

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

DAVID WARNED AND REWARDED.

A Sermon

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DELIVERED BY

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“Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.”—Psalm xix. 11.

DAVID was constantly singing the praises of God's Word, although, as I have often reminded you, he had only a small portion of the Scriptures compared with the complete Bible which we possess. If, then, it had pleased God that the Canon of Revelation should have been closed in David's day, it would, by the aid of his Spirit, have been even then a sufficient light to lead the saints of God into the way of holiness. You would be very sorry if the Pentateuch and the earliest Historical Books, should be all that you had of the Scriptures; yet they are, evidently, so rich, so full, so instructive, that they were all that David needed for the practical purposes of a holy life. Never allow anybody to make you depreciate the Old Testament. No part of the Bible is to be set up above the rest, or to be treated as of secondary importance. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

So I gather, from what David says, that, if we had no more Books of the Bible than he had, we should still possess an inestimable treasure for which we ought daily to bless and praise the name of the Lord. But now that we have the complete Revelation of the will of God, as contained in the Old and the New Testaments, we ought to rejoice with exceeding great joy. We have a Bible which is large enough to be a perfect library, and which is also so compact that we can carry it about with us wherever we go. It is exactly the right size, and it is just right in all other respects. It is just adapted to every individual in the world, and it is also the fittest book for any nation to use as an every-day guide as to its morals, its laws, and its conduct in relation to both God and men.

There are two things, mentioned in the text, which made the Scriptures very dear to David. The first is, that *they had warned him against evil*: “by them is thy servant warned;” and the

second is, that *obedience to the Scriptures had brought him a great reward*: "and in keeping of them there is great reward."

I. First, then, THE SCRIPTURES HAD WARNED DAVID AGAINST EVIL.

We are so dull and so foolish that, unless we are taught of God the Holy Spirit, we really know nothing as we ought to know it; yet we are so headstrong and so obstinate that, if we are not divinely checked, we run with heedless impetuosity into all manner of evil. We need to be goaded on to everything that is good; but we need to be held in with a tight rein, or we shall plunge into many things that are evil. Even when we do not wilfully choose the wrong, we seem to run into it by a sort of natural tendency, and we find ourselves bemired before we know where we are. If, however, the Scripture is made to be our constant companion and guide, we shall be saved from many mistakes into which, otherwise, we are sure to fall. Where we should have rushed on madly to our destruction, we shall find ourselves suddenly stopped, and we shall hear a voice behind us saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it;" and, through giving heed to that warning voice, we shall turn back from the broad road of our own choosing to the narrow way of God's choice.

God's Word warned us, first, *concerning our soul's disease and its remedy*. To some of us, our first warning concerning the evil of our nature came from the Scriptures. There are some persons, who must, very early in life, have been made aware of the evil of their nature; I mean, persons with a hot, impetuous, passionate temperament, or those with a strong animal tendency, and others who were brought up in the midst of vice, and who themselves eagerly plunged into it. One would think that such people ought to be able to see that they are not what they should be; but there have been others with a gentle nature, who have been trained up in the midst of piety; even without the grace of God, they would not be likely to become vicious, like those to whom I have referred. They have also, through helpful training, become honest, and upright, and amiable; there is everything about them that is pleasing and beautiful. They go to church, or to the meeting-house, and they join with others in making confession of sin; yet, somehow, they do not seem to realize that the confession applies to themselves exactly as it stands, for they are not openly as sinful as others are. There are some people, in such a condition of natural excellence, that, if it had not been for the Word of God, they would not have known what evil was sleeping within their hearts. A leopard may have been kept under restraint from the time when it was a cub, and it may appear to be perfectly harmless; but if it should taste blood, its real fierceness will soon be seen. You may walk over a grassy hill, and think yourself perfectly secure; yet, underneath, there may be a slumbering volcano, liable to break out at any moment. Everywhere about us there is that which flatters us, and makes us think that we are better than we are; but, by the Word of God, we are faithfully warned that there is a sink of iniquity within our soul,—a black and fetid spring,—a foul generator of everything that is evil in the very fountain of our nature. What a blessing it is for

us to be warned of that evil, lest we should go on dreaming that all was right, and never find out the truth till we were past conversion,—past the possibility of being renewed because we should have entered that other world where hope and mercy never can come! What a blessing it is that God's Word warns us concerning the disease, and tells us of the remedy for it,—warns us that we are lost, and reveals to us the glorious truth concerning the Saviour who has come to seek and to save that which was lost!

