



Bodleian Libraries

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

This book is part of the collection held by the Bodleian Libraries and scanned by Google, Inc. for the Google Books Library Project.

For more information see:

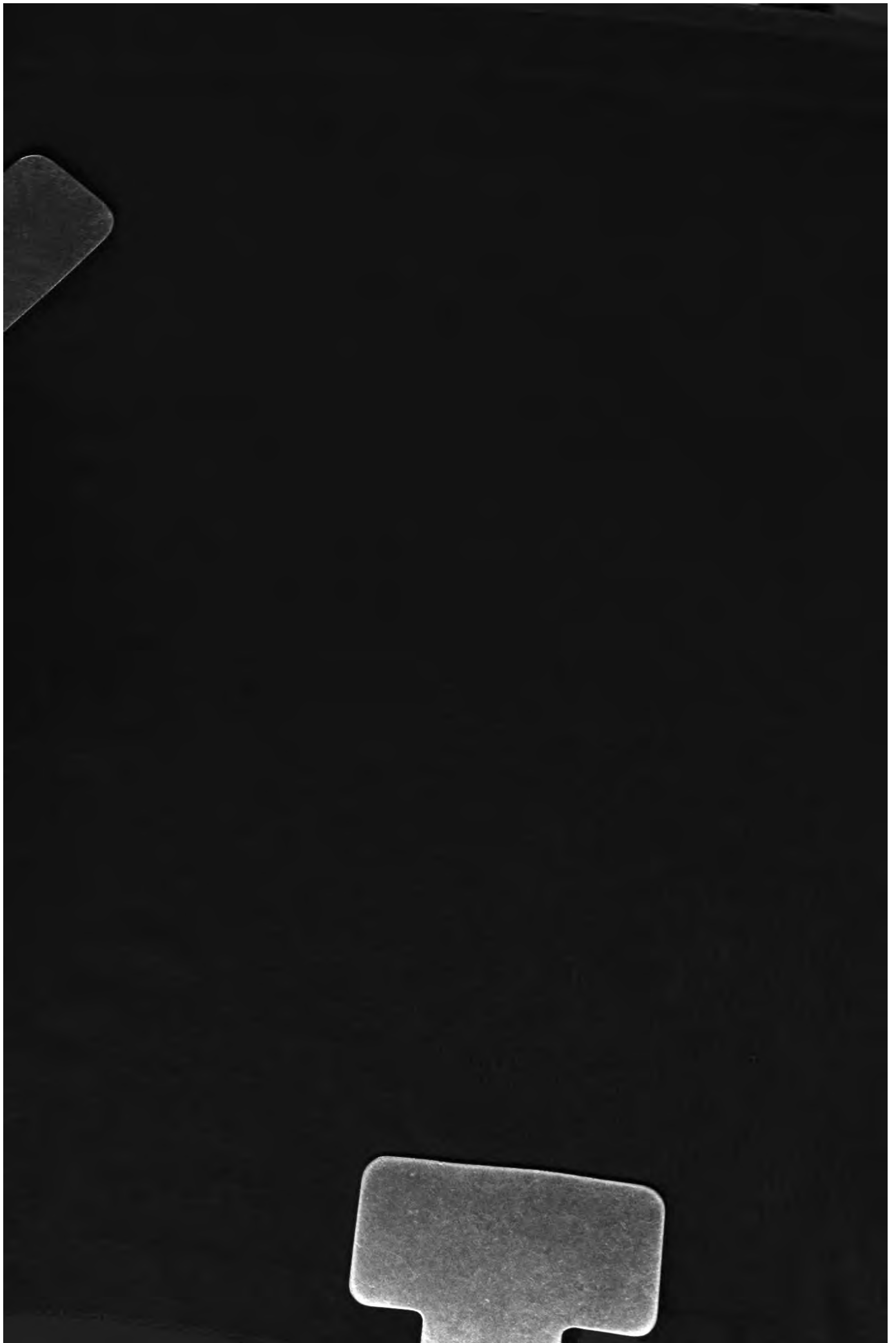
<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/dbooks>



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.0 UK: England & Wales (CC BY-NC-SA 2.0) licence.

The cover features a subtle, embossed border with floral motifs at the corners and a central diamond shape. The text is centered within this border.

✦
"PEACE UNTO
THE HEATHEN."
✦





“Peace unto the Heathen,”

AND OTHER

SERMONS,

PREACHED ON BEHALF OF

The Church Missionary Society.

BY THE

REV. JOHN HARDING,

CURATE OF AYOT ST. LAWRENCE, HERTS; AND LATE MISSIONARY
IN TRAVANCORE.

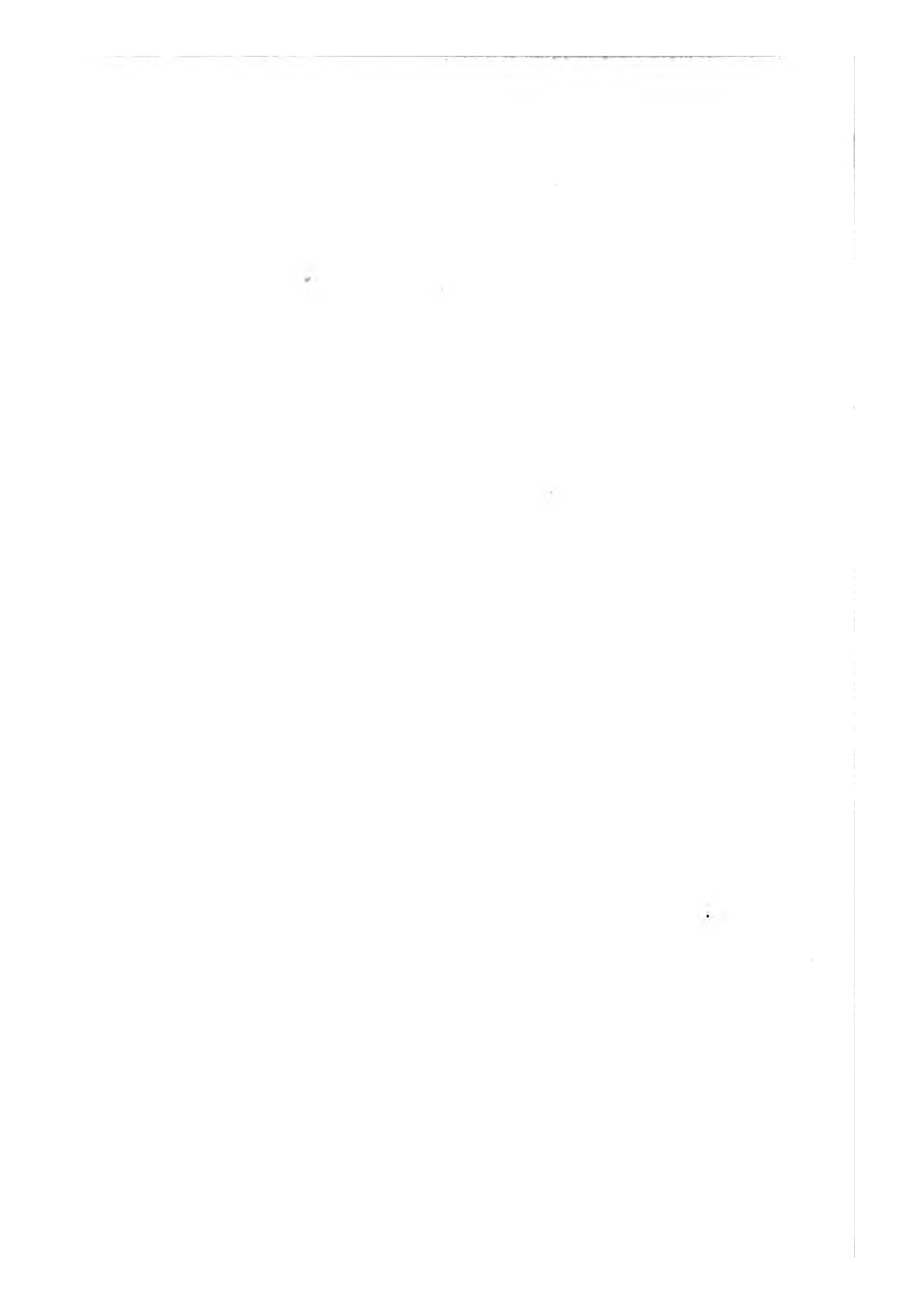
*Any Profits arising from the sale of this volume, will be devoted to the Church
Missionary Society.*

LONDON: WILLIAM MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER Row.

100. S. 176.



*To the "Lord of the Harvest," this humble first-fruit
is dedicated; with the hope and prayer, that it
may please Him to own and prosper it in the
twofold purpose for which it is sent forth, viz.,
To aid the Funds, and increase the Labourers
of the Church Missionary Society.*



PREFACE.

THE following Missionary Sermons have been written at intervals far apart, and preached on several occasions,—“The Heathen’s need, and the Christian’s duty,”—on board the *Argo*, screw steamer, in 1854, on the writer’s regretted return from India. They may yet, it is hoped, in another way, promote the highest of all interests; and most thankful will the writer be, if they should prove the means of inducing any to give themselves, or to contribute more liberally, to this most glorious cause. He often marvels at the few men at our Universities who offer themselves for Missionary work, while for the Civil and Military services hundreds are annually coming forward with bounding heart and eager expectations. O, what are earth’s richest gains, or time’s most coveted laurels, compared with the glory and the joy that will never end or be dimmed or diminished, of winning one immortal

soul to Christ and heaven? May God forgive us as a Church and Nation for doing so little for His kingdom and honour, and pour out largely upon us the Spirit of grace and of supplication!

Then shall His servants willingly offer themselves for this and every Christian work; His kingdom come; and His name alone be exalted.

J. H.

CODICOTE,
April 18, 1866.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
SERMON I.	
“Peace unto the Heathen ”	1
SERMON II.	
The Heathen's Need, and the Christian's Duty	18
SERMON III.	
“Thy Kingdom Come ”	32
SERMON IV.	
Christ the Light and Salvation of all Nations	48
SERMON V.	
The Establishment of the Messiah's Kingdom	62
SERMON VI.	
“The Idols He shall utterly Abolish ”	78
SERMON VII.	
“Unto Thee shall all Flesh come ”	93

	PAGE.
SERMON VIII.	
God's Name Great among the Gentiles	108
SERMON IX.	
The Wisdom of Winning Souls	125
SERMON X.	
"The Sons of the Stranger"	137
SERMON XI.	
Jesus lifted up	153
SERMON XII.	
"The Mountain of the Lord's House"	167

SERMON I.

“PEACE UNTO THE HEATHEN.”

“He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even unto the ends of the earth.”—*Zech.* ix. 10.

THERE are few prophecies of the Old Testament that more obviously refer to the person, and mission, and kingdom of the Messiah, than that contained in the words now read. Even if there were no certain evidence that the Son of God and His blessed work were foretold in this chapter, we could have little hesitation in referring both the words of the text and several other passages before and after them, only to Him and it. As the ninth verse, for instance, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass;” and the eleventh and twelfth, “As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no

water. Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope: even to day do I declare that I will render double unto thee." The first of these passages is quoted by St. Matthew and St. John, as fulfilled when our Lord triumphantly entered the holy city, under the very circumstances here foretold; Jesus riding on an ass—an animal still used by persons of distinction in the East, as we find it had been by Abraham, the sons of the Judges, Ahithophel, and others, from the earliest times—and a very great multitude spreading their garments and strawing palm-branches in the way, and "they that went before and that followed, crying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" Thus literally was the first prediction fulfilled, and the last, which also relates to Israel, will assuredly, in its time, receive as full and blessed an accomplishment; when the veil shall be taken from their hearts, and when, as we are told by St. Paul, "All Israel shall be saved." The blood of their covenant was shed by their guilty forefathers, and for eighteen centuries they have been prisoners in the pit of God's displeasure, wherein is no water; but still "prisoners of hope," waiting, longing, and praying for their Messiah, on whose return they shall receive double, and the days of their mourning shall be ended. But the words of the text, dear brethren, refer to

us Gentile believers rather than to Israel, and they ought particularly to remind us of our great mercies, and to encourage us in the prosecution of the glorious work of evangelizing the heathen world.

