilgrim-way, how can he be our guide? If he has never travelled in the night himself, how can he whisper consolation to us in our darkest hours? We have a fully qualified High Priest in our Lord Jesus Christ: he is perfect in that capacity. I desire to speak of him this morning in that light. Oh for help from on high; for I feel that it needs the inspiration of the Holy One to enable a man to speak of Jesus as he should be spoken of. No careless utterance must attempt to describe the great High Priest of our profession. It needs a perfect preacher fully to describe a perfect Redeemer; and where is he to be found? To preach a crucified Saviour in a crucified style is no easy task. I take it that a lip needs as much to be touched with a live coal from off the altar to speak of the lowly sympathy of Jesus as to describe his glory. Of the two I had rather venture to speak of the garden of Paradise than of the garden of Gethsemane, apart from the help of the Holy Ghost. Oh that the divine Instructor would direct our meditations at this time, so that we may glorify Christ, and may with increased confidence repose in him!

I have this further object also: while trying to comfort the people of God, I would persuade others to approach our great High Priest. Oh how I long that many of you who have hitherto never known the love of Christ, may now be touched with a sense of it, and may be sweetly drawn to him! By the very fact that he is able to sympathize with you in your griefs, I hope that those of you who are afflicted may be induced to draw nigh to him. Oh that upon this spot, and at this hour, you who have been halting and hesitating for years may at once find a shelter with the compassionate One! He waits to give you everlasting comfort: oh that you would believe in him, and enjoy it! We shall pray for this, and look for it; and may God grant us our desires, that so his Son Jesus may be glorified!

The great suitability of Christ for his work will be seen as we view him in three characters. Let us first consider him as *a suppliant*, and this is set forth in the seventh verse: "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." Next we would view him as *a Son*: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." And then we shall close by regarding him as *a Saviour*: "He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Come, Holy Spirit, and take of the things of Christ, and show them unto us.

I. First, then, that we may see the suitability of our Lord to deal with us in our cares and sorrows, we shall view him as **A SUPPLIANT**.

The text begins with a word which reveals *his weakness*: "Who in

the days of his flesh." Our blessed Lord was in such a condition that he pleaded out of weakness with the God who was able to save. When our Lord was compassed with the weakness of flesh he was much in prayer. It would be an interesting exercise for the younger people to note all the times in which the Lord Jesus is said to have prayed. The occasions recorded are very numerous ; but these are no doubt merely a few specimens of a far greater number. Jesus was habitually in prayer ; he was praying even when his lips did not utter a sound. His heart was always in communion with the Great Father above. This is said to have been the case "in the days of his flesh." This term is used to distinguish his life on earth from his former estate in glory. From of old the Son of God dwelt with the Father ; but he was not then a partaker of human nature, and the eternal ages were not "the days of his flesh." Then he could not have entered into that intimate sympathy with us which he now exercises since he has been born at Bethlehem, and has died at Calvary. "The days of his flesh" intend this mortal life—the days of his weakness, humiliation, labour, and suffering. It is true that he wears our nature in heaven, for he said to his disciples after his resurrection, "Handle me, and see ; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." But yet we should not call the period of his exaltation at the right hand of the Father "the days of his flesh." He prays still : in fact, he continually makes intercession for the transgressors ; but it is in another style from that in which he prayed "in the days of his flesh" :

" With cries and tears he offer'd up
His humble suit below ;
But with authority he asks,
Enthroned in glory now."

Among the days of his life on earth there were some which peculiarly deserved to be called "the days of his flesh"—days in which his feebler nature pushed itself to the front. Then men saw less of his greatness as a teacher and more of his suffering as man. I should call that one of the days of his flesh when he went to Gethsemane, and "was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He was very heavy, because the shadow of his cross fell upon him with a denser darkness as he drew nearer to his death upon it. When the dread desertion by God which was the centre of his grief began to startle him ; when men esteemed him "stricken, smitten of God and afflicted," then were "the days of his flesh." Prostrate under the olives, pouring out his inmost soul in plaintive entreaties, even to a bloody sweat, you see your Lord a suppliant in weakness—"in the days of his flesh."

