

CHAPTER XX.

First Outlines of Sermons, 1851-1852.



AMONG the many literary treasures so carefully preserved by Mr. Spurgeon, there are two sets of books containing his first brief Outlines of Sermons, and the more lengthy manuscripts which he used to prepare until the claims of his London pastorate made it impossible to continue doing so any longer. Probably, by that time, he also felt that he did not need to write so fully as in his early preaching days ; and, shortly afterwards, as he often told his students, the revision of his printed Sermons gave him all the advantages that he might have derived from more elaborate preparation for the pulpit.

The first volume of Outlines must have been commenced very soon after Mr. Spurgeon began to preach, for the second written in it was only the *fourth* discourse delivered by the youthful evangelist. The text was Revelation xxi. 27, and it was preached at Barton, near Cambridge, on February 9th, 1851. This fact fixes, approximately, the date of the commencement of that wonderful world-wide ministry which the Lord so long and so greatly blessed, and which He still continues most graciously to own and use. Such intense interest attaches to these early records, that the Autobiography would be incomplete unless it included at least a few specimens of the beloved preacher's first homiletic efforts. Mr. Spurgeon had himself intended, long ago, to publish a selection from them ; in the Preface to *The New Park Street Pulpit* for 1857, he announced that he hoped shortly to issue a volume of his earliest Sermons, while Pastor at Waterbeach, but this was prevented by the pressure of his rapidly-increasing work. The Outlines are valuable, not only because of their intrinsic merits, but also as the first products of the mind and heart which afterwards yielded so many thousands of discourses to the Church and the world, for the glory of God and the good of men. It must be remembered that they were made by a youth of sixteen ; literally, "the boy-preacher." At the beginning of Vol. I. is a *textual* index, showing that the seventy-seven Outlines were based upon passages taken from fifteen Books in the Old Testament, and sixteen in the New Testament ; while at the end is a *subject* index, which bears a

remarkable resemblance to those which set forth the contents of every volume of the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. Happy preacher, who commenced, as he continued, and concluded, the ministry he "received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." As indicating the character of the whole series, the first three Sermon-Notes are given in the present work, together with one Outline from each of the succeeding volumes, *facsimile* reproductions of the highly-adorned title-pages of Vols. I. and II., and the characteristic inscriptions written by Mr. Spurgeon at the commencement and conclusion of most of the volumes.

OUTLINE I.—ADOPTION.

"Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."—Ephesians i. 5.

Meaning of the term. Common among Romans. Two instances in Scripture,—Moses and Esther. Adoption differs from Justification and Regeneration.

I. THE SENSE IN WHICH BELIEVERS ARE SONS OF GOD.

Not as Jesus. More so than creatures.

(i) In some things spiritual adoption agrees with civil.

1. In name and thing. 2. To an inheritance. 3. Voluntary on the part of the Adopter. 4. Taking the Adopter's name. 5. Received into the Family. 6. Considered as children : food, protection, clothing, education, attendance provided. 7. Under the control of the Father.

(ii) In some things they disagree.

1. Civil adoption requires the consent of the adopted. 2. Civil adoption was intended to provide for childless persons. 3. In civil adoption, the adopted had something to recommend him. 4. The nature of a son could not be given. 5. The children did not inherit till their father's death. 6. The Pontifex might make it void.

II. THE CAUSE OF ADOPTION.

1. The Person : God. Father. Son. Spirit.

2. The motive. Free-grace, not works.

III. THE OBJECTS OF IT.

Elect sinners, not angels. All believers. Not all men, but justified men.