First, let us notice the *Person* who here speaks; secondly, *those to whom* He speaks; thirdly, the *blessing* which He speaks; fourthly, the *extent* of His dominions; and lastly, the *means* by which His kingdom and the peace of the heathen are to be promoted.

I. First, the Speaker is the King of Zion, the Lord Jesus, the Everlasting Son of the Father, “the Prince of the kings of the earth.” “The testimony of Jesus,” St. John says, “is the spirit of prophecy.” From the beginning, when “the seed of the woman” was promised to our guilty trembling first parents, to the prediction of Malachi, that the Lord would send His messenger, the Angel of the Covenant, the Son of God was the burden of every prophet, the hope of patriarchs, the consolation of Israel, and the desire of all nations. It is He who shall speak peace unto the heathen. Similar terms had been employed in the 72nd Psalm to describe the felicity and glory of the reign of Solomon, whose name signifies peaceable; but his own melancholy departure from God, and the brief duration of the prosperity there foretold, and its

limitation to the nation of Israel, clearly prove that not David's immediate successor, but David's Lord and future heir was the chief subject of the sweet singer of Israel's inspiration in that magnificent and beautiful psalm. Solomon was in many respects, as his royal parent had been, a type of Jesus; and his person, name, and felicitous glorious reign most strikingly represented Him who was to come,—“Immanuel, God with us,” in whom only all the promises to David and his family would be realized. Neither David nor Solomon reigned unto the ends of the earth, as is here foretold, although the latter ruled over the whole territory which God had promised to Abraham—from the Mediterranean to the Euphrates. That will again, doubtless, be the extent of Israel's dominions in the day of their restoration; but, obviously, it forms only a very limited portion of the earth, and is utterly inadequate to the realization of the words of the text, which include the whole world, like the expression and promise in the second psalm, “I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.” Yes, we must look beyond all earthly sovereigns, to Him who is “King of kings and Lord of lords,” as the person foretold by Zechariah. It is He who is the glory of His people Israel—the King of Zion and Jerusalem, whom as yet they know not, but who is

everywhere in their own sacred Scriptures the great subject of inspiration and prophecy. It is her King, and the King of all the earth, who has come, and who for her unbelief has, for a season, cast her off, and taken the Gentiles in her place, and grafted the wild olive-tree of heathenism into the parent natural stock of Abraham.

II. “He shall speak peace unto the *Heathen*.” The Heathen, or Gentile world of all nations, are, secondly, those to whom the King of Zion speaks. God had foretold to Abraham that all the families of the earth should be blessed in Christ, his seed. “Unto Shiloh,” the dying patriarch Jacob had predicted, “should the gathering of the people be.” Moses had called upon all nations to rejoice with his people; and had foretold that God would provoke Israel to jealousy by the Gentiles. “Thou hast made me the head of the heathen,” David prophesies; “a people whom I have not known shall serve me.” But indeed, the Psalms are full of the conversion of the Gentiles, and all the prophets unto Malachi represent the heathen as about to be called to the knowledge and service of the true and only God, and to be made partakers of all the blessings and privileges of the Messiah’s kingdom. Take, as examples, the second, the eleventh, and forty-ninth chapters of Isaiah, the ninth of Hosea, the text,

and the first chapter of Malachi:—“And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. And all nations shall flow unto it: and He will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” “In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious.” “It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob; and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light of the Gentiles, that thou mayest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.” “All the nations which are called by my name.” “He shall speak peace unto the heathen.” “For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.” St. Paul speaks of this as a mystery of the Old Testament, “that the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs and of the same body, and be partakers of God’s promise in Christ by the Gospel.” Although every prophet had foretold the call of the Gentiles; and the Psalms, and Isaiah in particular, were full of this blessed truth, yet he says it was a “mystery which in other ages

was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” Other nations, though needing this great salvation, and blindly feeling after God, if haply they might find Him, yet knew not that such good things were in store for them; and even Israel, whose prophets foretold the participation of the heathen in the blessings of the Messiah’s kingdom, appear not to have comprehended or welcomed the important truth. We know, indeed, that they even repelled and denied it, and that a special vision from heaven was necessary to remove from the minds of the Apostles their inveterate prejudice against the heathen, and to induce them to preach to them the Gospel. It was only gradually they saw that God made no difference between the Gentiles and the seed of Abraham. The Spirit in all His quickening and sanctifying grace and wondrous gifts descended alike on both; and Paul was especially chosen to be God’s messenger to the far-off Gentiles, to preach amongst them everywhere the unsearchable riches of Christ. To the Jews they were common and unclean, and alas! still are, whether Christians or idolaters. The epithet, Heathen, like that of Pagan, formerly included all except Israel and the Church of Christ, and embraced the Mahomedan as well as the idolatrous parts of the world. In the middle ages these

terms were used to denote unbelievers generally, those nations or individuals everywhere who were ignorant of Christ and His salvation. Heathen is derived from *heath*, the dwellers in which places were usually wild, illiterate, and degraded, and has now come to be applied exclusively to those who are addicted to the abominations of idolatry, and who are perishing for lack of knowledge. Pagans were once only those who dwelt in villages, from the Latin word, *pagus*, a village: but because in the early days of the Gospel's progress, idolatry and ignorance still remained long in the villages after they had been abolished in the towns and cities, the word, in time, like heathen, was used to denote those generally who knew not the Gospel, and alike included the followers of the false prophet* and the worshippers of the "gods many and lords many," to whom we now exclusively apply it. All indeed are intended in the text; † for though not in *equal*, they are all in *fatal* error. They are all ignorant of the only Name given under heaven among men whereby they must be saved; and, practically, they are all as far from God, from peace, and truth, and purity, and heaven. Christ

* See note in Gibbon's Roman Empire, chap. xxi.

† The Hebrew word גוֹיִם, *goiim*, is indiscriminately translated nations, heathen, and gentiles, as in Mal. i. 11, and means all, except Israel. In the text, it is literally, "the nations."

has commanded His Gospel to be preached to every creature, because every creature needs it ; and it is sufficient and adapted for all, and is “ God’s power unto salvation to every one that believeth.” The heathen everywhere, my brethren, are calling upon you to help them. There is no peace in their religions ; no light to the enquiring, anxious mind to remove its doubts and fears ; no comfort to the soul agonized and burdened under life’s multiplied sorrows and afflictions, and no hope to the dying or to the surviving ; nothing to cheer or sustain in life, or death, or in the fearful expectations of a coming judgment and eternity.

III. But, thirdly, it is said, “ He shall speak *peace* unto the heathen.” This is the blessed message of the Gospel which we are commanded to send to every creature. “ For he is our peace ;” “ The Prince of peace.” “ The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.” God’s great proclamation to man everywhere is peace ; “ Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord ; and I will heal him.” “ Peace on earth, and good-will toward men,” sang the multitude of the heavenly host, when the Son of God became incarnate ; and “ My peace give I unto you,” Jesus said, before returning to His Father, “ not as the world

giveth, give I unto you.” The Gospel message is reconciliation; it is the assurance that those who were far off are now brought nigh, that “God has reconciled the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” And it also declares the *grounds* on which that peace has been made, namely, the incarnation, and substitution, and sin-bearing sacrifice of God’s only begotten and beloved, sinless Son. “For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” It is not simply forgiveness and salvation to all who repent and believe, but it is peace *through the blood of the Cross*; peace, because the penalty of man’s transgression has been fully borne; because the eternal claims of justice have been satisfied, and God’s perfect law magnified and made honourable; peace, because for the guilty the guiltless One has died; the just given Himself for the unjust, a ransom and propitiation for the sins of the whole world. “But now in Christ Jesus,” St. Paul writes to the Ephesians, “ye who sometimes were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ: for he is our peace;” and to the Colossians, “Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by

wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy, and unblameable, and unproveable in his sight.” “We are justified by faith,” he writes to the Romans, “and have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ;” “through whom we have now received the atonement.” And when he calls God the “God of peace,” in his Epistle to the Hebrews, and prays that those to whom he writes may be made perfect in every good work to do His will, it is through the blood of the everlasting Covenant—the blood of that Covenant to which Zechariah refers in the verse following the text, and with which he connects the deliverance of the prisoners of hope out of the pit wherein is no water—the cursed, parched, barren land of sin everywhere—of man’s state by nature, Jew and Gentile. “He shall speak peace unto the heathen.” This is the Gospel’s glorious message, its great and precious blessing, and its universal and infallible effect: first, peace with God, peace with ourselves, and peace with others. “The work of righteousness is peace,” the prophet says; “and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever.” “Great peace have they that love thy law,” David experienced; and “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed upon thee, because he trusteth in thee.” And still stronger is the

language of the New Testament: "The peace of God which passeth all understanding." Such is the blessed result to the individual soul of reconciliation with God; and of a similar nature are its effects on others and on the world. It teaches, and disposes, and enables us to live peaceably with all men. One of the fruits of the Spirit is peace, and one of the heaven-sung characters of the Gospel was, "peace on earth,"—not only peace and goodwill from God to men, but from men towards each other. It changes the most violent and ferocious into the mildest and the gentlest,—a bigoted, persecuting Jewish Saul into the large-hearted, self-sacrificing preacher to the Gentiles, weeping for the sins and the souls of his fellow men, and willing to spend and be spent for their good; and to be even accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh; and making another the preacher of love who formerly would have called down fire from heaven to consume his neighbours in Samaria. Our mission-fields bear ample testimony, my brethren, to the fulfilment of the prophet's words, that "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid," and afford the fullest assurance that "they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain," when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." The

same prophet Isaiah tells us, that “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks, and that nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war any more.” “He shall speak peace unto the heathen,” and “of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.” “His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.”

IV. These words assure us, in the fourth place, of the *extent* of Christ’s dominion. It will prevail everywhere, according to the prophecy of Daniel respecting the kingdom which the God of heaven should establish, which should supplant and succeed all other kingdoms, and continue for ever. This is the kingdom of the Son of God,—not of this world, and yet, like His people and its subjects, in the world. The little stone cut out of the mountain without hands has already smitten and overthrown a great part of the once heathen world. Many nations, and those the most powerful in the world, all Europe, much of America, and many islands of the sea, have submitted to the sceptre of Jesus, and the idols in them have been utterly abolished. His Gospel is going forth conquering, and to conquer; and the decree has gone forth that “every knee shall bow before him, and every

tongue confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "Yet have I set my King," Jehovah says, "upon my holy hill of Zion." "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." "His name shall endure for ever. His name shall endure as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in him. All nations shall call him blessed." "The idols," everywhere, Christian and Pagan, "he shall utterly abolish;" "All shall know him from the least unto the greatest," and "the whole earth shall be filled with his glory." "His dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth." We are infallibly assured, my brethren, that the kingdom for which we daily pray shall in due time come, and prevail, and endure. Our missions are founded on this belief, and every success hitherto obtained, and every nation that has been evangelized, are a pledge and proof to us that ere long the accuser of the brethren shall be cast down, and all the prisoners of hope released; that Jesus will take unto him his great power and reign, and that the anthem of unnumbered voices in heaven and earth shall be heard: "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth: the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever."