Brethren, I beseech you to think of our Lord's pleading "in the days of his flesh" as a matter of fact. Do not dream of him as though he were a phantom, and of his prayers as if they were part of a mere show. He was a real man, and his prayers were as real as yours can be. Believe in Jesus as man. You would be indignant at any one who would diminish the glory of his Godhead, and most justly so ; but oh, do not yourself take away from him the truth of his humanity : he was in very deed made flesh and dwelt among us. This was the case even when his apostles beheld his glory, "the glory as of the only begotten

of the Father, full of grace and truth !” We must get a firm grip of the true humanity, or else we lose the sacrificial death, the resurrection, and all the rest ; and the brotherhood of our Lord, which is a grand source of consolation, also disappears. Remember that he who sits at the right hand of God was once here in the likeness of sinful flesh. He who shall shortly come to judge the quick and dead passed through a period of limitation, weakness, suffering, weariness, since he was in human flesh. “The days of his flesh” were to him days of poverty, sickness, weariness, reproach, and temptation : though in him was no sin, yet he was tempted and tried in all points like as we are. Inasmuch as he has passed through such days as these, he is fitted to be the High Priest of believers, who also are passing through the days of their flesh. Brethren, we know too well that we are partakers of flesh and blood, and it is no mean comfort that our Lord Jesus himself took part of the same.

In the days of his flesh our divine Lord felt *his necessities*. The words, “He offered up prayers and supplications,” prove that he had many needs. Men do not pray and supplicate unless they have greater need than this world can satisfy. Men work for what they can get by working, and pray for that which can by no other means be obtained. The Saviour offered no petitions by way of mere form ; his supplications arose out of an urgent sense of his need of heavenly aid. It is difficult to realize it, but so it is, that our divine and innocent Saviour placed himself in such a condition for our sakes that his needs were manifold. Of course, as God he could come under no necessity ; but being man, like ourselves, he did not permit the power of his Godhead to destroy the man-like weakness of the flesh. Hence he endured such necessities as we do, and resorted, as we must, to the one all-sufficient source of supply, approaching his Father by prayer. He sought for blessings with prayers ; he pleaded against evil with supplications. His approaches to God were many—both words are in the plural—“prayers and supplications” ; and they were manifold in their character ; for he presented prayers and supplications of all kinds. Specially in the garden he cried again and again, “If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.” Now, trite as the observation may be, yet it is one that needs to be often repeated, that our Saviour did really pray. When you, in your heaviness, shut the door of your chamber, and kneel down in prayer ; when that prayer gathers strength, and you fall flat upon your face in agony ; when you cry and weep before the Most High, under a sinking sense of need, it is hard for you to think that Jesus ever did the same. But he did so. He asked as really as you ask ; he implored and besought, he entreated and wrestled, even as you must do. He knows that solitary place on Carmel, where Elias bowed his head between his knees and cried seven times unto the Lord. He knows the turning of the face to the wall and the weeping of the sorrowful eyes, even as Hezekiah knew them. He can have pity upon you in your loneliness, your distraction, your apparent desertion, your sinking of heart, your sorrowfulness even unto death. Look to him, then, in your night of weeping, and be of good cheer.

Those of you who are only now beginning to pray, I would encourage you to remember Jesus as setting you the example of praying. If your prayers have but few words in them, and are mainly made up of crying

and tears, yet in this they are like those of your Saviour, and so you may hope that they will be accepted. If you are afraid that your prayers are shut out from heaven, remember how the Saviour complains in the twenty-second Psalm, "O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent." He was heard in the end, but at the first he seemed to plead in vain. Jesus prayed under discouragements: what he did himself he will help you to do. He knows what the agony of prayer means, and he will cast a brother's eye on you when in the bitterness of your repentance you seek the Lord. How clear it is that we have a suitable High Priest, of tender heart, and loving soul!