Then, next, God's Word warned us *concerning our danger, and the way of escape from it*. Did you never find yourself, dear friend, forming associations with ungodly persons, and gradually becoming more and more pleased with them; and, then, did the Word of God come to you with power, saying, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers"? Did you also hear this command applied to you, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing"? If so, I am sure that, as you tore yourself away from the fatal embrace of the ungodly, and escaped for your life out of the Sodom of which you had almost become a citizen, you could not help prizing and praising the Book by which you had been warned to flee from the peril which threatened to destroy you.

Did you ever find yourself thinking that all was well within,—that you were really getting to be somebody of importance,—that you might hang out your streamers, and did the Word of the Lord then come home to you, saying, "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"? Did you haul down your flags? Did you hide your face for shame? Did you get away alone, and confess to God the proud mistake that you had made, and not feel safe again until you were lying at the cross-foot, looking up to your Saviour for mercy and forgiveness? If so, I feel sure that you took your Bible in your hand, and you said, "By this blessed Book is thy servant warned to escape from self-delusion and from being puffed up with the conceit that he was something when he was nothing."

How many, many dangers there are in this life against which the Word of God warns us! I recollect being on board a steamboat going up the Thames, early in the morning, when the fog had not cleared away, and when a man, in the bows of the vessel, shouted out as loudly as ever he could for us to go astern, for we were out of our track, and should soon have been ashore. As I heard that shrill cry of warning, I could not but be grateful for it; and you and I, dear friends, would long ago have gone aground if the Word of the Lord had not called out to us, sometimes in sharp, stern tones, "Stop! There is danger just ahead;" and we have been compelled to alter our course, and go where our natural inclination would never have induced us to go. Blessed be God that we were not only warned, at the first, concerning our spiritual disease, and directed to him who could cure it; but, many a time since then, have we been warned of unseen dangers in our holy pilgrimage; so let us prize and bless the Book that has been our Mentor and our Monitor, ever

seeking to keep us in the right path, or to draw us off from the wrong.

God's Word has also been a warning to us, oftentimes, *concerning our duty and our obligation*. Many a professing Christian man is not living as he should live; but if he would diligently read his Bible, and obey its injunctions, there would soon be a great alteration in him. Hundreds of believers, while searching the Scriptures, have been powerfully affected by some one text, and have been led not only to see their shortcomings, but also to perceive the way to a nobler and better life. "I must do something," says one, "to prove my love to him who has done so much for me. I have fallen short even of the standard that I set up for myself, and that standard is far below what I find in the Word of God;" and, it may be, under the influence of a single verse, the man has become generous, self-sacrificing, earnest, fervent, and has glowed with a zeal for God which he never knew before. Many of us can testify how often the Word of the Lord has quickened us, so let us be wise enough to go to it whenever we become lethargic and dull; that, under the inspiration of its sacred pages, we may be again aroused and revived. O Spirit of God, we bless thy holy name that, when duties lay neglected, and precepts had been entirely forgotten, thou didst bring them up again before our minds in this precious Book, and then we made haste, and delayed not to keep thy commandments, because thy Word has warned us concerning our duty and our obligation!