V. But the words of the text, lastly, shew us, or imply, the *means* which God will employ to promote and establish His spiritual kingdom. “He shall *speak* peace unto the heathen.” Do not these words teach us, my brethren, that the preaching of the Gospel is God’s appointed means for winning subjects to the dominion of His Son, and, consequently, plainly shew us that it is our duty to send forth ambassadors with the proclamation of His message of reconciliation, even unto the ends of the earth? Whatever prophetic views we may entertain, whatever may be our opinion respecting the millennium, literal or spiritual, or of the part Israel, when converted, are to take in the world’s evangelization, all will agree that our present duty is to preach the Word, to be in season, out of season, to proclaim the Gospel to every creature, whether as a witness chiefly, and with the hope at present of only a few conversions, or as the instrument which others believe God has ordained for the salvation of all flesh. All evangelical Christians equally value the ordinance of preaching, and regard it as the great means under the Spirit’s power which God has appointed in the present dispensation for winning souls to Christ, and for building up those who have believed on their most holy faith. St. Paul says to the Ephesians, that “Christ came preaching peace to you which were

afar off, and to them that were nigh;" words quoted from the evangelical Isaiah, and characterizes his own ministry as that of reconciliation, or the proclamation of peace. Here then, my brethren, is our present high, imperative, blessed duty: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature;" and here is our animating, unfailing promise: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I invite you to take your part in this glorious enterprize, and to enjoy your share of this exalted privilege. Am I addressing any who will go forth as labourers? or if you cannot aid the cause by preaching the Gospel yourselves, are there any of you who cannot assist more largely than you have hitherto done by your prayers, your contributions, and your service as collectors at home? O, my brethren, think of the perishing heathen; remember the unspeakable mercies that you enjoy through the Gospel, and labour that others, that all may share its present and eternal blessings with you. As one who has been privileged to labour in this blessed cause, and who can no longer serve it directly in the mission-field, I would especially urge its paramount importance; and entreat all whom I address to give it their increased pecuniary support, and a wider, deeper, warmer place in their sympathies, prayers, and efforts. And, above all, would I rejoice, if

permitted, to be the means of inducing any to give themselves to the work, to say, “Here am I: Lord, send me.” Labourers everywhere are wanted, a hundred, yea, a thousand-fold. Are there none of you, my brethren, qualified and willing to go forth, and whom God may now be calling to this service? With Him and with you I now leave the matter, praying that He may put it into your hearts *liberally* to contribute of your substance—more *fervently* to aid the blessed cause by your prayers, and as you are able, *personally* to serve it, to the glory of His great Name.

SERMON II.

THE HEATHEN'S NEED, AND THE
CHRISTIAN'S DUTY.

“And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us.”—*Acts xvi. 9.*

ALTHOUGH our blessed Lord had left a very distinct and solemn message with His Church to evangelize all the nations of the earth, yet many years we find elapsed before the Gospel was proclaimed amongst the heathen. It was but natural that the Apostles should first have given their time and labour to their brethren of the house of Israel, and, scattered as the Jews were in almost every part of the then known world, the first labourers in the heavenly vineyard would find ample employment, in endeavouring to persuade their fellow-countrymen to receive the Gospel of their salvation.

It was God's will, however, and the last command of their Lord and Master, that the Gentiles

should be fellow-heirs with the house of Israel of all the blessings of Christianity. It was the duty of the Apostles to *begin* their labours at Jerusalem ; but they were *to go forth* from thence in every direction, to declare among the heathen that the Lord reigned, that the Son of God had tasted death for every man, that all might now return unto their reconciled Creator, and be partakers of eternal salvation. And it was a singular coincidence, that as Paul was thus in the text directed by a vision to pass over into Macedonia, and preach the Gospel for the first time in Europe ; so Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, had also been favoured with a special messenger from heaven, to assure him of the acceptance of his prayers, and to direct him to those who would declare unto him words, whereby he and his house should be saved. God would not have His plans frustrated ; and if His servants were slow to comprehend their mission with reference to the Gentiles, He would even by a supernatural vision make their duty plain. Many of the heathen in Asia had, indeed, listened with rejoicing hearts to the words of eternal life ; for St. Paul, at least, clearly knew that Jesus was set to be a "light of the Gentiles, and for salvation unto the ends of the earth," and he was moreover called to be the Apostle of the uncircumcision, and doubtless he had fully discharged his mission, up to the hour

when the vision of the man of Macedonia appeared to him, and when the glorious light of the Gospel was to arise and shine upon the darkness, and to chase away the superstitions of Europe. There is much of a deeply interesting character connected with the circumstance recorded in the text, for a flourishing Church soon sprang up in Macedonia, and gave occasion to the writing of one of the most valuable Epistles in the New Testament—that to the Philippians.

As usual, Paul and his fellow-labourers met with violent opposition when they began their work in Macedonia; but in both the attempts that were made to crush the Gospel,—first, by Satan urging the infatuated Pythoness to bring reproach on the Apostles and their doctrine, and secondly, by their imprisonment in the gaol at Philippi, God caused the wrath of men and the opposition of devils to praise Him, and daily “added to His Church such as should be saved.” The young woman herself, doubtless, embraced the Gospel, as soon as she was dispossessed of the evil spirit; and then the jailer and his household, while Lydia and hers had before been added to the Lord. Ere long, many congregations, with their bishops and deacons, worshipped God together at Philippi, strong in faith, and “fruitful in every good work.” The Epistle written to them by St. Paul is the only one, it has

been observed, in which no reproof is given to those addressed, and in the last chapter he gratefully acknowledges the frequent proofs which they had shewn of their liberality and affection towards himself. The Gospel had to multitudes in Macedonia proved the "savour of life unto life," and, as the Apostle testifies in his Epistle to the Colossians, had brought forth fruit, to the glory and praise of God.

And it does so still amongst the heathen, on behalf of whom I would this day repeat the words addressed to the Apostle—"Come over, and help us." I need not here remind you, my brethren, what blessings the Gospel has conferred upon the once-cannibal inhabitants of the South Seas, and upon all, in every place and stage of progress, who with singleness of heart have received it. No, dear brethren, we have no need to go to distant lands for examples of the elevating and saving effects of Christianity; for we ourselves are perhaps the most striking instance of its power—we, whose forefathers, in the days of the Apostle, were amongst the most degraded of the human race, and who sought to pacify the anger of their gods by the blood of their sons and daughters. Yes, it is the Gospel that has raised England to her present lofty position among the nations, that has banished from her shores the dark and cruel rites of Druidism, and caused her inhabitants to advance with steady and

ever-increasing progress in knowledge, and peace, and purity, and happiness.

We are but a small portion of the human race, however, and seven hundred millions still are perishing for lack of knowledge ; are giving God's glory to another, and His praise to graven images ; are miserable in life, comfortless in sorrow, and hopeless in death. "Come over, and help us," is addressed to us from every part of our unhappy, because *sinful* earth. Whether we contemplate God's ancient people Israel, or the many-religioned nations of the heathen, the cry for help is sounding in our ears, and appealing to our heart's best sympathies. China's population of four hundred millions still worship they know not what, and are ignorant of the God who made them, and of the Saviour who redeemed them. India with its one hundred and eighty millions can count as yet her Christians but by thousands, while her gods are twice as numerous as her inhabitants. The licentious delusions of Mohammed exercise their baneful influence over probably a hundred and fifty millions more, and in a great part of the greatest Continent, America ; in Africa, Madagascar, and a thousand other islands, idolatry in its many hideous forms still reigns, oppresses, and destroys.

Who indeed can tell the need of seven hundred millions of the human race, their need temporal and

spiritual, their ignorance and their errors, their fears, their sufferings, and their hopelessness? In those lands, oppression and cruelty, immorality and wretchedness exist, such as we can but faintly conceive, and such as have in Europe, happily, for ages been unknown. Justice or injustice is sold to the highest bidder. Offices are purchased at immense sums, which are wrung out of the people in return. They sometimes lose half the produce of their fields by the rapacity of their rulers. The immoralities of the heathen are unnameable, and the horrors and cruelties of their wars, of slavery, and other evils can only be fully known by their unhappy victims. Like ourselves too, they are subject to all the ordinary ills and sorrows and afflictions of humanity. Sickness and disease and death reign amongst them, as amongst us; but no comforting voice ever whispers in *their* ears, "Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth," and "our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." The blessed words of the Bible, the ineffable consolations of the Spirit, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," and the "hope full of immortality," are, alas! utterly unknown and unfelt in the dark and cheerless regions of heathenism. Satan's kingdom knows not of the light of truth, of joy, or peace, or the hope of glory. He robbed man of all in paradise,

quenched the light of the soul by sin, and introduced into man's nature all his own evil passions of envy, and hatred, and pride, and rebellion, and secured in time the full development and exercise of all by ignorance, and darkness, and error.

That the Gentiles are "past feeling, and have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness," St. Paul attributes to "the ignorance that is in them," and which is the consequence of their "alienation from the life of God." They may not indeed be ignorant of the things of this world: yea, they may, as in the cases of ancient Egypt, Greece, and Rome, be even foremost in the cultivation of many of the arts and sciences, and yet be perishing for lack of the knowledge of the only true God, through which alone is salvation. Civilization and education exist to a great extent among the inhabitants of China and India, but "God is not in all their thoughts." Jehovah is to them, as He was to the polished Athenians, "the unknown God," and instead of worshipping their Creator and hourly Benefactor, they deify even the brutes that perish, and make gods which are but the personifications of vice and horror and pollution. Their life is indeed one of hard and cruel bondage, and death only releases them from the miseries of earth that they may receive in the endless world to come the bitter wages

of transgression. How they will there be dealt with we know but little from Scripture ; but of this we are assured, that indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, await every soul of man that doeth evil, not only of the Jew, but also of the Gentile," and that "no other name but that of the Lord Jesus is given under heaven among men, whereby they must be saved."

We are again assured that belief is necessary to salvation ; for the Gospel terms are, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved." How, therefore, shall they be saved, unless they believe ? "And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard ? And how shall they hear without a preacher ? And how shall they preach, except they be sent ?" A world lying in wickedness and ruin, my brethren, is appealing to us for help. Millions of those whose habitation is as the valley of the shadow of death, are stretching forth their hands to us for assistance, that we may lead them to God's holy hill of life and truth and salvation. The ignorant of all nations are imploring of us the knowledge of God's word ; the young and the old, the rich and the poor, the civilized heathen and the savage, all unite in giving utterance to the cry— "Come over, and help us." They all alike are ignorant of "the things which belong to their peace," they cannot help themselves, and if we

therefore do not, they must die in their sins, and who shall say that their blood will not be required at our hands?

For as the *need* of the heathen is so urgent and manifold, so, in the second place, is our *duty* to assist them; our duty, first, from our Lord's command; secondly, from the position in which God's providence has placed us; thirdly, from the experienced blessings of the Gospel; and, lastly, from the prophecies respecting the conversion of the Gentiles.

1. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature," is the last message of our Lord to His people; and therefore, no doubt can remain as to our duty with reference to the heathen, so long as a single human being exists who has not heard the name of Jesus. However they will be dealt with in the day of judgment, and whatever may be their eternal state—and the Judge of all the earth we know will do right—we are not left in any doubt as to our Lord's will in the matter of preaching His Gospel to them. The field of the Church is the world, and the only limit to the period of her exertions, that blessed day when all shall know Him from the least to the greatest. This glorious result may not indeed be effected, as some suppose, by any kind or extension of agency now employed; but still our present high privilege and duty are to fulfil the commission of

our Lord ; and in every place, from the rising to the setting sun, from pole to pole, from our own immediate neighbourhood to our antipodes, to assert God's right to reign, to preach His love to ruined man, to exalt the Lord Jesus, and to endeavour to win souls to Him.

2. Again, God's providence is clearly indicating that it is our duty to help all who know not the Gospel of His Son. It is doubtless for this purpose among others, that He has committed into our hands the glorious empire that we possess ; that as faithful stewards we may use our mighty influence and power to bring the nations subject to us to the obedience and service of Christ. And woe be unto Great Britain, my brethren, if she does not thus glorify the King of heaven ; for then assuredly, as in the case of many empires that have preceded her, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," would be written by the finger of God against her — "Thou," too, "art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Oh, then, as we love our country, as we would still behold her exalted, and yet more exalted among the nations of the earth, let us ever remember that it is England's duty to proclaim the knowledge of God wherever her influence extends, and to introduce the religion of Jesus, wherever Heathenism, Mohammedanism, or Judaism exists in her dominions.

3. Thirdly, the known blessings which the Gospel ever brings with it, also render it our duty to help those who as yet do not possess them. The very possession of the Gospel involves the duty to proclaim it. Every valuable discovery that tends to remove existing evils, or to promote or increase human happiness, is speedily communicated, as an obvious duty which we owe to our fellow-men; and the individual would be justly denounced as an enemy to his race, who knowing of any certain remedy for the plague, refused to make it public.