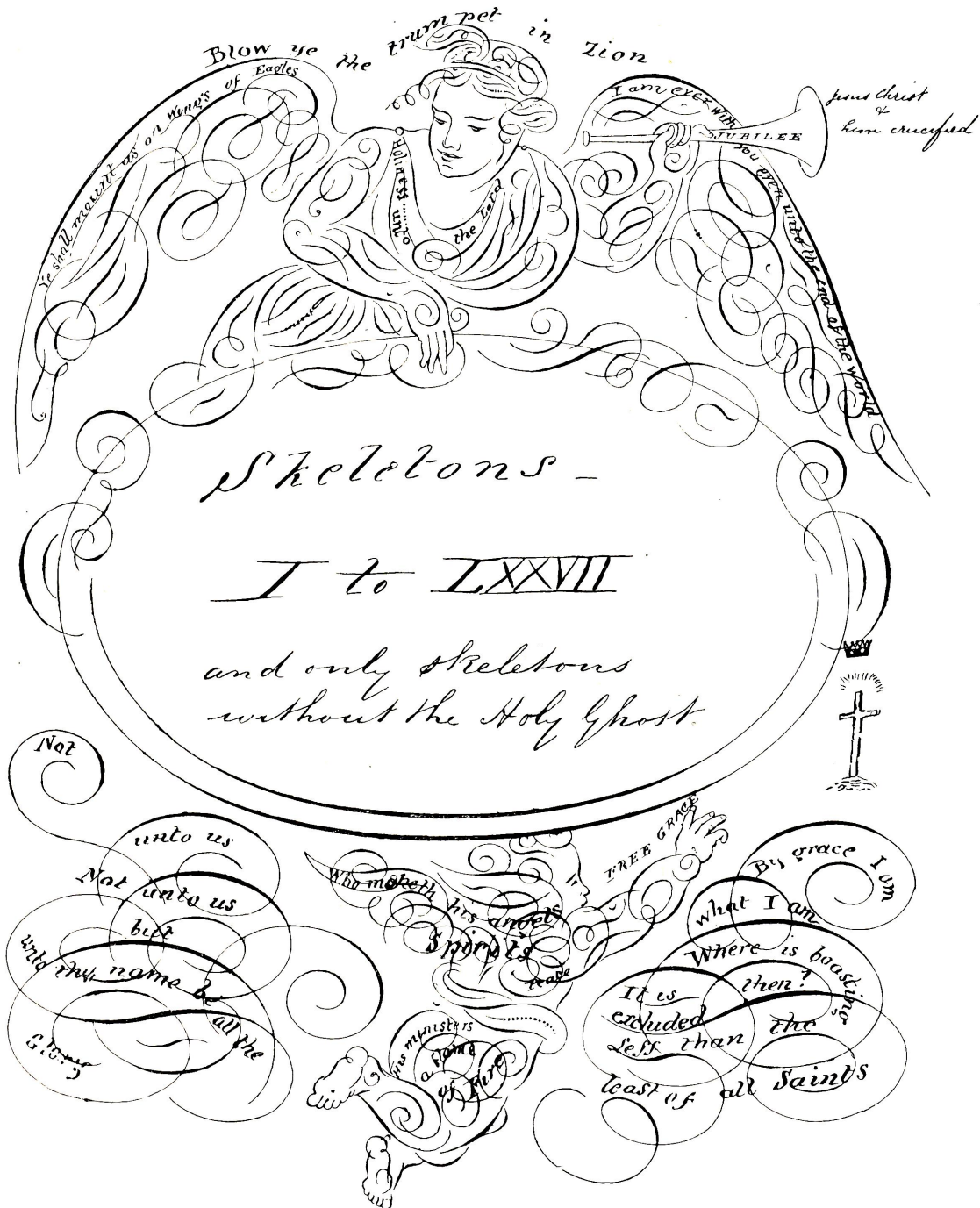
IV. THE EXCELLENCY OF IT.

1. It is an act of surprising grace. (1 John iii. 1.) Consider the persons. 2. It exceeds all others. 3. It makes men honourable. 4. Brings men into the highest relations. 5. Includes all things. 6. Immutable and everlasting.

V. THE EFFECTS OF IT.

1. Share in the love, pity, and care of God. 2. Access with boldness. 3. Conformity to the image of Jesus. 4. The Holy Spirit. 5. Heirship.

Encouragement. Appeal to saints and sinners.



FACSIMILE OF TITLE-PAGE OF VOLUME I.

OUTLINE II.—NECESSITY OF PURITY FOR AN ENTRANCE INTO HEAVEN.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.”—Revelation xxi. 27.

I. THE STRICTNESS OF THE LAW “any thing that defileth.”

Satan cannot. Sin cannot. What a matter of rejoicing to Christians!

How can man enter?

Not by ceremonies. Not by the law. Not by sincere obedience in part.

The heart must be purified.

All past sin forgiven. How? By free-grace.

All present sin crucified. How? By the Holy Spirit.