Brothers and sisters, God's Word warns us *concerning the whole of our life, and even concerning some things to come which, otherwise, we could never have known*. If any brother is impressed with the thought that Jesus Christ may come at any moment, and call him to account, that is an admirable reason why he should every day watch unto prayer, and get himself ready for his Lord's coming; but, sometimes, when I read the Word of God, and when I travel through this great city, I am led to contemplations of another sort. I think that, whether the Lord comes soon, or not, does not affect my responsibility and yours concerning the people now living, and the generations that may yet come. If this great London is to go on increasing, if the population shall still keep multiplying, what will be said of us if we allow street after street to be built, houses by thousands to be erected, and hardly any new houses for the worship of God, while public-houses may be measured by the mile? It seems to me a dreadful thing to live at this particular time in which, if the gospel seed be not plentifully sown, the waste ground of centuries, if the world lasts so long, will cry out because of our indolence. But if the seed be scattered broadcast, then the harvests that shall be reaped in the centuries that may yet come shall redound to the glory of God, and also to the credit of those who faithfully served their Lord. I believe that, if ever men stood in a place where they could have power over a vast tremulous mass of humanity,—if ever men were in contact with wondrous wires that may influence ages that are yet to be, and nations still unborn, we are the men who stand in just such a position. That which is done,

or left undone, to-day, will have certain effects throughout eternity; but it will, perhaps, be sufficient for us to limit the consideration, and to recollect that our service or our neglect may affect generations of our fellow-creatures for good or evil. May God help us to remember that solemn verse which warns us that "none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself." May the Holy Spirit also bring to our memories our Saviour's words, "Ye are the salt of the earth;" and "Ye are the light of the world." If we salt not the earth, what can come to it but corruption; and if we enlighten not our generation, what can come to it but the blackness of darkness? By the consideration of these things are God's servants warned to be up and doing while it is called to-day. May God grant that we may not neglect the warning, but may we prize it, and thank God that, in the Sacred Scriptures, there is provision made to wake us up when we sleep, and to keep us active in his holy service! "By them is thy servant warned."

I should like to pass the question round to all who are here,—Dear friends, are you being warned by God's Word? Does it ever stop you, like an angel in the way when you are going forward contrary to the will of the Lord, and make you suddenly start, and stand still? Does God's Word ever, as it were, put its finger up to silence you just as you are going to speak? Does it ever seem to lay its hand upon your arm just as you are going to stretch out your hand unto iniquity? Does it ever warn you? Does it operate upon you as a drag, a check, a restraint? If it does not, then you have yet to learn the first elementary lesson of true piety. You are not as David was, you are not yet taught of the Spirit of God; for, if you were, you would frequently be warned by God's Word, and you would love to have it so. May God, in his mercy, grant that we may all learn, experimentally, the meaning of this first sentence of our text: "By them is thy servant warned"!

II. Now let us turn to the second part of the subject, in which I take much delight. It tells us that OBEEDIENCE TO THE SCRIPTURES BROUGHT TO DAVID A GREAT REWARD.

Holy writ was very precious to David, and he says, concerning God's commandments, "in keeping of them there is great reward." He does not say, "for keeping them." That is the old legal system,—so much pay for so much obedience. It is a poor system even if it could be worked out, and it is not God's plan at all. "Ye are not under law, but under grace." We are to do nothing for payment, but everything for love. Observe the difference between the two sentences. "For keeping them there is great reward." That is beggarly; it is a hireling's utterance. "In keeping them there is great reward." That is the language of one who loves obedience; it is a child's sentence,—the sentence of one who is perfectly free in his obedience, and who does not render it because he must, but because he delights to do so. That is the difference between the legal spirit of bondage and the evangelical spirit of holy freedom before the living God.

So, then, there is a great reward to gracious men in the keeping

of God's commandments; and that reward consists, first, in the *pleasure of obedience*. To those of us who love the Lord, it is a great delight to do what God bids us do. For instance, he bids us draw near to him in worship; and I can confidently appeal to many of you who are here, and I am sure that you will sympathize with me when I say that the happiest moments of my life are those that are spent on this spot where I am now standing, or down in the prayer-meetings or at the communion table; for, when I begin to worship and adore the Lord, my heart finds wings, and I soon rise above all cares, and troubles, and carnal considerations, into a high, holy, happy, spiritual condition. I am certain that I have experienced more true happiness on this platform than can have been enjoyed in any other place on the face of the earth. Whether you have been happy while I have been praying, I cannot tell; but I know that I have seemed to be in the immediate presence of God while I have been leading you in supplication; and, therefore, I judge that it has been much the same with you. And when you have a happy time alone in prayer, or in singing God's praises, or reading his Word, is it not the very vestibule of heaven to your soul? Well, that is an illustration of the truth that, in keeping God's commandments there is a great reward.