Now of all remedies, dear brethren, the Gospel is the most precious and effectual: since it heals the soul, the source of all our evils; goes at once to the root and origin of all man's wretchedness; and, by bringing him back to God, makes all things new; spreads blessings on every side; proclaims "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." Were it only with reference to the earthly benefits of the Gospel, as a religion that makes men peaceable, kind, industrious, and pure, it would be our duty everywhere to make it known, and to gain converts to its doctrines: but its aim and tendency are far, far higher than this; even to save men from eternal misery, to make them meet to become inhabitants of heaven, and to enjoy the fulness of

God for ever. Compared with these objects, every earthly benefit is of utter insignificance, and when we think of these as the blessings which the Gospel confers, we must assuredly acknowledge that our time, our talents, our influence, our wealth and our all, should cheerfully and self-denyingly be employed in inviting those to become partakers of them who are still living "without God and without hope in the world."

4. And once more, and lastly, the glorious prophecies of Scripture respecting their conversion ought to awaken our sympathies and efforts towards the needy nations of the Gentiles. "The idols He shall utterly abolish." Every knee shall bow in devout acknowledgment of Jehovah's power, and "every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, His name shall be great among the Gentiles," and "the whole earth shall be filled with His glory." Of all this we are fully assured by Him who is able to perform it; but this does not lessen, but rather the more increases our duty towards the heathen: since it is by the Gospel that men are to be made wise unto salvation; and "for all these things," God says, "He will be enquired of." Oh, yes, my brethren, men need to be *told* that they have a loving Father in

heaven, and that He will give His Holy Spirit to them that ask Him, or how can they enquire, how ask, or seek, or obtain the heavenly treasure? The privilege is ours to be preparers of the way of the Lord. He has committed unto us His oracles of truth, that into every language of the earth they may be translated, and that His ambassadors may go forth and preach them, and that those who hear may live and rejoice for ever.

“Come over, and help us,” might be the motto of all our great religious societies; for all men are in need of help, and it is both our duty and our privilege to help them. To a great extent, thank God, this has been done. The British and Foreign Bible Society has acted a noble and a Godlike part, and the Church Missionary Society has faithfully done hers. Thousands now in heaven arrived thither by means of this Society; thousands more are journeying thither by her guidance in stedfast faith and hope; and not thousands, but millions, we trust, will yet be directed by her missionaries to the same blessed place. Will you not therefore help, dear friends, in this glorious cause? Shall the cry of misery reach your ears and your hearts in vain? No, we believe it will not; for “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich;”

and "the love of Christ," we trust, "constrains you to live no longer unto yourselves, but unto Him who died for you and rose again." The silver and the gold you know are His, and that you are but stewards of this and of every other talent that you possess.

But O that this appeal were productive not only of means, but of men; that God would put it into the heart of some whom I now address to give not only liberally of their substance, but also themselves to this blessed work! This, dear brethren, is our great want—agents to carry and dispense the help needed, labourers to reap the ripening harvest which awaits us in every land. Give your aid in money, for it is the noblest purpose to which you can apply it; and give your prayers, that those who preach amongst the heathen may do the work of the Lord faithfully, that "His word may have free course and be glorified," and that the "Lord of the harvest would send forth labourers into His harvest;" but above all, if you can, give *yourselves*, as "living sacrifices unto God" in this glorious cause. And assuredly you never will repent of it; for when the end shall come, "both he that soweth and he that reapeth shall rejoice together."

SERMON III.

—
“THY KINGDOM COME.”
—

“Thy kingdom come.”—MATT. vi. 10.

No three words in our language are more familiar to us than these; and yet how pregnant and comprehensive, how blessed and glorious and important is their meaning! and how liable are we, just because of their familiarity and frequency of repetition, to forget, or regard at least with diminished, weakened thought and feeling, the sublime and divine petition which we in these words offer! But this is our infirmity, my brethren, and should be striven against and conquered; and it is the importance of our Lord's Prayer—its fulness and its beauty and its suitableness—that justify and commend its frequent use.

The petition contained in the text is the shortest, but the fullest; for it indeed embraces all the rest: and when that kingdom *has* come for which we

supplicate, God's Name will everywhere be hallowed ; His will will be done on earth as it is in heaven ; the daily bread we now require will have been exchanged for “ the hidden manna,” the spiritual food of our Father's house above ; His people's sins and trespasses will no longer need to be forgiven, for they will have for ever ceased to commit them, and God will never remember their past transgressions, and no one else shall ever be able to lay anything to the charge of His elect ; they will have been eternally delivered from all temptations ; and the Evil One, and all the evil into which he with ceaseless malice sought to betray them, will have been conquered and escaped ; Satan and his emissaries bruised finally under their feet, and all the pollutions and dangers that here surrounded them, then reckoned among “ the former things,” which all have passed away ; and “ the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,” all honour and dominion and praise, will alone be ascribed unto “ Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.”

The coming of God's kingdom includes and embraces all. It was for this that prophets and evangelists looked and longed, as the consummation of all their salvation and all their desire. It was of this they so glowingly predicted, and so eloquently and earnestly preached and wrote. This was the

stay and staff of pilgrim-patriarchs, the subject of Enoch's prophecy, of Daniel's visions, of the ministry of our Lord, and of the final revelation to St. John. Abraham's faith embraced it, the hope of Moses had respect to it. Balaam predicted it, David sang of it, Solomon's peaceful glorious reign typified it. To it give all the prophets witness. It is the theme of Evangelists, of the disciples' preaching in the Acts, of their writings in the Epistles, and of the closing words of inspiration. God's glory will then be fully manifested, His enemies finally subdued, and His people perfectly and eternally blessed. It will be the glorious end and consummation and restitution of all things, when Jesus shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. Not *till* then will the purposes of His humiliation and sufferings be attained. He waits till then at the right hand of God, till His enemies be made His footstool, till all nations acknowledge Him and are blessed in Him, till in body and soul His people are presented faultless before Him with exceeding joy, when He will deliver up His mediatorial kingdom to the Father—its object attained—and God be all in all.

We daily pray for the coming of this kingdom. Do we duly consider, my brethren, for what it is we ask? and do we endeavour to remember and realize our personal interest in the subject of our petition?

Let us more fully consider,—first, What is meant by God’s kingdom; and, secondly, What by praying that it may come.

I. God’s kingdom, briefly, means the Gospel dispensation. The expression is sometimes used to denote the blessings of that dispensation on earth, and at others its fulness and eternity of felicity and glory in heaven, and in the Lord’s Prayer includes both. When John the Baptist and our Lord proclaimed the kingdom of heaven was at hand, they meant God’s redemption of mankind by the incarnation and atoning death of His Son; or the Gospel, the good news, that “the seed of the woman” was now come to “bruise the head of the serpent,” and that “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.” In most of the parables, and throughout the Gospels and Epistles, this is generally the import of the words “kingdom of heaven,” “kingdom of God,” *implying*, as in other places is *expressed*, the future and eternal blessings of salvation; and by the obvious meaning of the terms as there used, we may best infer what our Lord intended by them in the words of the model prayer which He has taught us. “Thy kingdom,” then, we understand to express God’s dispensation of mercy and grace and glory to sinful men. It is

Christianity as contra-distinguished from Judaism. It is the full and final revelation of God's will, the provision for our spiritual and eternal recovery from the misery and ruin of sin. It is the fulfilment of God's promise to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. It is glad tidings of great joy to Israel and to all people. It is the announcement of "good-will to men, and peace on earth," and of "glory to God," thereby, "in the highest."

1. First, it is *God's* kingdom, not man's. It comes from above, not from beneath. It is His reign over the hearts of men—the re-establishment of His throne and kingdom which sin had destroyed—and consists in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Its origin is from God: He purposed it from eternity; and before the foundation of the world, ordained His Son as Mediator and Lord, and promised that He would give Him the heathen for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. He chose its subjects in Him, the beloved, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. It is His kingdom; He is all in all in it. It is from Him, by Him, through Him, and to Him. It is from the Father, through the Son, and by the Spirit; and to the eternal glory of the undivided Three. The origin, means, and end are alike

Divine. Its *origin* is the everlasting love of the Father; its *means*, God the Son manifest in the flesh, and the gifts and grace of the Holy Spirit; its *end*, the Triune God's sole praise in the salvation of its subjects.

The words are more immediately addressed to the Father, as the first Person in the sacred Trinity, and because in this kingdom the Son and Spirit operate in subordination to the Father. For man's sake, the Son, who is one with the Father in the Godhead, voluntarily assumed the office of a servant, and as man became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross; and the Holy Spirit, for the same blessed purpose of our salvation, consented to act in subservience to the Son, and to fulfil the object of His and the Father's love by operating on the sinner's heart—enlightening, convincing, teaching, guiding, renewing, strengthening, sanctifying, and comforting. “Thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and Thou art exalted as head above all,” David said, referring to God's providential, boundless, natural empire. It is equally so, my brethren, in the spiritual world. The Gospel kingdom is His; it is the manifestation of His wisdom, grace, and love. All its purposes, means, attributes, blessings, effects, are evidently and exclusively from Him. No finite mind could have conceived so great and glorious a salvation,

which, while it redeems, restores, elevates, and blesses man; also exalts, magnifies, and honours God; reveals and proclaims the resources of infinite mercy, in conjunction with the satisfied demands of perfect and everlasting justice.

2. Secondly, this kingdom, like its Divine Author, is *spiritual* and *heavenly*. It has to do with beings of flesh and blood, but it partakes not of their errors and infirmities. It is the dispensation of the Spirit. Unlike Judaism, it is unconfined by place and time and circumstance. It is free as the light and air of heaven, and equally adapted to men of every clime, condition, and character. It consists not in meat and drink, and cometh not with observation. It is not a kingdom of outward forms and services, of charms and superstitions and priestcraft, like every religion and system of man. Proceeding from the God of order, it has its Divine institutions, sacred oracles, and appointed ministers; its foundation of facts and doctrines, and its superstructure of precepts, promises, warnings, and examples; and its sure effect in all who are its loyal subjects will be submission to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake, and the practice of every outward duty, personal and relative, public and private, towards God and towards man: but its service is spiritual, not servile; its principle, the will of God, not human

expediency ; and its motive, the constraining love of Christ, and not the fear of man. The only acceptable worshippers of the Father are those who worship Him in spirit and in truth. It is the heart and its intentions and tendencies that He regards, and not the multiplied words of the lips, the prostrate form, or the gorgeous priestly vestments. Man's religion is always of the earth, earthly,—a religion of the eye and the ear and the imagination ; and it is a mockery, not only of his all-wise, omniscient Creator, but also of himself : for he detests hypocrisy and mere pretence in his fellow-men, and would scorn the costliest gift if unaccompanied by the heart of the giver ; and yet he everywhere presumes that a mere outward service will prove acceptable to his Maker, and calls in the aid of every external means—of repetition, and pomp, and ceremony, and relics, and penances, and costly gifts, and images, and self-torture, and pilgrimages, and such-like, to give effect and efficacy, as he in self-delusion supposes, to his religion. God's kingdom, my brethren, is within you. It is spiritual, heavenly, divine. It is life, and truth, and reality ; and it is for the universal prevalence of these that we are taught by our Lord to pray, “Thy kingdom come.”

3. It is, thirdly, for the coming of a *holy* kingdom that we supplicate. Our Father in heaven is per-

fect, and He is the thrice-holy Almighty. Even the heavens are not clean in His sight. All that pertains to Him is holy—His habitation, His angels, His word, His sabbaths, His name, and His service. It is only the pure in heart who shall see Him, and His "angels shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity." Everything and person in it must be holiness unto Him. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." "The Lord our God is holy," and "neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, nor liars shall inherit the kingdom of God." There are many such in the visible church and kingdom of God's grace on earth. The Gospel-net, at present, includes bad fishes as well as good; the Gospel-field, tares as well as wheat; and until the time of harvest they must remain together: but then an eternal separation will take place, and "he that is filthy will be filthy still, and he that is holy will be holy still." God's kingdom is characterized by righteousness; and the more the Gospel spreads, the more extensively will truth and purity prevail. Its nature, and tendency, and object, are to make men holy; and of all who truly embrace it, it may be said, that "they are washed, that they are sanctified, and that they are justified in the name of the

Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” “Christ gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” His word cleanses as well as enlightens, purifies as well as comforts; and when our Father’s kingdom shall everywhere have come, its subjects will be everywhere perfect, as their Father who is in heaven is perfect.