All future sin avoided. How? By the Spirit's help.

II. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF ENTRANCE “in no wise.”

God has said so. He will not allow it; nor will the angels; nor the redeemed.

A wicked man would not be happy in Heaven.

No prayers, cries, groans, strife, can get a dead, unholy sinner into Heaven.

If a man is not in, he is out for ever, no coming in, no change.

Call to enter in by faith in Jesus Christ.

OUTLINE III.—ABRAHAM JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.

“And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness.”—Genesis xv. 6.

I. THE FACT “he believed in the Lord.”

Leaving his country. Life in Canaan. Sodom.

Isaac's birth. Promises to him. Isaac's sacrifice.

Two sorts of faith 1. Historical, or dead faith.

2. Living faith, producing works.

II. THE RESULT “He counted it to him for righteousness.”

1. Sins forgiven,—2. Righteousness imputed,—by faith.

By it, he gained God's favour and love, Heaven, and eternal life.

These bring—Peace. How easy lies the head that does no ill!

Love. When we are pure, we love God.

Joy. The justified person has true joy.

Comfort. All things work together for good.

Security. None can condemn, nor destroy.

III. AS ABRAHAM WAS SAVED, SO MUST WE BE.

Not by works, or Abraham would have been.

Not by ceremonies. Abram believed before circumcision.

Reasons why sinners and Christians should believe God; exhortations to faith.

OUTLINE CXXXIII.—BY FAITH JERICHO FELL.

“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.”—Hebrews xi. 30.

Faith is the one grand essential in salvation. It must be inwrought, or else there will be no spiritual life at first. It is necessary ever after in numberless ways. We cannot have knowledge of gospel doctrines without faith, nor can we lay hold on the promises without it. The graces are all dependent on faith. He loves most who believes most. He will have most zeal who has most faith. Humility is produced by faith, and hope breathes through faith. In doing good to others, and particularly in combat with evil, let us have faith.

I. FAITH IS THE GRACE TO WHICH VICTORY IS GIVEN.

1. The other graces are not decked with laurel, lest man should steal their crowns ; but faith is too tall, man cannot reach its head. Faith has less to do with man, and more to do with God than any of the other graces ; for faith is looking away from self, and trusting the Eternal.

2. Faith gains the victory because she engages the arm of the Almighty on her behalf. She has power with Him, and therefore she prevails.

3. That man is most able to bear with humility the joy of victory who endured the conflict by faith ; he will give all the glory to God.

4. Other graces do wonders, but faith does impossibilities. She is the only grace that can act in certain places, and under certain circumstances. She is intended for this very purpose.

II. FAITH WINS HER VICTORIES IN GOD'S APPOINTED WAY.

1. She uses no means of her own contrivance ; she waits upon God for guidance.

2. She neglects not His appointments ; she is not presumptuous.

3. When she uses the means, she does not despise them. She ungirds the sword,—she follows the ark,—she hears the rams' horns.

4. She is laughed at for seeming folly ; but in her turn she smiles.

5. She does her Maker's will, and she expects the blessing, but all in an orderly way. That is no faith at all which believes and does nothing. We may not expect to be saved by faith, unless that faith pushes us on to run in God's way. Whether we seek salvation, the good of our friends, the stopping of evil, or the destruction of our corruptions, let us seek it in the Divinely-appointed way.

III. FAITH WINS HER VICTORIES IN GOD'S TIME.

1. She goes round Jericho thirteen times ; she expects the wall will come down at last, so round and round she goes.

2. She expects that, on the Lord's appointed day, her sins will all be overthrown, and she thinks her work well repaid when she knows this will happen. Therefore is she persevering in the conflict.

Now let us apply these thoughts—

1. *To the pulling down of Jericho in our own hearts.*

We want to slay all the old sinful inhabitants, but the lofty wall stands firm. Let us have faith. Let us follow the ark. Let us hear the sound of the trumpets, even though they are only rams' horns. Let us go round the wall all the seven days,—that is, all the week,—all the days of our life. Let us inwardly groan, but not grumble with our lips; and soon, when the ordained day arrives, the walls will tremble, we shall shout, and our enemies will be gone.