That refers to one part of the commands of God,—the drawing nigh unto him in worship. Now turn to the second table, where you are bidden to love your fellow-men, and see how far you have obeyed its commands. Have you done all you could to help the poor? Have you distributed alms among them? Have you been a nurse to the sick? Have you taught the little children? Have you tried to instruct grown-up people whom you have found under soul-concern, and sought to lead them to Christ? What have been the happiest evenings that you have ever spent when you have reviewed the engagements of the day? Have they been those in which you have had a season of gaiety with your friends,—I do not mean anything objectionable or wrong, but ordinary amusement;—a day, for instance, when you have been in the country, and you have been full of mirth and merriment? Has that been your happiest day? I do not think so; I believe that the happiest days you have ever lived have been those in which you have been downright weary in the cause of God. You have put your head on your pillow, and you have slept, oh! so sweetly; or, if you have been too tired to sleep, you have had joy-bells ringing in your heart because you have been doing somebody good. It is a great delight to give away money, for Christ's sake, to help the poor, and to succour such as are unable to help themselves. Just try to relieve a poor widow of part of her burden of care, or seek to supply the needs of an orphan child, and see whether it will not bring you joy and gladness. It is a whole day's holiday to be permitted to spend a day in doing good. In saying this, I am not dreaming, I am merely telling you what I know to be a matter of fact. Those who love the Lord do find that, in keeping his commandments, there is great reward; there is a pleasure in the obedience itself.

Then, dear friends, there is a reward *in the healthiness of this*

exercise. Either in worship and serving the Lord, or in loving and doing good to your fellow-men, there is most healthful exercise to your spirit. There are some forms of physical labour that quickly wear out the human frame; and there are some processes of thought that bring on brain weariness and mental exhaustion; but, in the service of God, there is a refreshment which makes the labour light. If we could have a machine that would manufacture its own oil, and provide its own coal, and repair its own waste, it would be a wonderful triumph of mechanism; but the spiritual mind is, by God's grace, made something like that. It bears within itself a well of living water springing up into everlasting life. It is an engine that creates its own fuel, and oil, and water as it runs along its way. God, by his infinite power, gives to the believer such spiritual strength within him that, even "though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." There is nothing that does a man so much good as to worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. A little heavenly excitement is a blessed refreshment and revival for the entire manhood; and—turning again to the other side of the subject,—to walk uprightly towards our fellow-men, to forgive those who injure us, and to bless with our beneficence all those who need anything at our hands, is a kind of exercise that is eminently suitable to our renewed manhood; and, the more we have of it, the more are we refreshed. If you want to grow to be what you ought to be, keep God's commandments, for in keeping them there is this blessed healthiness of spirit that comes to the obedient. He who would be whole, must be holy. Holiness is, indeed, a kind of wholeness or spiritual health.

Let me give you a few specimens of the way in which some of us have found the keeping of God's commandments to be truly profitable to us.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'I am this dark world's light;
 Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,
 And all thy day be bright.'"

I obeyed that command, and I can bear testimony that a great reward was at once given to me. Oh, how quickly the heavy burden rolled from my shoulder! How my soul did leap, like a roe or a young hart, the very moment that I obeyed that command of the Lord, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." Then there is that command, "Trust in the Lord," which is the perpetual precept for a believer's whole life; have not many of you found a great reward in keeping that command? Why! that trust in God has enabled you to cast upon him your burden of daily care, and every other burden that has been upon you; and when you have trusted him, you have been placid, and calm, and joyful, and strong, and fully equipped for all your labour and service. What a great reward faith brings to all who exercise it! It is a most soul-enriching grace; and, where it is in active operation, untold spiritual wealth comes pouring into the coffers of the saint.