4. And fourthly, this kingdom is necessarily also characterized by *happiness*. Its foundation is righteousness—the meritorious imputed righteousness of Christ, and the implanted renewing righteousness of His Spirit; and the fruit of righteousness is peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Holiness is essential to happiness, and happiness invariably results from holiness. No nations or individuals are ever truly received into God’s holy kingdom, but they are forthwith made partakers of a joy and peace and felicity never before experienced. It first reconciles man to God, then to himself, and then to others. It teaches him to recognize and regard all men as brethren, and fellow-subjects of His Father’s kingdom. Its laws are written in his heart, and not merely in God’s statute-book—the Bible. The Spirit of love and peace is given him, and he becomes like-minded. Swords are beaten into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks, and war is learnt no more. How much has our own and every

other Christian land been elevated by the Gospel, by the coming of God's kingdom to us and them as nations and as individuals! Idolatrous and barbarous customs have been abolished; the poor and the sick, in mind and body, cared for; the frequency and the ferocity of war diminished; acts of peace and utility encouraged; nations brought into closer and increasing brotherhood; commerce and education promoted, and all that tends to make men holier and happier and better. "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound; yea, blessed are the people whose God is the Lord." "Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

5. Again, the kingdom for whose coming we are taught to pray will also be *universal, triumphant, and eternal*. God's purposes of grace and truth in the Gospel shall yet, and perhaps before long, everywhere take effect and prevail. As leaven, the kingdom of our Father is silently, but surely leavening the whole lump of humanity. Though the stone cut out of the mountain without hands was in its beginning small, and despised by man, and especially by the Jewish builders, yet is it destined to become the head of the corner, and to fill the whole world. The insignificant mustard seed of the Gospel is growing into a tree that shall cover all the earth; and every nation, and kindred, and people,

and tongue, shall rejoice under its shadow; and its leaves shall be for the healing of the nations. The gates of hell shall not prevail against Christ's Church; His Father's kingdom shall overthrow every rival; and all other kingdoms shall be included, and shall glory in it. Yes, my brethren, it shall come, and prevail, and endure. “The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation;” “the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in,” and “all Israel shall be saved;” and “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment, and with justice, from henceforth and for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.”

It is no earthly, doubtful warfare that we are waging; no kingdom of this world for whose coming we are taught to pray. It is the kingdom of our Father which cannot be moved; it is God's holy hill of Sion, on which He declares He has set His Son Messiah, and to whom He has given the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession: and He has said, “My purpose shall stand, and I will perform all my pleasure.” “As I live, saith the Lord, unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall confess;” and “the earth shall be full of the know-

ledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

II. What is meant, in the next place, by praying that this kingdom may come? We have already, in part, answered the enquiry. The kingdom relates to ourselves individually, and to every human being beyond us. Its coming into our hearts and theirs is salvation: and our Lord teaches us, first, to pray that we ourselves may become its subjects; and then, that we should pray and labour that others, and that all may participate in its heavenly blessings. Have we sought it first ourselves, my brethren? In vain do we repeat the words in prayer, if we do not endeavour to realize them in our hearts, and manifest them in our lives. We are all outwardly subjects of our Father's kingdom, but are we so in reality and truth? Have we with penitent, contrite hearts, acknowledged before Him our transgressions, believed and confided in His Son, sought and received, been renewed and sealed by His Spirit? Do we delight to do God's will, and is His law written in our hearts? Are we loyally devoted to His cause, valiant for His truth, grieved at the opposition and blasphemy of His enemies, and denying ourselves, and giving of our substance liberally to promote the interests of His kingdom in the world? Have we realized His kingdom in our

hearts as that of heaven, spiritual, holy, peaceful, triumphant, universal, everlasting? These are its attributes, my brethren, and the soul unto which it has come is a new creature in Christ Jesus; and every one may know whether or not this is his or her experience. And one of its surest tests is the interest we feel in the spiritual welfare of others, the earnestness with which we pray that all may be converted, and the liberality with which we give, and the diligence with which we labour for the extension of our Father's kingdom throughout the world.

Out of that kingdom there is no salvation for either ourselves or others; and if we can now rejoice in being its saved and honoured and happy subjects, O we shall increasingly desire that all may likewise hear the same glad tidings; and not only desire, but give of our substance, and of our time, and of our influence, that “God's way may be known upon earth, His saving health unto all nations.” O may we all, dear friends, seek first this kingdom and righteousness ourselves, and then, that all may share it with us—in all its fulness of grace, and truth, and love, and comfort here, and in its unutterable glory, and felicity, and joy hereafter, when “they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.” Freely have we received the Gospel of God's grace, and been invited to partici-

pate in all the present and future blessings of His kingdom. O let us freely dispense these blessings to our perishing fellow-sinners. You can all pray that this kingdom may come to every land and every heart, and the poorest widow with her two mites may enrich the treasury of the Lord, and aid in sending messengers of mercy to the miserable, and the word of life to those who are perishing for lack of knowledge.

That most useful Society, the Church Missionary Society, invites you all to assist in this glorious and Godlike work. I have been permitted for several years to labour in connection with this Society in South India; and I have seen how greatly God has blessed its efforts, in the many thousands of enlightened pious converts who have been added to His Church through its instrumentality; and have witnessed the heathen abolish their idols, and destroy their temples, and on their ruins erect Christian schools and churches. More than a million heathen have been converted in different parts of the world during the present century; and if the labourers could be multiplied a hundred-fold, we might expect a hundred-fold greater success. The great field of the world is everywhere white already to harvest. Every land is calling to us to go over and help them. Christ's last command is, that we should preach His Gospel to every creature;

and His gracious promise, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” He has taught us to pray that our Father’s kingdom may come, and He has assured us that what we ask shall infallibly be accomplished.

Let each, then, help in this blessed work, as God has prospered him, and let whatever you give be sanctified and doubled by your prayers; and may God our Father accept both us and our offerings, and cause His kingdom everywhere to come, and His will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. And to Him, the Father, Son, and Spirit, One God, the God of our salvation, be ascribed the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever.
Amen.

SERMON IV.

CHRIST THE LIGHT AND SALVATION
OF ALL NATIONS.

“For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.”—*Acts* xiii. 47.

THESE words were addressed by St. Paul to the unbelieving Jews, in the synagogue at Antioch. He and Barnabas had there been preaching the Gospel of salvation, acceptable, and “the savour of life unto life,” to many; but, as on other occasions also, “the savour of death unto death” to all who rejected that blessed message.

It was necessary, the apostle said, that the word of God should first have been spoken to the Jews, for so Jesus had commanded. As He Himself was first sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, so likewise He ordained that repentance and remission of sins should first be preached at Jerusalem by His apostles. The children of the kingdom in this,

as in other things, were to have the pre-eminence. The glorious privilege was offered them of entering first into that everlasting kingdom, which in the fulness of time, God had set up for the recovery and salvation of men! But the first made themselves the last. Infatuated Israel would not have the Son of God to reign over them; instead of embracing with adoring gratitude the high privilege granted them, they put it from them, rejected the counsel of God against themselves, and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life. And then the apostles turned to the Gentiles, agreeably to our Lord's prediction, that "many should come from the east and west, and should sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven, while the children of the kingdom should be cast out."

It was also in accordance with many of the prophecies of Isaiah and other sacred writers who had foretold God's purposes of mercy to the heathen, His thoughts of peace towards our guilty race, and the glorious and eternal salvation which His own Son should purchase for us all by offering Himself in our stead. "It is a light thing," says Jehovah to His Only-begotten, as recorded in Isaiah xlix. 6, and which is the passage quoted by St. Paul in the text, "It is a light thing that Thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Israel; I will also give Thee for a light to the

Gentiles, that Thou mayest be My salvation unto the ends of the earth." Glorious as are the promises given to converted Israel, and pre-eminent as will be their position on their restoration to the covenanted land of their forefathers; yet being but the hundredth part of the population of the world, the work of evangelizing the heathen is evidently incomparably greater, and one also absolutely sure of ultimate and universal accomplishment. "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set Thee to be a light of the Gentiles, and that Thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." Let us consider from these words, First, the condition of the heathen world; secondly, The salvation which God has provided; and lastly, Our duty to make that salvation known.

I. That Christ has been set as a light of the Gentiles, and for salvation unto the ends of the earth, evidently implies that the condition of the heathen is that of darkness and ruin; that they are without the knowledge of God, and are in danger of perishing in consequence. "The world," even "by wisdom," St. Paul says, "knew not God." In those countries, such as ancient Assyria, Egypt, Greece and Rome, where almost every kind of human learning was pursued, and where several of the arts were carried to the highest perfection, even

in such lands, and amongst such a people, God, the ever-blessed Creator, was unknown. His own offspring, those who lived, and moved, and had their being in Him, knew not of His existence, or if they did, they glorified Him not as God. "Professing themselves to be wise," they became, in the most important of all knowledge, "fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things."

And such, or even worse, is the condition of those nations that are still in heathen darkness. Not one of them has improved on that melancholy state described by the Apostle. In India the catalogue of deities numbers 330,000,000, and many of these are represented as beings of the most hideous and polluted character; while in some lands they appear to believe in no real living deity at all, but only in a Supreme Nothing, a mere negative being, impersonal, inactive, without attributes, unconscious of his own existence, to be absorbed in which is the desired perfection of the deluded worshippers. Such is Buddhism,* the religion of China and the surrounding nations, embracing nearly one half of the world's population.

* In Hinduism also the supreme deity, Brahm, is represented as in a state of profound unconsciousness, and as a being of mere negative qualities.

And perhaps we may from hence account for the sleepy, apathetic, unprogressive and unenquiring character of those eastern nations. In this they resemble the deity whom they worship, a being utterly indifferent about the concerns of earth's 1,000,000,000 of immortal souls—indolent, asleep, absorbed in his own dreamy selfishness. And if we look at other lands, at Africa, or many parts of America, or the Isles of the South Seas, the prospect only blackens and becomes more horrible; for we find that devils there are the chief objects of worship, and that human blood is regarded as the sacrifice most acceptable to their cruel, monstrous deities. "Darkness" everywhere "covers the heathen earth, and gross darkness the people;" men are "dead in trespasses and sins;" they are "without God and without hope in the world." Not only does the light of truth not shine, but the deeds and the fruits of darkness everywhere abound. Not only is there the absence of the knowledge of God, but also all the present and the future terrible consequences of their wilful ignorance. "For 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 they are without excuse." They are self-condemned. They themselves have quenched the light of reason and of

conscience, and have made God their enemy by wicked works. Oh what a scene, dear brethren, is this to contemplate, how dark, and dismal, and painful! a world estranged from its Creator, rioting in sin, in love with the works of darkness; men born, and living, and growing old, and dying in utter ignorance of the God who made them, and of the Saviour who gave His own life for their redemption.

II. But let us now, in the second place, consider that glorious and eternal salvation which God in His mercy has provided for mankind. "I have set Thee to be a light of the Gentiles, and that Thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." "God so loved the world," notwithstanding all its ignorance, and pollution, and idolatry, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. The glory of His character is His goodness. "God is love," and in the unspeakable gift of His Son for the restoration and salvation of a ruined world, He has manifested His love in all its depth, and fullness and glory. "Herein is love," love divine, unmerited, unequalled, everlasting, "not that we loved God,"—for our case was the very reverse of that, we were enemies, not friends,—“but

that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." By the grace of God, Jesus Christ tasted death for every man; He came to be "a light of the Gentiles, and for salvation unto the ends of the earth." "After that the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." After God had given man the fullest trial, 4,000 years, to recover the knowledge, and holiness, and blessedness which he had lost by sin, He then Himself interposed: again said, "Let there be light," and life, and peace, and hope for the sons of men. As light was first created in the natural world, so also is it the first in order and importance in the spiritual. It was through the darkening of their understanding and the ignorance that was in them, that men forsook the way of life, and lost themselves in error, and superstition, and ungodliness; and it is by seeing light in God's light, by knowing and receiving the truth of His word, "the truth as it is in Jesus," that they are to be converted, and renewed, and saved. And hence our blessed Lord calls Himself the "Light of the world," "the Sun of Righteousness which had arisen with healing in His wings," to chase away the gloom of sin's long night, "to guide our feet into the way of peace, and to give light to them

that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." The doctrines He taught are the light which is to disperse the black systems of idolatry, the sun which is to shine in every dark place of the earth, which is now the habitation of cruelty; the truth, which is to make all men free; the glory that is destined to fill and cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. And in and by this light is *salvation*. This light is the *life* of men. The end and purpose of its shining is to quicken the souls of men, to enliven the dead mass of humanity, to warm the cold heart of man with the love of God and his neighbour, to save him, in short, from the condemnation and the power of sin, and to exalt him to eternal glory. "The Gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" it is the great means which He has in His love devised for the redemption of our ruined race.