Further, let us see how like the Son of God was to us in *his intensity* of prayer. I wish I knew how to preach upon a theme so sacred. One had need put off his shoe from off his foot upon this doubly-consecrated ground. The intensity of his prayer was such that our Lord expressed himself in "crying and tears." The evangelists do not record his tears, but the Holy Ghost here reveals what human eyes could not have seen. He pleaded with God until his pent-up grief demanded audible utterance, and he began to cry. He said, so that the disciples heard him a stone's cast away, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." His voice grew louder as the stream of his sorrows forced a channel for itself. There was great strength in his cries—they were "strong crying": they were deep, plaintive, touching, heart-breaking: "If it be possible—if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." We may be thankful that we did not hear the cries of that sore distress which fell upon our great Substitute. Cries are weak things, but his were *strong* cryings—strong with the heart of the Great Father. When he ceased his crying, and was silent, his tears took up the strain. The Lord heard a voice in his tears; and who shall say which spoke the more loudly, his crying or his tears? When a man so courageous, so patient as Jesus, betakes himself to cries and tears, we may be sure that the sorrow of his heart has passed all bounds. His soul within him must have been bursting with grief. We know it was so by another sign; for the life-blood forgot to course in its usual channels, and overflowed its banks in a sweat of blood. I do not think, as some do, that it was merely a sweat such as is common to labour; but I believe it was a sweat of blood, or the expression would not have been used, "as it were great drops of blood." A sweat of blood has now and then been seen upon men in great and fatal alarm; but the Saviour's was more wonderful than any of these cases; for so profuse was this bloody sweat, that it was as it were great drops of it "falling down to the ground." This was prayer indeed; supplication which exhausted his whole manhood. Body, soul, and spirit were now upon the rack of anguish, and upon the strain of agony. He pleaded with God after a more piteous, painful, terrible, and powerful sort than you and I have yet attained to. But, brethren, here is the point: if it comes to your case to be in a dark, dark hour, and to be praying with the heavens like brass above your head, and if you are obliged to cry aloud, and weep your soul away, then remember Jesus in the days of his flesh. Usually it may be you are very quiet, and perhaps wordless in prayer; but now you cannot refrain yourself: as

Joseph cried so that the Egyptians in the house of Pharaoh heard him, so do you give vent to your agony. Be not ashamed of your weakness, your Lord did so before you. Strong man as you are, you weep like a child. Do not apologize lest you seem to accuse your Saviour. Behold, you are not alone! Jesus is passing through the deeps with you. See you not the blood-stained foot-print of your Lord? Your utmost anguish is known to him. Fear not. Commit your way unto the Lord, even in this worst part of it. Trust him when the iron enters into your soul. Leave all in his experienced hands.

You poor souls who have never as yet trusted my Lord, are you not attracted to him? If he suffered all this can he not meet your case? By all this he was made perfect as a High Priest; oh, can you not trust him? Is he not able to enter into your misery? Oh, darkened hearts, is there not light here for you? When you pray with anguish Jesus perfectly understands the situation. Oh, you that loathe yourselves! oh that wish you had never been born! oh, you daughters of melancholy, and children of despair! Can you not see in the marred visage of your Redeemer a reason for trusting him? Since from his lips you hear strong crying, and from his eyes you see showers of tears, you may well feel that his is a sympathetic spirit, to whom you may run in the hour of danger, even as the chicks seek the wings of the hen.

Still, to proceed with the text: we have seen our Lord's needs, and the intensity of his prayer; now note *his understanding* in prayer. He prayed "unto him that was able to save him from death." The expression is startling; the Saviour prayed to be saved. In his direst woe he prayed thoughtfully, and with a clear apprehension of the character of him to whom he prayed. It is a great help in devotion to pray intelligently, knowing well the character of God to whom you are speaking. Jesus was about to die, and therefore the aspect under which he viewed the great Father was as "him that was able to save him from death." This passage may be read in two ways: it may mean that he would be saved from actually dying if it could be done consistently with the glorifying of the Father; or it may mean that he pleaded to be saved out of death, though he actually descended into it. The word may be rendered either *from* or *out of*. The Saviour viewed the great Father as able to preserve him in death from the power of death, so that he should triumph on the cross: and also as able to bring him up again from among the dead. Remember how he said in the Psalm: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Jesus had faith in God concerning death, and prayed according to that faith. This brings our blessed Lord very near to us; he prayed in faith even as we do. He believed in the power of God to save him from death, and even when cast down with fear he did not let go his hold on God. He

pleaded just as you and I should plead, impelled by fear and encouraged by faith. Let us imitate his intensity, his intelligence, and his faith. He has condescended to set us an example which we can copy: he has come into living companionship with us in our most urgent supplications. He has had his Jabbok, therefore, O ye seed of Jacob, trust in him.