Now take another command; for instance, "Pray without ceasing." In keeping that command, have you not had a great reward?

True prayer is true power. Prayer brings every blessing from on high. There is no need to do more than just mention it, for many of you know that, when you have kept that command, there has been given to you a great reward.

Let me remind you of a command which is often forgotten,—the command to forgive them that trespass against you. If you have done that, have you not found a great reward in the fact of having done it? Someone well said, "If my fellow-men do not praise me for what I have done, I do not mind; I am quite satisfied to have done that which deserved their praise." So should it be with you, and those whose wrong-doing you have forgiven. If you have borne long with their ill manners, and your kindness has only increased their enmity, so that they have reviled you more than ever, feel that it is quite sufficient reward for you to have done the right thing in forgiving them.

Or suppose it is not the duty of forgiveness that is in question, but some other, such as that of holy self-sacrifice, how do you stand with regard to it? Have you made sacrifices for Christ? Have you given of your substance to his cause until you have pinched yourself in doing so? That is one of the sweetest things a Christian can ever do, and there is a great reward in doing that. Have you denied yourself some pleasure in order to spend your time in doing good to others? If so, I am sure it has proved to be one of the best things you have ever done. It does not breed boastfulness or self-conceit, but there is a kind of moral sense within the spirit that makes our heart feel happy whenever we are doing a right and noble thing. We do not ask that we may be praised for it, or rewarded for it; it is quite sufficient delight for us to have had the privilege of doing such a thing as that. One of the greatest rewards that we ever receive for serving God is the permission to do still more for him. The reward for a man who has faithfully served God as the leader of fifty people is to be permitted to serve him as the leader of a hundred; and, in the case of a man who has lost a great deal of money through being faithful to his conscience, perhaps the greatest reward that God can give him is to let him lose twice as much by being still more faithful if that is possible. He who has been honest and upright, and who has been slandered,—it may be that he shall be rewarded by being slandered still more. The highest reward that God ever gives his servants on earth is when he permits them to make such a sacrifice as actually to die in his service as martyrs. That is the highest reward of which I can conceive,—the acceptance that God gives to the very body, and blood, and bones of his servants, as a whole burnt-offering unto him. Do you remember what reward the Spartans had when they fought most valiantly? A Spartan was once asked, "Suppose you fight like a lion to-day, what reward will you have?" He answered, "I shall have the honour of always being in the front rank, where there is the most danger." A coward would have preferred to be in the back rank, where there was the least danger; but the brave Spartan said, "If I have proved my courage, I shall have the permission to suffer more, and to venture more for my country." And this is the kind of reward that

God will give to us. If we keep his commandments, we shall be permitted to have more to do for his dear sake.

I have not time to speak of the peace that comes from the keeping of God's commandments, or of the ennobling character which it produces; but I must just mention the great reward which this obedience brings to us *in the power and capacity which it is gradually breeding in us for the perfect service of heaven.* God can make a man fit for heaven in a minute, if he pleases to do so. That I am sure of, for Christ took the dying thief there; but, as a general rule, the education of God's children is a matter of time; we have to be prepared for the enjoyments and the employments of heaven by processes of discipline here on earth. Now, brother, when you get to this state of spiritual experience,—that it is your one joy and delight to glorify God,—when you can bless God for suffering,—when you can praise him for heaviness of spirit if he chooses to send it,—when your will is entirely subject to the will of God, and your whole life is entirely absorbed in seeking the glory of God, then you are fit for heaven, for heaven principally consists of perfected natures, with the capacity to do the will of God without let or hindrance for ever.