The end of the Son of God's incarnation was that all men might be saved; that instead of perishing, they might have everlasting life; that where the ignorance of sin and idolatry darkened the earth, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God might shine in the face of Jesus Christ. And in how many parts of the world has this blessed result been already accomplished! Even in the Apostles' days the Gospel of Christ had been preached in every country of the then known world, and myriads

of faithful converts rejoiced in the light of God's countenance. Many a proud and scoffing Greek then learned to sit, like Mary, at the feet of Jesus; stern Romans yielded to the gentle, humanising influence of the Bible; worshippers of dumb idols were turned from their folly to serve the true and living God; the ignorant of all lands were enlightened, the profligate reclaimed, the sick healed, the lost found, and the dead in trespasses and sins quickened. In places where the licentious and cruel rites of idolatry had been celebrated, there were now daily assembled for the worship of Jehovah those who had been changed into meekness and love and purity by the Gospel; and amongst such, we ourselves, brethren, of this highly-favoured land. Before the light of truth shone on Britain, no darker or more cruel spot deformed God's once fair creation. Our forefathers were no better than the heathen of other lands, until "the grace of God which bringeth salvation" appeared unto them, and which has made us, their descendants, the first of the nations of the earth in knowledge, and power, and godliness.

Yes, it is the righteousness of the Gospel which has exalted us, and by which we, as the stewards of God's grace, ought to endeavour to bless and elevate all the nations of the earth. During the last sixty-five years very much has been done by

different societies towards extending the knowledge of God among the heathen. Faithful ambassadors of Christ have gone forth in every direction, and have been declaring in almost every tongue the message of reconciliation. Whole tribes and nations in the South seas—nations of dreaded cannibals, whose delight was in war, in destroying and devouring each other—have, as in the days of old, turned from their senseless idols and the worship of devils, to “serve the living and true God, and to wait for His Son from heaven.” The wild, savage, and iron-souled Red Indian has been softened, civilised, and saved by the words of Jesus; the ice-bound inhabitants of Greenland and Labrador have learned to rejoice in the love of God their Saviour; in India, China, and Africa, hundreds of thousands are now united with us in the bonds of a common faith—in almost every region and climate, in almost every dark, cold, cruel, and polluted corner of the earth, the beams of the Sun of Righteousness have been pouring light, and life, and salvation, “Christ has been preached unto the Gentiles, believed on, and glorified in the world.” His Gospel is going forth conquering, and to conquer. “The idols He shall utterly abolish,” and “from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, His name shall be great among the Gentiles.” The sun that has arisen will struggle through every mist and cloud and

storm, and his path become brighter and brighter unto the perfect day; until every nation shall rejoice in his meridian splendour, and the whole earth be filled with his glory.

III. But let us notice, in the third place, the part we are to take in hastening forward that blessed day, or the obligation that we are under to make known the glorious salvation which God has provided for the children of men. "For so," saith the apostle, "hath the Lord commanded us." St. Paul had received a special commission to evangelise the Gentile world. The Lord had appeared to him in glory, and spoken to him direct from heaven, and the burden of the message he received was, that he was thenceforth to "know nothing among men, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," to "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ." But a similar duty, my brethren, has been laid upon us. Our Lord's command to His Church is, to "Go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." What we have received, it is our duty to communicate; for it is the only remedy for sin, the only means of accomplishing that deliverance for which the whole creation on earth groaneth and travaileth in pain together. All are alike involved in the darkness and the desolations of sin, all are crying to us for help, and God has given

us our power and our position, in order that we may minister that help, and send forth the light and truth of His salvation. Yes, as a church and as a nation, woe be unto us, my brethren, if we preach not the Gospel. It will be at the risk of quickly losing all our glory and our greatness, if we neglect this paramount duty, even as other nations have been cast down and thrown aside, because they did not thus use their influence for the conversion of the heathen. But surely higher motives than this ought to induce us to engage in and to persecute this blessed work. Is there no debt of gratitude which we owe to the God and Father of all our mercies? No love of Christ constraining us? No compassion for those in misery, and no feeling of pleasure in relieving the distressed, and in being instrumental in raising those who are perishing to the blessedness of a glorious immortality? Are not all men our brethren? and ought we not to act the part of the good Samaritan to those who lie benighted and lost, and who are perishing both in body and soul? It might seem superfluous to have to tell men that it is their duty to send the Gospel amongst the heathen; and yet, strange to say, many not only think that it is not, but even oppose those who feel that it is, and who are doing all they can in this blessed cause.

Some endeavour to excuse themselves by saying,

that because there are people ignorant at home, we ought not, or need not at least, to trouble ourselves, or spend our money for those who are ignorant abroad. But where would have been our Christianity in England, had the Apostles and first preachers of the Gospel reasoned in this manner? and were our Lord's words without meaning, and without reason, when He commanded that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem?" Jesus did not forget the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and His Apostles invariably preached the Gospel first to their fellow-Jews, and it is no less our duty also always to begin at home. But the remedy is to be as extensively made known as the existence of the disease; and it is God's purpose and command that the Gentiles shall be fellow-heirs of the grace of life, and that all the ends of the earth shall see His salvation. And are we wiser than God? Or shall we endeavour to frustrate His gracious purposes, and selfishly limit that to ourselves which is the common blessing of the human race, and which can equally make other nations what it has, in the good providence of God, made us?

There are others again, who urge in defence of their indifference to Christian missions, that as the heathen have not our responsibilities, as they have not to answer for the abuse of revelation, we

had better leave them alone in His hands who judgeth right. But again it may be replied, What would have been our condition, suppose the first preachers of the Gospel had thought in the same way regarding Gentile Britain? No, my brethren, all such objections are futile, irrational, and unchristian. The common law of love to our neighbour places us under the undoubted obligation to send the Gospel amongst the heathen; and if we have any proper sense of the unspeakable blessings of salvation, and any proportionate gratitude to Him who gave His own Son in our stead; if we have any love towards that adorable Redeemer who died that we might live, and any regard to His authority and command, we shall not need to be reminded so much of the *duty* as of the *privilege* which God thus calls upon us to exercise.

Be it yours, dear brethren, to hasten the consummation of that blessed period promised in the sure word of prophecy. "Be not weary in well-doing; for in due season you shall reap, if you faint not." Increase and abound yet more, in giving, and in labouring, and in praying for the cause of your Lord and Master; and what you do in His name for the heathen, He will receive and reward as done to Himself. May He accept your present offerings and services, and may you all experience that He is your light and your salvation.

SERMON V.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE
MESSIAH'S KINGDOM.

“Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion.”
—*Psalm* ii. 6.

THE writers of the New Testament have left us in no doubt as to the illustrious person respecting whom this psalm was written. Different parts of it are on several occasions quoted by the apostles, as clearly fulfilled predictions concerning the Lord Jesus; first, in the fourth chapter of the Acts, in which all the opposition spoken of against David is shewn to have been fulfilled also in Jesus, against whom, the anointed of the Father, “both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together;” again, in the thirteenth chapter, where St. Paul refers the words, “Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee,” to the resurrection of Christ; and, lastly, in the first and fifth chapters of the Epistle to the

Hebrews, in which this same Apostle infers from these words, not merely Christ's resurrection, but also His eternal Divinity and Sonship, as the "only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The fact is, David was both a prophet and a most striking living type and representative of Him who, while he was his Lord, was also in due time to be His Son; and, therefore, in this remarkable psalm, nearly all that he relates regarding himself, of the difficulties and opposition that attended his accession to the throne of Israel, is prophetically applicable to the Son of God.

Great as were the trials and afflictions of David, his cruel and unnatural persecution by Saul, his wars with the Philistines, and other enemies, and, for many years, the resistance and disloyalty of the greater part of his own nation; yet not to be compared were those with the overwhelming sufferings which, for our sakes, the Son of God and of David endured. His sinless soul well-nigh sunk beneath the unknown weight and measure of His bitter agony, when exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, and sweating as it were great drops of blood, He prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me!"

It indeed could not pass, consistently with the requirements of God's justice, in connection with man's salvation; and, therefore, from divine and

ever-adorable love towards us, Jesus drank the bitter portion, and redeemed our guilty world. And then His work of suffering and of humiliation was over; and having spoiled the principalities and powers of hell, He rose as the mighty conqueror of all His and His people's foes, ascended His everlasting throne, and there sits in majesty, until His enemies be made His footstool.

And it is this assurance of His final and universal triumph that encourages us, dear brethren, in the prosecution of the great work of evangelizing the heathen world. It is no uncertain warfare that we are waging; it is not an undertaking that admits of any doubts or misgivings as to its ultimate and complete success. The cause of Christian Missions is one, for the support and triumph of which the word and promise of Him who cannot lie are pledged. As surely as David conquered every enemy, and reigned on Mount Zion in glory and peace and prosperity; so surely will the Son of God "put down" all rival and opposite "rule and all authority and power; and "every knee bow before Him, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." For a little while in the ignorance of their nothingness, and in the weakness and folly of their malignity, the "kings and the rulers of the earth may set themselves, and take counsel together against the Lord, and against His

anointed;" but, as in David's case, so also in Messiah's, "the Lord shall have them in derision."

In spite of all that "the gates of hell" and the malignant efforts of ungodly men can devise or execute, the everlasting decree shall receive its accomplishment: "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion."

In the further consideration of these words, let us first notice the kingdom that is here mentioned; secondly, the difficulties and opposition it has to contend with; and lastly, the assured prospect of its final triumph and glory.

I. As the Lord Jesus is the exalted person referred to in the text as king, there can be little doubt that the Christian Church is the kingdom here meant. There is, doubtless, also included, the future glory and felicity of Israel; for Jesus came to be a glory unto them, as well as to be a light unto the Gentiles. And their restoration and conversion, it would appear, will be one of the great means in God's hands of making known His salvation to the ends of the earth: "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what," says St. Paul, "shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" "And if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their

fulness?" Yet, however this may be, whatever part converted Israel may be privileged to take in the evangelizing of the world, this will only be a partial realization of the promise given in the text; and as amplified in the verses following, where Jehovah says, that "He will give the heathen unto Christ for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." The kingdom of Jesus is the "general assembly and church of the first-born," that glorious dispensation of God's grace in which the fallen ruined sons of Adam are ransomed, reclaimed, renewed, and sanctified; and in this kingdom, there is "neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free;" but all, of all countries, languages, and conditions, "are one in Christ Jesus." As all have sinned, as all are by nature and practice alike "dead in trespasses and sins," so without distinction all are embraced in the bountiful provision of the Gospel. The precious blood of Christ was shed for all; the gifts of the Holy Ghost purchased by that blood are freely offered to all, even the most rebellious; and the great authoritative announcement of the Gospel by its Divine Founder Himself is, that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

1. Catholicity is one of the brightest characteristics of Christianity. It is a religion intended and

adapted for all. It knows of no limitations, and makes no distinctions as to persons. This Jerusalem which is from above is free, and is the mother of us all. In every nation he who feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him. The kingdom of His Son includes all the lesser kingdoms among men, is destined to overthrow every rival and every enemy, and to extend not only over every distant country and portion of the earth, but over every heart and every will, over every living soul of a regenerated world. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." "I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." "The earth shall be *full* of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord; and in *every place* incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering." Thus *universal*, dear brethren, will be that kingdom which Jehovah has promised in the text to establish. O that He may put it into all our hearts to resolve to do what we each *can* to further this blessed object!