2. *To the pulling down of Jericho in the world.*

Sin has strong and lofty towers. The Tower of Babel or Babylonish Rome, idolatry, etc.,—let us yet believe that these will tumble to the earth. Let us continue our rounds as minister, Sunday-school teachers, and Christian workers. Keep the poor rams' horns going; do your duty, and one day Jesus shall reign universally.

3. *To the pulling down of Jericho in this village.*

Dagon stands fast here; but the ark of God is come. The trumpeters of God have long blown the trumpet; the rams' horns are still sounding a loud rough blast. Many are following the ark, but the time for the complete victory has not quite come. Keep on, brethren, and give a great shout, all at once,—by faith,—and down will come the mighty walls.

The Lord help us to believe His Word, and then fulfil to us His promises! *Amen*, through JESUS.

(The following poem was written by Mr. Spurgeon at the time that he prepared and preached the foregoing discourse :—)

THE FALL OF JERICHO.

The day is come, the seventh morn
Is usher'd in with blast of horn;
Tremble, ye tow'rs of giant height,
This is the day of Israel's might.
Six days ye mock'd the silent band,
This hour their shout shall shake your land.
Old Jordan's floods shall hear the sound,
Yon circling hills with fear shall bound.

Thou palm-tree'd city, at thy gates
Death in grim form this moment waits;
See, hurrying on the howling blast,
That dreaded hour, thy last, thy last.

Lo, at the leader's well-known sign,
 The tribes their mighty voices join,
 With thund'ring noise the heavens are rent,
 Down falls the crumbling battlement ;
 Straight to the prey each soldier goes,
 The sword devours his helpless foes.
 Now, impious ! on your idols call ;
 Prostrate at Baal's altar fall.
 In vain your rampart and your pride,
 Which once Jehovah's power defied.

Now Israel, spare not, strike the blade
 In heart of man, and breast of maid ;
 Spare not the old, nor young, nor gay,
 Spare not, for Justice bids you slay.

Who shall describe that dreadful cry ?
 These ears shall hear it till they die.
 Pale terror shrieks her hideous note,
 War bellows from his brazen throat,
 Death tears his prey with many a groan,
 Nor earth itself restrains a moan.

Ho ! vultures, to the banquet haste,
 Here ye may feast, and glut your taste ;
 Ho ! monsters of the gloomy wood,
 Here cool your tongues in seas of blood.

But, no ; the flames demand the whole,
 In blazing sheets they upward roll ;
 They fire the heavens, and cast their light
 Where Gibeon pales with sad affright ;
 A lurid glare o'er earth is cast,
 The nations stand, with dread aghast.
 The shepherd on the distant plain
 Thinks of old Sodom's fiery rain ;
 He flies a sheltering hill to find,
 Nor casts one lingering look behind.
 The magian scans his mystic lore,
 Foretells the curse on Egypt's shore ;

The Arab checks his frightened horse,
Bends his wild knee, and turns his course.
E'en seas remote behold the glare,
And hardy sailors raise their prayer.

Now, in dim smoke, the flames expire
That lit the city's fun'ral fire,
The glowing embers cease to burn :
Haste, patriot, fill the golden urn !
In crystal tears her dust embalm,
In distant lands, in strife or calm,
Still press the relic to thy heart,
And in the rapture lose the smart !

It must not be ; her sons are dead,
They with their mother burned or bled ;
Not one survives : the vip'rish race
Have perish'd with their lodging-place.
No more lascivious maidens dance,
No youths with lustful step advance,
No drunkard's bowl, no rite unclean,
No idol mysteries are seen.
A warrior stands in martial state,
And thus proclaims her changeless fate :
"Accursèd city, blot her name
From mind of man, from lip of fame.
Curs'd be the man, and curs'd his race,
Who dares his house on thee to place ;
He founds it on his firstborn's tomb,
And crowns it with the brother's doom."

Thus God rewards the haughty foe,
Great in their sin and overthrow.
He ever reigns immortal King ;
With Israel's song the mountains ring.

Yet 'mid the justice dread, severe,
Where pity sheds no silv'ry tear,
A gleam of golden mercy strays,
And lights the scene with pleasing rays.

One house escapes, by faith secure,
 The scarlet thread a token sure,
 Rahab, whose seed in future time
 Should bear the virgin's Son sublime.

Thus, when the Thund'rer grasps His arms,
 And fills our earth with just alarms,
 His hand still shields the chosen race,
 And 'midst His wrath remembers grace.