Now I must conclude with two observations. The first is, dear friends, that you may know the profitableness there is in keeping God's commandments by considering the opposite thing. Do not try it, but just think of it. Suppose that you Christian people do not keep God's precepts,—suppose that, in certain ways, you violate them, what will happen? I am not now referring to your eternal safety; but I am quite sure that you will never derive any benefit from disobedience to God. You may get more money, perhaps, by a certain course in business, but that will not be true profit; it will be bad money which will canker all the rest that you have. Whatever you get, in that way, will be infinitely worse than losing. Look at David when he broke God's commandments. It was an evil day for him when he looked with lustful eye upon Bathsheba; and, from that first moment in which he turned aside, there was a cloud over his entire life. Although God had made with him "an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," yet that last part of his life was full of grief and sorrow; and you can trace it all to that turning aside from keeping the precepts of his God. O brothers and sisters, do you want to curdle your whole life? Then, let a drop of uncleanness fall into it. You may do, in half an hour, what will embitter the next twenty years of your life,—ay, and will make your dying pillow to be full of thorns. There can be no possible profit to a child of God in disobeying his Lord's commands.

This is my last remark; there must be a great reward in keeping God's commandments, for I never yet heard anybody say that he was sorry that he had kept them. I have met with many persons who have, for a time, suffered because of their faithfulness to conscience; but they have taken that as a matter of course, and they have found such a great reward in obeying Christ, and following their conscientious convictions that, if it had cost them a hundred times as much, they would cheerfully have submitted to the loss. Never has there

been a man who, on his death-bed, has regretted that he has followed the Lord fully. Is there one here who has kept God's commandments, and who regrets that he has done so? Is there one such person on earth? Was there ever one who could truthfully say, "I served God with all my heart, and he has cast me off, and I am sorry that I ever had such a Master"? No, there has not been such a person, nor shall there ever be one who can say that, so long as the world stands; for in keeping God's commandments there is great reward.

God bless you, dear brothers and sisters, and give you that reward, according to the riches of his grace, through Jesus Christ our Lord! Amen.

Exposition by C. H. Spurgeon.

PSALM XIX.

This Psalm has the same subject as Psalm cxix. Both of them are full of praise of God's Word. God has written two books for us to read,—the volume of the Creation and the volume of the Sacred Scriptures,—and these two are in complete harmony. Happy are they who can read both these books, and see the same vein of teaching running through every page.

Verse 1. *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.*

The heavens are always declaring God's glory; if we gaze up to them by day or by night, we always read in them the power, the wisdom, the goodness, the greatness, the immutability of God.

2. *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.*

If we have but ears to hear, and hearts to understand, how much of God may we see in that vast volume of nature which is spread out above us both by day and by night!

3, 4. *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

All men must hear God's voice in nature if they are only willing to do so. Paul wrote to the Romans, "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;" so that those who will not see "are without excuse."

4—6. *In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof:*

The sun has his place, and keeps it, so let us keep ours. The sun is glorious in his goings forth,—"as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber,"—glad himself, and making all things glad in his gladness; the whole world rejoices at the sight of the face of the sun. The sun is strong to go through his appointed orbit, and fulfil his ordained course. So may it be with us; may we not only have the gladness of our conversion, when we are "as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber," but may we have strength and grace to run the race set before us from the start to the finish!

The sun makes his influence felt wherever he goes: "there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." So also may it be with us; may our influence be

felt wherever we go! The sun is a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Sun of righteousness; but he is also a type of what every Christian should be, for "the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day;" and there should be nothing hid from the fervent heat of our Christian character. We ought so to serve God that our influence should be felt everywhere. May God give us more of his light and his heat that we may shine and burn to his glory!

7—9. *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.*

Six sentences, according to the parallels of Hebrew poetry, all in praise of God's Word. Let us always regard this holy Book as the Word of Jehovah; let us never look upon the Bible as being on a level with other books. The Word of the Lord is our ultimate Court of Appeal; we accept its teaching as infallible, we obey its commands, we desire to reflect its purity.