It will further help you if I now call your attention to *his fear*. I believe our old Bibles give us a correct translation, much better than the Revised Version, although much can be said for the latter, "With strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." That is to say, he had a fear, a natural and not a sinful fear; and from this fear he was delivered by the strength brought to him from heaven by the angel. God has implanted in all of us the love of life, and we cannot part from it without a pang: our Lord felt a natural dread of death. If it be said that the Saviour was too courageous to know the fear of death, I beg to remark that he was the more courageous because he so calmly encountered that which he feared. Martyrs have died without the preceding dread which fell upon our Lord; but remember, that the help of God which sustained *them* was taken away from Jesus; and consider, also, that his death was special, and differed from that of all others of our race; for in that death there was condensed the penalty due to sin. To the righteous man death is not now a penalty, but a mode of going home: to Jesus it was in the fullest sense the penalty of death for human guilt. He saw before him, as we do not, all the pains and torments of death; he knew what he had to bear, and foretasted in the garden the smart involved in being a surety for sinful man. The vials of God's wrath were about to be poured upon him, and Jehovah was heard saying, "Awake, O sword"—as if it had never awoken before—"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts." He saw the abyss into which he must fall. If no dread had come upon him, why, methinks, the very essence of the atoning suffering would have been absent. Fear must take hold upon him—not that of a coward, but that of one terribly oppressed. His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." So when you tremble after sipping your cup of bitterness, think of Jesus trembling too. When you, in entering into the valley of death's shade, feel yourself greatly disturbed at the prospect before you, think of Jesus who was heard in his fear. Come, you that fear, and find help in one who also feared. Borrow courage from one who out of fear prayed himself into victory. Think of him who cried unto God, "Be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me." Trust your souls with him who in the days of his flesh cried out in anguish, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

But then notice another thing in the text, namely, *his success in prayer*, which also brings him near to us. He was heard "in that he feared." O my soul! to think that it should be said of thy Lord that he was heard, even as thou, a poor suppliant, art heard. Yet the cup did not pass from him, neither was the bitterness thereof in the least abated. When we are compelled to bear our thorn in the flesh and receive no other answer than "My grace is sufficient for thee," let us see our fellowship with Jesus and Jesus' fellowship with us. Jesus came forth from his agony saying, "Thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns. I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee." Oh what a brother Christ is, since he, too, cried and wept, and had power with God and prevailed! When God has sent from above, and drawn us out of many waters, the Lord Jesus is there to sing with us and rejoice with us, the constant companion of all our experiences. Can we not trust him? Brothers and sisters, if Jesus rises with us to the highest note of the scale, and if he also comes down with us to the deepest bass that the human voice can reach, then we may conclude that all along he is in unison with us in all the intervening notes. So let us to-day feel that Jesus is like ourselves in all but our sin, and that we may fearlessly come and trust him as we would trust a father or a brother, or as a fond wife confides in the husband of her love.

II. Let us now spend a few moments in beholding our Lord as a SON. His prayers and pleadings were those of a son with a father: "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."

The Sonship of our dear Saviour is well attested. The Lord declared this in the second Psalm: "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Thrice, as we have already noticed, did the voice out of the excellent glory proclaim this truth, and he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Yes; he that cried, he that wept, he that pleaded until he came to a bloody sweat, and he from whom the cup could not pass till he had drained it to the dregs, was nevertheless the only begotten Son of God. So, my brother, when you are put to great grief, do not doubt your sonship. What son is there whom the father chasteneth not? When you are in heaviness through manifold trials, do not listen to the insinuations of the enemy: "If thou be the son of God." Yea, if you should have to ask, "Why hast thou forsaken me?" do not doubt your sonship. Your faith should not be founded upon your own enjoyments, but upon the promise and the faithfulness of God. You are as much a son when you walk in the dark as when you rejoice in the light of Jehovah's countenance.