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(At the end of the hundredth Outline, Mr. Spurgeon wrote :—)

For this 100, I bless the Lord, for the good is His. May they be the seed of many a plant of the Lord !

(Inscription inside front cover of Volume II :—)

FINIS.

June 19. My 18th birthday. With my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.

Lovingkindness runs faster than time ; it outstrips me, and then waits to be gracious.

(Inscription at the end of Volume II :—)

Better is the end of life than the beginning.

Better the end of labour than the starting.

These sketches are so many proofs of the power of faith By faith I got them.

They are evidences of God's love,—for oft have they come just at the moment when, had they tarried, I had been undone.

Blessed be God for making men so much His darlings as to let them speak His Word !

May it be my topmost desire to live as much to God's glory as possible ; and—

“When I shall die,
 ‘Receive me,’ I’ll cry,
 ‘For Jesus has lov’d me,
 I cannot tell why.’”

In health, contentment, and peace, June 19/52, only feeling the thorns of sin and sin's effects.

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OUTLINE CLXXII.—THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH.

“And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”—Acts xi. 26.

Kings are wont to chronicle their wars ; mighty men expect to be made to live after death in the historic page ; but though these matters have a certain amount of interest, what is it compared with the interest attaching to this inspired Book of the Acts of the Apostles ? The History of England is not so important as this one portion of the Bible. It is a “Book of Martyrs,”—Stephen, Paul, and many more. It is a “Book of voyages and travels,” of thrilling and permanent interest. It is Vol. I. of “The Christian Times.” It is a book of debates, speeches, addresses, sermons, &c.

The church at Antioch has a history so interesting that I only pray that I may be helped to make it so, as I give—

I. A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH.

Certain saints, driven by persecution from Jerusalem, fled to Antioch, and commenced there their labours of love. Their names are unmentioned, but God knoweth them, and they are now receiving their reward. Let my name perish, but let Christ's name last for ever.

The Lord's hand helped them, and many believed, and turned unto the Lord. These were so pious that the church in Jerusalem heard of it, and for their further edification sent down Barnabas to labour among them. He was full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and under him the church grew so great that he went after Paul to assist him.

The saints at Antioch were a liberal people ; and, by God's grace, continuing to increase, they soon had five pastors, and the Holy Ghost put it into their minds to send out, as missionaries elsewhere, two who became eminently successful. Thus, Antioch became a mother-church to many surrounding parts. Paul and Barnabas used to return there, after their laborious missionary tours. They anchored at Antioch, as in a haven of refuge.

1. Let us note that the gospel is not of necessity a slowly-progressing affair. The first preachers were very successful, for it seems that in about two years the church at Antioch was firmly established. That church grew amazingly, then why should not ours, and why should not all others grow in similar fashion ? The conversion of the world will not always go on at snail-pace, and we ought to pray that it may not in this place. O God, grant it !

2. Let us notice the principal elements of success in this case, believing them to be the same in all. There were things from *God, the ministers, and the people.*

God—in Providence shielded this Gentile Jerusalem from persecution, and gave

peace to the people. He sent them faithful ministers, and with those ministers He sent His Spirit.

The ministers—preached the Lord Jesus. Barnabas was a good, kind, faithful, Spirit-filled man. Paul also was a mighty preacher of the Word.

The people—must have had much grace,—a close cleaving to God and to one another,—liberality and readiness to assist any work of faith,—and abundance of that jewel called “all prayer.”

II. A FEW REMARKS UPON THE TITLE FIRST GAINED BY THIS CHURCH AT ANTIOCH,—“CHRISTIANS.”

Perhaps the name was given as a designation by the Gentiles, gladly adopted by the disciples, and sanctioned by Divine authority. They had hitherto styled themselves “disciples,” “the faithful,” “the elect,” “brethren.” The Jews called them Nazarenes, Galileans, &c. The sect was so small that, doubtless, among the masses of the heathen, it was nondescript; but, in Antioch, the talent, the zeal, the number, the influence, and (in some cases) the wealth of the members of the new church made it needful that it should have a name. The name given is a good one,—

CHRISTIANS.

1. This intimates that there was much unity among the disciples, so that one name would apply to all. Blessed time when this unity shall return, and we shall be all gathered in one!