2. Let us next observe the *holy* character of the kingdom mentioned in this psalm; and in this respect also we shall perceive how greatly God's

kingdom differs from the kingdoms of men, "Yet have I set my king upon My *holy* hill of Sion." O how different from the empires and dominions of this world is that heavenly kingdom of which we are subjects, and to seek admission into which is the first paramount duty and interest of mankind! The kingdoms of earth are often founded in ambition and blood, in treachery and cruelty, injustice and falsehood; and too frequently, alas! are cemented and upheld by the same unhallowed means. But not such is the empire of Him who is seated on the throne of Zion. Truth and holiness, peace and love, and joy and righteousness are its heavenly attributes. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men," was the angelic anthem sung at its commencement; and this will, likewise, be its universal song through everlasting ages. Like other kingdoms, this also has its outward organization, its ministers, and its ordinances; but none or all of these constitute its glory. That is spiritual, not earthly, "the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible," "the beauty of holiness," the renewed "image of God, in knowledge, and righteousness, and true holiness." The kingdom seen by Nebuchadnezzar, which overthrew and superseded all the kingdoms of this world, had its origin in a stone cut out of the mountain without

hands ; and, "the kingdom of God," our Lord told the Jews "was within them, and cometh not with observation." It consists not in outward pomp and splendour, in the ten thousand empty delusive fascinations of the kingdoms and false religions among men, and which, in plain contradiction to the words of Jesus and His apostles, the Church of Rome has everywhere adopted, and by which she captivates and destroys immortal souls.

"The kingdom of God is not meat and drink" either ; it does not consist in mere rites and ceremonies, in varied forms, and endless, vain and heathen-like repetitions, in processions, ablutions, and genuflections, in fastings, and penances, in the superstitious reverence of its ministers, and in a fictitious mysteriousness about its instituted ordinances. No, dear brethren, such *is* the essential character of the religions of man ; but the very *opposite* of this is the nature of the kingdom and religion of Christ. Those whom the Father seeks as His acceptable worshippers are those whose *hearts* are His temple, who worship Him exclusively neither at Samaria nor Jerusalem, but in spirit and in truth everywhere. "Know ye not that your bodies are the temples of the Holy Ghost, and that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates ?" God wills that everything should be done in His church and kingdom decently and in order. He has duly

appointed ministers, and “loves the gates of Sion more than all the dwellings of Jacob:” every thing and person belonging to His kingdom is holy; but there is an inward sanctity, a moral, spiritual, and divine purity and holiness which He loves best,—the creation of His own Spirit, and without which all external profession and sanctity are worthless. “For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.”

It is this inward consecration, this purity of heart and life, this lost image of our Creator restored, that constitute the holiness of the Messiah’s kingdom; and instrumentally to effect this, is the great object of the Church Missionary Society. All its labours are directed to this one, divinely, appointed end, the salvation of lost souls, the enlightenment of those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death, and who are perishing for lack of knowledge. This supremely honourable and blessed work of endeavouring to win souls to Christ, is the great charge which He has laid upon His church; that they may prepare a people for the Lord by “turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God; that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified.” For, “without holiness

no man shall see the Lord ;” and “as He who hath called you is holy, be ye also holy.” Thus, dear brethren, we see the holy nature of that kingdom mentioned in the text. It is God’s *holy* hill of Zion, the renewed, purified hearts of men, made here His dwelling-place and temple, in order that they may hereafter “behold His face in righteousness,” and “walk with Him in white,” in that glorious and incorruptible kingdom above, into which “nothing shall in anywise enter that defileth, or worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.”

3. We may notice, in the next place, that the kingdom of the Messiah will also be an *endless* kingdom. Isaiah declares, that “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.” Like the Great Eternal, it will be as permanent, as it will be holy and universal. During the brief period of six thousand years, many nations mighty and strong have followed each other to the grave. Nineveh, and Egypt, and Babylon, and Tyre, and Greece, and Carthage, and Rome, have all for a few centuries flitted across the scene of earth’s dark history, like flaming meteors, leaving only greater gloom and terror behind ; but the kingdom of heaven, the light which has arisen on God’s holy hill of Zion, has ever been increasing, and diffusing new life, and energy, and glory in the world. As the kingdom of the Messiah was founded in truth,

and love, and holiness; so will its course be still onward, and its duration through everlasting ages. What is begun on earth, will be perfected in heaven; what had its origin in God's decree before the foundations of the world, will also survive the destruction of the present earth and heavens. While earthly kingdoms perish, our Father's kingdom will endure; while change and decay characterize the mightiest empires of this world, that of heaven, of "God's holy hill of Sion," "cannot be moved," is "incorruptible and undefiled, and fadeth not away."

This kingdom, Daniel says, after it has broken in pieces and consumed all others, "shall stand for ever;" "Whose dominion," Nebuchadnezzar declares, "is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation; and when "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, He shall reign," we are told in the closing book of Scripture, "for ever and ever."

II. But we are yet, my brethren, in the Church militant,—as yet the temple is only building, the kingdom has not yet come; and neither few nor light are the difficulties and opposition it has to contend with.

There are still Philistines, and Sauls, and Jebu-

sites in the land ; and many are not Israel who are of Israel, and take up arms against the Lord, and against His Anointed. Many of the professed subjects of His kingdom were among the first and most violent opposers of this noble Society, whose only object has ever been to preach Christ crucified, and to add to His Church such as should be saved. Satan could not look with indifference on this and similar institutions, which God in His good pleasure was calling into existence for the very purpose of destroying the strongholds of idolatry and overthrowing every system of error ; and, hence, the little help obtained at first in a land abounding with wealth, and the paucity of agents to go forth and proclaim God's message of mercy to the heathen. And hence also, the great difficulties experienced abroad, the hardened hearts and prejudiced minds, the cold indifference or active opposition of multitudes to whom the truth of the Gospel was made known. Unknown, and even unwritten languages, enfeebling deadly climates, want of men, and want of means,—all these were so many enemies and obstacles to be overcome in setting up the kingdom of the Lord, and in fulfilling His last command, to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature. In part, these difficulties have been conquered, and God has blessed, and is blessing the labours of this and other Socie-

ties in almost every portion of the globe. And yet, comparatively, only a beginning has been made. Whole nations, and these by far the most populous nations of the earth, are still without God and without hope in the world. Not a third part of the heathen world has yet been evangelized, nor are there the means, or the men at hand, by which to enter on this Godlike work with anything like an adequate or proportionate instrumentality. Some missionaries have more than a million souls under their charge, and often such overwhelming masses are left altogether uncared for. And even amongst those who have listened to the truth, not one in ten has probably yielded himself a willing subject to the Saviour. Many still are called, but few chosen; and prejudice and apathy, and open hostility and rebellion are not unfrequently manifested against the Lord and His Anointed; and "we will not have this man to reign over us," is often the ungrateful reply given to the most loving and self-denying proclamations of the Gospel.

But what then, dear brethren, is to be done? Shall we abandon the Divine cause of Zion's king, because it pleases Him to bear with men so long and so patiently? Shall *we* become cold and indifferent towards that object which is so infinitely dear to Him, for which He poured out His soul unto death, procured and sent

forth His Spirit, and established His church and ministry? No, my brethren, we are not at liberty thus to abuse and bury the precious talents that we have received, and to neglect the cause and honor of our heavenly king; and if His people had only prayed, and laboured, and given as they could and ought, many nations still plunged in heathen darkness might long ago have been rejoicing in the light of truth, and been bowing the knee in worship to the God of heaven. But as the Lord Himself waits for the full ripening of His purposes, so, doubtless, He intends that His people should, and gives them not success at first, that they may learn to trust only in Him, and in the grace of His Omnipotent Spirit by which He has promised to renew the heart of man.

III. At the same time, enough success has always attended every faithful effort to encourage His servants to persevere; and His Holy Word is filled with promises that *ultimate* and *universal* success shall crown the labours of His church. And with this full assurance, dear friends, let us renew and redouble our exertions, and our prayers on behalf of the world's conversion. Many bright trophies in the South Seas, and Africa, and North-West America, and India, and Burmah, already attest the Gospel of Christ to be, as of old, the

power of God unto salvation. Already, in one hundred and sixty-nine languages the Scriptures of truth are printed and read ; in every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue, on every Sabbath-day, many devout assemblies unite with us in praise, and prayer, and adoration ; and "Thou art the King of glory, O Christ," is part of their sublime devotion. It is not in vain that we have been taught to pray, "Thy kingdom come." All prophecy sympathizes with these sacred words, and "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," closes the inspired volume. Let us only work, and pray, and give as we ought ; and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry, and will take unto Him His great power and reign. "Yet have I set My king upon My holy hill of Zion ;" and "the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."

God is calling you, dear brethren, to take part in this great enterprise, and He asks you for the best gifts that you can bestow ; for your silver and your gold, your brothers and your sisters, your sons and daughters ; yea, for yourselves, as living sacrifices, to labour in this glorious cause, directly or indirectly, abroad as missionaries, or at home as helpers, collectors, or contributors. More labourers are every where wanted, and more means to send those

labourers forth; and more fervent and constant prayer to render the efforts of those sent forth effectual.

I leave the cause in your hands, and yet not I, but the Lord; your Lord and mine: and, O that He may carry it to your hearts, and constrain all whom I address to devote themselves to His service; to live while you live unto the Lord, to further, and to hasten His kingdom; that when He shall call you hence, you may enter into His joy, and receive that blessed and everlasting reward which He has promised to those who "turn many to righteousness!"

SERMON VI.

“THE IDOLS HE SHALL UTTERLY
ABOLISH.”

“And the idols He shall utterly abolish.”—*Isa.* ii. 8.

THESE words were undoubtedly spoken primarily of the Jewish nation, but, like other predictions in this chapter, they have also a far wider application, and foretell the universal overthrow of idolatry.

In the first verse we are told that this vision concerned Judah and Jerusalem, and, as we read in the eighth, their land was full of idols, on account of which God had forsaken the house of Jacob. But the words of the third and fourth verses so clearly and so fully refer to the universal conversion of the Gentiles, as well as to Israel's pre-eminent glory and blessedness, that we cannot doubt a similar application of the text, especially when we read in so many other parts of this same prophet's writings of the world-extending mission of the Messiah, the glory of whose kingdom Isaiah seems

more particularly to have been inspired to predict. And we may see in the fulfilment of the words as regards Israel, a proof and pledge that they will likewise be in due time realised throughout the world—when, “from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, God’s name shall be great among the Gentiles; and when in every place incense shall be offered unto His name, and a pure offering.”

I. First, let us briefly notice the accomplishment of these words respecting Judah and Jerusalem. Until the time of the Babylonish captivity we meet throughout the Old Testament with the most painful evidence of their infatuated tendency and devotion to idolatry. Even while the thunders of Sinai still reverberated through their tents, with Aaron at their head, they formed for themselves idols, and bowed down to the image of a calf. “These are thy gods, O Israel,” they said, and they worshipped, as they had imitated, the abomination of the besotted idolaters of Egypt, one of whose chief deities was the bull Apis. So thoroughly were they imbued with this monstrous idea and desire of demon-worship, that we meet with this solemn question and reproof from God in the prophet Amos, “Have ye offered unto *Me* sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house

of Israel? But ye have borne the tabernacle of your Moloch and Chiun your images, the star of your God, which ye made to yourselves." They professed to be the servants and worshippers of Jehovah, the I AM, who had delivered them from Egypt, and the symbol of whose presence, by night and by day, for forty years they had witnessed. They had received His law by the disposition of angels, and by the hand of their mediator, Moses; God's tabernacle was pitched among them, they had daily intercourse with His ministers, and lived by the continual miracles of His power and goodness; their altars smoked with ceaseless sacrifices offered in His name on behalf of priests and people; and yet, God's solemn question implies that they did not worship Him. "Their hearts were not stedfast with Him," David tells us: they rendered Him a divided service at the best, and were continually revolting and apostatizing from Him into the grossest kinds of idolatry practised by their polluted neighbours. While professing to worship Jehovah alone, their hearts went after their idols; and during considerably more than half the period of their national existence they were practically, if not avowedly, worshippers of the lords many and gods many of the heathen. Even Solomon yielded to the debasing tendency, and set up altars to Ashtoreth, and Milcom, and Chemosh, and Moloch, the abomination of the

Sidonians, and of the children of Ammon and Moab. Their land was indeed full of idols. Their kings and priests and people alike forsook the living God their Saviour, and the holy place of the Most High was desecrated by the presence of the images of devils, and by the horrid cruelties and vile prostitution that characterise their monstrous worship. We almost shrink from reading the terrible accounts given of Israel in those days of their apostasy, of the thousands of helpless infants made to pass through the fire in the worship of Moloch, and of Jerusalem filled with the blood and with the vices of the victims and votaries of idolatry, illustrated as they are by the similar diabolical practices of the heathen in Africa and elsewhere, in our own day.* "The dark places of the Earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." But as regards Israel, all such horrors and pollutions have for many ages ceased. The idols to which they so tenaciously clung have long been utterly abolished. Their captivity at Babylon cured them of that national and natural love of idols; and they have, as Hosea foretold,

* Thus the late lamented Captain Speke mentions that not a day passes among the Uganda, without at least one human sacrifice, and he represents that tribe as the most civilised among those he visited! He also states that on each succession to the throne all the male relatives of the new sovereign are put to death!