Being a Son, the text goes on to tell us that *he had to learn obedience.*

Is not that a wonderful thing? As man our Saviour had to learn. He was of a teachable spirit, and the Lord himself instructed him. All God's children go to school, for it is written, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." The lesson is practical—we learn to obey. Our Lord took kindly to this lesson: he did always the things which pleased the Father. This is our time of schooling and discipline, and we are learning to obey, which is the highest and best lesson of all. How near this brings our Lord to us, that he should be a Son and should have to learn! We go to school to Christ and with Christ, and so we feel his fitness to be our compassionate High Priest.

Jesus must needs *learn by suffering*. As swimming is only to be learned in the water, so is obedience only learned by actually doing and suffering the divine will. Obedience cannot be learned at the university, unless it be at the College of Experience. You must suffer the commandment to have its way with you, and then it will educate you. We think when we are first converted that we have learned obedience, and assuredly we have in a measure received the spirit by which we obey; but no man knows obedience till he has actually obeyed, both in an active and a passive sense. Even the Lord Jesus must come under the law, honour the law, and suffer the law, or else he cannot learn obedience. Who knows what it is to obey God to the full until he has had to lay aside his own will in the most tender and painful respects? To plead with God for the life of a beloved child, and yet to see that dear child die, and to kiss the rod—this is to learn obedience. To go alone and plead with God for the life of a husband or wife, and agonize with him for the boon, and then to be compelled to weep at the new-made grave, and yet to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord"—this is to learn obedience. Our Lord as man was made to know by his sufferings what full obedience meant: his was practical, experimental, personal acquaintance with obedience; and in all this he comes very near to us. A Son learning obedience: that is our Lord. May we not joyfully walk with him in all the rough paths of duty? May we not safely lean on the arm of One who knows every inch of the way?

The Lord Jesus Christ learned this obedience to perfection. The text speaks of him as "being made perfect." As a high priest he is perfect, because he has suffered to the end all that was needful to make him like unto his brethren. He has read the book of obedience quite through. He was not spared one heavy stroke of divine discipline. You and I never go to the end of grief: we are spared the utmost depth; but not so our Lord. The Lord sets us a service proportioned to our strength; but what a service was exacted of the Son of God! Ours is a lightened burden; but the Well-beloved was not spared the last ounce of crushing sorrow. "For it became him, for whom are all things, and

by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

Our Lord learned by suffering mixed with prayer and supplication. His was no unsanctified sorrow, his griefs were baptized in prayer. It cost him cries and tears to learn the lesson of his sufferings. He never suffered without prayer, nor prayed without suffering. Supplication and suffering went hand in hand; and in this way our Lord became perfected as the high-priest of our profession.

The practical point I am trying to drive at in my poor way is this: let us trust ourselves with him who as a Son knows the training and discipline of sons. Being yourself a son, look up and see what the elder brother endured, and know that "in that he hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." You who are afraid that you never will be the children of God, come and hear your Saviour cry as he rises from prayer, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Sons of men, whither do you wander? Why not come to him who is made like to yourselves? Which way are you looking? Look to him that suffered in your place and stead, and suffered both as a Suppliant and a Son. If you have never trusted him before, I think that you should begin this morning, now that you see his fellowship with you, his sympathy with you. I do not at this time set him forth to you in his power and glory—that I will do on another occasion; but I bring him before you in his weakness and humiliation, hoping thereby to attract to him the poor and needy who need such a helper.

III. Time fails me, and therefore we can do no more than spend a brief time in beholding the Lord Jesus as a SAVIOUR. It is to this end that he pleaded as a Suppliant and learned obedience as a Son.

As a Saviour he is perfect. Being made perfect through suffering, he is able fully to discharge his office. Nothing is wanting in the character and person of Christ in order to his being able to save to the uttermost. He is a Saviour, and a great one. You are wholly lost, but Jesus is perfectly able to save. You are sore sick, but Jesus is perfectly able to heal. You have gone, perhaps, to the extreme of sin; he has gone to the extreme of atonement. In every office essential to our salvation Jesus is perfect. Nothing is lacking in him in any one point. However difficult your case may seem, he is equal to it. Made perfect by suffering, he is able to meet the intricacies of your trials, and to deliver you in the most complicated emergency.