2. This shows that the conversation, singing, worship, preaching, &c., of these men and women must have been much about Christ; else, how would the common people know their name?

3. This shows that their life and conduct must have been according to the example of Christ; otherwise, the more knowing members of the community would have denied their right to the title.

But I also am called a Christian.

How honourable a name! Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod, was more honoured in bearing this name than by his connection with an earthly prince. Paul, at one time a learned doctor in the Pharisaic school, owns this name of Christian as his highest title. Surely, 'tis a title which an angel might almost covet. But what does this name show?

1. That I am a believer in the Divine mission of Jesus,—a believer in His official name, “Christ.” Let me then take care to trust in Him most implicitly, and never by my doubts dishonour Him.

2. That I am a professed imitator of the holy, harmless, undefiled, loving, generous Jesus; let me then really be so in all things.

3. That I am a lover of Jesus; then let my conversation and talk and meditation be concerning Him.

A Christian is one who is anointed to be a priest unto God, to offer continual prayer and praise in the name of Jesus. Bearing the one name which the glorious army of martyrs, the great apostles of Christ, and the saints in all ages, have borne, may we honour the name of Jesus, and on our shoulder bear the cross of Jesus!

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(Inscription at the end of Volume III :—)

Praise, praise, unto Him who causeth the river to run on still,—though, as some say, unfed by natural streams.

God doeth good, and all the good herein is every atom His. Bear witness, oh, paper, of my thanks for these instances of grace!

(Inscription on Title-page of Volume IV :—)

In this volume, may I have the pen of a ready writer!

(Inscription at the back of Title-page :—)

By faith, I begin this volume.

(Note at the end of Outline No. 200 :—)

I desire to record thanks for this second 100. May God receive glory *from* them as well as *for* them!

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OUTLINE CCXII.—NOWISE CAST OUT.

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me ; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."—John vi. 37.

Upon reading this verse, one feels inclined to break out with the angelic song, "Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy."

Here are two sets of doctrine, the high and the low conjoined ; surely, this passage will suit all, from the "Hyper" down to the Primitive.

I. THE ETERNAL "SHALL"—POSITIVE.

II. THE ETERNAL "WILL"—NEGATIVE.

I. THE POSITIVE ETERNAL "SHALL." "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me."

These words may be regarded as—

1. A prophecy of our Lord, the Prophet of His people.
2. A solemn oath of God the Son.
3. A triumphant boast of Jesus the Conqueror.
4. A challenge to death and hell.

In these words, He speaks like one—

1. Who knows the number of His people : "all."

2. Who regards past and present as one : "giveth."
 3. Who knows His rights are good : "shall." And—
 4. Who is convinced of His own power to perform what He has promised.
- But this is of no comfort to us unless we can see—

1. That He has given us the Holy Spirit.
2. That we have given ourselves to Him.

If we have done so, then let us glory in these blessed words, and sing them aloud,—

"All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me."

II. THE NEGATIVE ETERNAL "WILL." "And him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Notice here the Speaker,—our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father has never spoken thus in His absolute character ; it were an insult to try to go to Him except through Christ, when He has made His Son the only medium of access to Him.

Notice the character addressed,—not the Jew that cometh, not the king or rich man that cometh, not the good man that cometh, not the young or old, but "*him that cometh*," *whosoever* he may be.

Notice the words of Jesus. "I will in no wise cast out." It is very strong in the original ; Christ means, "I will not, not, not," or, "I will never, never, never cast out any who come to Me." Christ will not cast them out—

1. Because of their great sins.
2. Because of their long delays.
3. Because of their trying other saviours.
4. Because of the hardness of their hearts.
5. Because of their little faith.
6. Because of their poor and dull prayers.
7. Because everyone else passes them by.

When they are once in, they are in for ever. Christ will not cast them out—

1. Because of their unbelief.
2. Because of their old corruptions.
3. Because of their backslidings.

Read, write, print, shout,—

"Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

What is it to come to Christ ? Men do not know what it is ; they fancy it is to reform themselves, to be moral, honest, good, upright, &c., &c. But it is, to trust, to believe in Jesus. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved."

Great Saviour, I thank Thee for this text ; help Thou me so to preach from it that many may come to Thee, and find eternal life !