"The law of the Lord is perfect." Nothing may be taken from it, and nothing added to it, for it is perfect as it is. It is without admixture of error, and without adulteration of falsehood; and it proves its supernatural power by converting men from the error of their ways. What other book can convert the soul of man except so far as it contains Biblical truth?

"The commandment of the Lord is pure." There is no other code of morals so pure as that revealed in the Bible. The gospel reflects glory on all the perfections of God; and, therefore, it makes wise the simple. Poor simple-hearted folk, conscious of their own ignorance, come to this Book, and not only find wisdom in it, but are themselves made wise by it. It is also "sure" as well as "pure." There is no question about its teaching; it is certainly true. If we learn only what is sure, we may be sure that we shall not have to unlearn it.

"The statutes of the Lord are right," and they will set us right if we obey them. They will also rejoice our heart, for unrighteousness brings sorrow, sooner or later; but rightness in the end brings joy.

"The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." There is a close connection between the eye and the heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." Sin in the heart puts dust in the eye; we cannot see right unless we feel right.

"The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever." When you come to know God, and the power of true religion in the form of holy, childlike fear, you never lose it, it is yours for ever. Time cannot destroy it, eternity will but develop it.

"The judgments of the Lord are true;" there is no alloy of falsehood here. Whatever destructive criticism may be brought to bear upon it, no part of sacred Scripture will ever be destroyed: "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

10. *More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold:*

Or, the very best gold. No riches can so enrich the mind and heart as the Word of God does. A man may have tons of gold, and yet be utterly miserable; but he who is pure in heart, he who hath God's Word and the love of it in his heart, is truly rich, however poor he may be in temporal things.

10. *Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.*

As I read those six poetic lines in praise of the Word of God, I could not help thinking how the bees build their honeycombs in hexagons of six-sided combs, all full of honey. Such is this portion of the Word of God

with its hexapla of commendation, every part of which is full of sweetness to the true believer.

11, 12. *Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward. Who can understand his errors?*

While David is speaking of the Book that has no errors in it, he is reminded of his own errors; and they strike him as being so many that he cannot understand them. Every sin is really an error, a mistake, a blunder, as well as something a great deal worse. It is never a wise thing to do wrong.

At the end of a book, we sometimes find that the printers insert a list of "Errata,"—errors made in the printing of the volume. Ah, me! we shall need to have a long list of "Errata" at the end of the volume of our lives. How many mistakes we have made! Augustine, in his "Confessions," amended what he had written amiss in his previous books. The best of men need continually to confess their errors, but God's Book has no error in it from beginning to end.

12. *Cleanse thou me from secret faults.*

"Cleanse me from the faults which I cannot see, and which no mortal man has ever seen. Thou, Lord, seest them; be pleased, therefore, to cleanse me from them." This view of the omniscience of God is very comforting to the believer; because he perceives that, even if he cannot see his sin, so as to own it, and confess it, yet God can see it so as to forgive it, and cleanse it.

13. *Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins;—*

If we indulge in secret sins, we may gradually slide down an inclined plane until we come to presumptuous sins, sins committed wilfully, sins known to be sins, daring, God-defying sins. Lord, keep me back from such sins as these! If others urge me to advance in this wrong direction, O Lord, do thou keep me back! "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins;"—

13. *Let them not have dominion over me:*

For, when a man once sins presumptuously, the tendency is for him to become a slave to that sin, it gets dominion over him. The worst slave-owner in the world is sin; and presumptuous sin is a tyrant with many a cruel whip in its hand.

13. *Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression.*

"That greatest transgression of all, that sin against the Holy Ghost which shall never be forgiven;—if I am kept from presumptuous sin, I shall never fall into that fatal pit."

14. *Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer.*

David does not hope to be accepted till he has first of all been pardoned; but when the Lord has forgiven him, and sanctified him, then he comes with both mouth and heart to serve his God; and his prayer is that he may be acceptable in the sight of God, to whom he owes the strength to worship, and through whom he hopes to be accepted because he has a Redeemer: "O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer." May each one of us be thus acceptable in the sight of God, for Christ's sake! Amen.