Henceforth *he is the author of salvation.* What a suggestive word—the *author* of salvation! Author! How expressive! He is the cause of salvation; the originator, the worker, the producer of salvation. Salvation begins with Christ; salvation is carried on by Christ; salvation is completed by Christ. If a man is the author of a book,

and not a mere compiler, it is all his own writing. Salvation has Jesus for its author. Do any of you wish to write a little of the book yourselves? Then Jesus would not be the author of it; but it would be Jesus and you. But because our Lord has assumed our nature, and entered into fellowship with us, he has become the author of salvation, and we must not intrude into his office. Let the author of salvation complete his own work. Come and accept the salvation which he is waiting to give to you. He has finished it, and you cannot add to it; it only remains for you to receive it.

Observe that *it is eternal salvation*: "the author of *eternal* salvation." Jesus does not save us to-day, and leave us to perish to-morrow; he knows what is in man, and so he has prepared nothing less than eternal salvation for man. A salvation which was not eternal would turn out to be no salvation at all. Those whom Jesus saved are saved indeed. Man can be the author of temporary salvation; but only he who is "a high priest for ever" can bring in a salvation which endures for ever. This reminds us of the word of the prophet: "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Surely I know that whatsoever the Lord doeth shall be for ever. An eternal salvation is worth having, is it not? Jesus does not give a salvation which will let you fall from grace, and perish after all; but a salvation which will keep you to the end—though you should live to be as old as Methuselah. Salvation to eternity and through eternity is provided by Jesus. Oh, love the Lord, all ye his saints, since by his stooping to be perfected as a High Priest, he has been able to bring in for you such a salvation as this.

Furthermore, inasmuch as he has learned obedience, and become a perfect High Priest, *his salvation is wide in its range*, for it is unto "all them that obey him." Not to some few, not to a little select company here and there, but "unto all them that obey him." One of his first commandments is "Repent." Will you obey him in that, and quit your sin? Then he is the author of eternal salvation to you. His great command is, "Believe and live." Will you trust him, then? For if you do, he is the author of eternal salvation to you. He whom I have tried to describe with all my heart—this blessed sympathetic fellow-sufferer of ours—he is willing and able to save all of you who will obey him at this moment by trusting him.

Come, my hearers, let Jesus be your Master and your Lord. Come, ye runaways, return to him! Come, ye castaways, hope in him! Be his, for he has made himself yours. Seek him, for he has sought you. Obey him, for he obeyed for you. He is "the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him."

Note, that *he is all this for ever*, for he is "a priest for ever." If you could have seen him when he came from Gethsemane, you think you

could have trusted him. Oh! trust him to-day, for he is "called of God to be an high priest after the order of Melchisedec," and that order of Melchisedec is an everlasting and perpetual priesthood. He is able to-day to plead for you, able to-day to put away your sins. Oh that God the Holy Spirit may lead many of you to come and obey him at once!

A heavy atmosphere fills this Tabernacle this morning, making it difficult to speak and more difficult to hear; but yet if some sudden news came to you, as the burning of your house, or the death of a dear child, you would shake off all lethargy and wake up from all dulness and heaviness of spirit, and therefore I claim your liveliest thoughts for the solemn subject which I have introduced to you. Think much of the Son of God, the Lord of heaven and earth, who for our salvation loved and lived and served and suffered. He that made man was made man. As a suppliant, with cries and tears he pleaded with God, even he before whom the hosts of heaven bow adoringly. He has still that tenderness to which he was trained by his sufferings: he bids you now come to him. Ye that love him approach him now, and read the love which is engraven on his heart. You who have not hitherto known him, come boldly to him and trust him who has come so near to you. The Man is very near akin unto us. Behold how he loves us! He bends to us with eternal salvation in his hands. Believe in him and live. God grant it! Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Luke xxii. 39—46,
and Hebrews iv. 14—16; v.

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—327, 328, 271.