"abode many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim," or idols such as their fathers worshipped. They have worshipped and served Jehovah alone, though they refuse as a nation, as yet, to believe in His Son their Messiah: but as truly as the one prediction has been fulfilled, that they should not be as the heathen among whom they dwelt, and whom they wished to resemble; so surely also shall the other, that "they shall look upon Him whom they have pierced, and mourn," and "all Israel be saved," and dwell and rejoice again in their own land, covenanted and promised to them for ever.

II. But, secondly, the words of the text have likewise received an extensive fulfilment as regards the Gentiles. In many lands, once defiled and cursed by idolatry, the idols have been utterly abolished. Contemplate the rapid progress of the Gospel in the Apostles' days. Nation after nation was visited and evangelised by the messengers of mercy, and what we read in the nineteenth chapter of the Acts, of the effect of the Gospel at Ephesus, is only a sample of the great harvest of souls then reaped and gathered into the granary of Christ's Church. "And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. And many that

believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds. Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed." Most faithfully and successfully did the first Gospel messengers everywhere labour. All the world then known was visited by them, and with what results we learn, not only from the various epistles addressed to nations so far apart as those of Rome and Corinth and Colosse, but likewise from the testimony of heathen writers, who mention that in consequence of the wide and rapid spread of Christianity, "the temples were almost forsaken, and the sacrifices neglected." Thus God employed the pen of the heathen Pliny to bear his unconscious testimony to the accomplishment of His word—"The idols he shall utterly abolish."

And then we know how soon after the entire Roman empire became Christian in the reign of Constantine, how the temples everywhere were destroyed or converted into churches, and the idols which had been worshipped for a thousand years abolished. Onward, and still onward, was the Gospel's march. Syria, Asia-Minor, Greece, Rome, Egypt, Ethiopia, Carthage, Scythia, Gaul, Britain, all Europe, Armenia, Malabar, and other lands, all outwardly, at least, embraced the Gospel

and abolished their heathen idols, and many amongst them, we doubt not, also the still more tenacious idols of the heart. And in our own day still wider has been the diffusion of God's truth. In the beginning of this century it pleased God to awaken nearly every Protestant Church to a new or revived consciousness of their obligations to make known His great salvation. For generations they had neglected this primary duty. They were apathetic, and cold, and lifeless themselves, and in their efforts to evangelise their brethren and neighbours at home, and do not seem to have ever contemplated, much less to have attempted, any grand enterprise on behalf of the perishing millions abroad. The life-blood of the Protestant heart flowed languidly, and could not reach, or warm, or invigorate the distant extremities of humanity. No man cared for the souls of Jews or Gentiles. We selfishly kept the glorious treasure of immortality to ourselves, and dispensed not the bread and water of life to the needy and the dying. But then came the reviving breath of God's Spirit, and our land and Church, especially, shared largely in the Pentecostal blessing. The valley of dry bones became an exceeding great army of devoted soldiers and servants of the Lord Christ. Religion extended and deepened at home, and the heart, now sound and vigorous, sent forth copious streams of life and blessing and beauty and

health and power to every part. Again, as in the Apostles' days, the word of God mightily grew and prevailed, and the idols in many lands were utterly abolished. Most of our various missionary societies were then formed, for Jew and Gentile, for home-necessities and foreign, and with the Bible Society as their common friend and helper, have sent forth messengers of mercy into almost every land, and given to the people of 169 languages the oracles of the true and living God. East, West, North, and South have participated in the effects of this great revival. The Ethiopian's land is, in consequence, stretching out her hands unto God, and many tens of thousands of converts there have cast away their idols to the moles and to the bats. Several islands in the Pacific have been entirely evangelised during the last sixty-five years, and not an idol is now found amongst them. The cannibal shores of New Zealand have been visited and won to the British empire by our missionaries, and, with few exceptions, all her once dreaded inhabitants are now Christians, and ten of her sons ordained ministers of peace in connection with our own branch of Christ's Church in those islands. Natives of Tahiti have first seen the idols worshipped by their fathers in the London Missionary Society's Museum! It is the same in North-west America, in India, China, and other lands, and it is computed that not fewer than 1,250,000

souls have been converted from heathenism during the present century. Seven copies of God's word are being circulated every minute, day and night throughout the year, by different Societies. The British and Foreign Bible Society has circulated 47,989,579 copies, and the Christian Knowledge and other societies probably 30,000,000 more, and 2,450,127 were issued by the Bible Society alone during the past year. At least £1,500,000 are now expended annually by all the different Protestant communions in Europe and America on Missionary work,* and of this more than one-fourth is contributed by members of the Church of England. There are upwards of 200,000 communicants, 232,353 children under Christian instruction, 2,367 missionaries,† and 16,000 native assistants of different kinds, connected with the various Protestant Missionary Societies throughout the world, and the Bible has now been translated into every important language. My brethren, what has God wrought? All this, recollect, is the result of the Christian efforts made during the last sixty-five years: and remember also, how small and feeble was the beginning of this great work—without the aid or encouragement of those in power either in Church or State, and prosecuted often amidst the

* Including Bible and Tract Societies' operations.

† Of these, 579 are ordained natives.

active opposition of those who ought to have supported it. Thus, in India, for many years all evangelising efforts were prohibited, even by rulers who professed themselves Christians, and some of those who first went to preach the Gospel in that land were obliged to leave the country, and to go and proclaim their message elsewhere—in Burmah.

For several years no English clergyman would engage in this work, and our first devoted missionaries in Africa and New Zealand were laymen; and even now one fourth of our ordained agents are foreigners, faithful men of God from Germany and other lands, who long ago ought to have shamed us into greater devotedness and zeal. But every year witnesses an increasingly larger accession of labourers from among the clergy and students of our own Zion, and men who have taken the highest honours at our universities, have learnt, like St. Paul, to count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, and for the higher honour of preaching His unsearchable riches among the Gentiles. There are now in connection with the Church Missionary Society, 201 European clergymen, and 79 native and country-born, who preach in 30 different languages, to upwards of 120,000 converts, at 148 different stations. They are assisted by 2,155 native catechists and schoolmasters, and have under their

care 22,000 communicants and 36,000 children;* and for these purposes the friends of this society raised last year, at home and abroad, £167,176. We thank God, my brethren, for what has been accomplished by this and other societies. Their progress has been marvellous, and we believe that if our resources, and means, and missionaries were only increased in proportion to the world's wants and woes, and its appeals to us for help and sympathy, the words of the prophet would in their fullest extent be realized—"The idols He shall utterly abolish." Then would the world-wide "wilderness and the solitary place be glad for them, and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose." "The little one would become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation." Yea, a "nation would be born in a day." "God, even our own God would bless us, and all the ends of the earth would fear Him." Assuredly that day will come, and it may come speedily. A far greater work has been accomplished than appears on the surface, and there are thousands in India and other lands who are more than almost persuaded to be Christians, but who are deterred by oppressive laws and by the chains of caste from making an open profession of their

* In these results of the Church Missionary Society, many thousand converts in the West Indies are not included, as they have long been independent of the Society.

convictions. Education is doing a great work in undermining their belief in Hindooism and other false systems; and civilization, the electric telegraph, postal arrangements, the railway, and other European advantages are all aiding in the demolition of idolatry, and in the preparation of the people to receive and welcome the Gospel of Christ. It has been my privilege for several years to preach the Gospel in India, and I have there witnessed in our mission in Travancore a literal fulfilment of the prophet's words. The idols of a heathen temple were abolished by the villagers during one of my visits to them, and their pagoda destroyed, and on the place where it stood, and where devils had for ages been worshipped, we erected a temple to the true and only God. One of our missionaries in Tinnevely* has seen forty such temples destroyed, and has during his devoted labours in that interesting mission been instrumental in erecting twenty Christian churches! But what are our few missionaries, my brethren, among India's population of 180,000,000? There is not one missionary in India, connected with all our Protestant societies, for every 300,000 people, while there are districts nearly as populous as England without any missionary at all! Oh, we want to increase their number a hundred, yea, a thousand-fold. There is

* The Rev. J. T. Tucker.

only one missionary in India in connection with the Church of England, including those of the Church Missionary and of the Propagation Societies, for every million of its population! And then China is ten times more destitute, with twice the number of inhabitants; and Japan, and Africa, and Arabia, and Thibet, and many parts of America, north and south, and hundreds of islands in the east, and south, and west, are all appealing to us for help, and inviting us to go and reap the ripening harvest.

By all the promises of God's word, and by all the woes and sorrows of humanity; by our Saviour's last command, and the assurance of His constant presence; by all the successes of the past, and by all the predicted glories of the future; by the ties of a common nature, and by the obligations which the enjoyment of our own great mercies involves; by our own once heathen, barbarous state, and by the constraining love of Christ, and the blessings of His salvation, which alone have made us to differ—by all these, and other mighty reasons, my brethren, we are bound, it is our privilege and our duty, to aid to the utmost of our power, the great and glorious cause of Christian missions. And in proportion as the idols of sin and selfishness are abolished in our hearts, shall we feel a deepening interest in this blessed work. We have long

ceased to be a heathen nation, but oh, how many, like the house of Israel, still set up idols in their hearts? idols in their business and their pleasures, in their children, their property, their appearance, the honour that comes from man; in a thousand things, or anything that they love more than their Saviour and their God. Ah, dear friends, all these too, if we make idols of them, God will utterly abolish. He ought to have no rival, and He will have none. Look upon all as His, and consecrate all to His service—gold and silver, houses and lands, children, position, honour, business, pleasure, gifts and talents, tastes and acquirements. They are all from Him, and are given you to occupy till He come. The most profitable investments are those made for the glory of God and the good of souls; the highest pleasure is that derived from serving the Lord Christ, and there is scope for the exercise of the loftiest talents, and of the most refined and elegant tastes in the cause of Christian missions. If any of you can, give yourselves to this work, and pray that others, that many, may be sent forth into the Lord's harvest. Aid this glorious cause by your liberal gifts, and by your systematic weekly, monthly, or annual subscriptions; and above all, pray for God's abundant blessing on all the agents and operations of this society; and then, my brethren, shall that day be hastened when, in the fullest sense, the words of the prophet shall be

realized, "and the idols He shall utterly abolish." Yes, it is God's work, not man's. In vain do we plant and water, unless He give the increase. It is not to civilization we trust, nor to human skill or power. Greece and Rome were civilized, but they were wholly given to idolatry. The world by wisdom knows not God. It is only the new-creating might of His spirit that can cause men utterly to abolish their idols, and the great means used by this society is, the faithful preaching of the everlasting Gospel, which now, as of old, everywhere proves by that Spirit's grace the power of God unto salvation. Out of Zion this law has gone forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. God is judging among the nations, and rebuking many people. Many have already beaten their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks; and when the idols shall be utterly abolished, "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

It is for the hastening of this blessed millennium, dear friends, that your aid is now solicited; and God grant that we may all be not only helpers, but also sharers of it; and that when Jesus shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, we may each rejoice at His appearing, and receive from Him the animating welcome: "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"

SERMON VII.

“UNTO THEE SHALL ALL FLESH
COME.”

“O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.”—*Psalm lxxv. 2.*

THERE are probably few sincere Christians who do not sometimes feel discouraged by the darkness that surrounds them, and by the difficulties that everywhere seem to retard the progress of that glorious Gospel in which they themselves believe, and which their Lord has commanded His Church to proclaim to every creature. Eighteen hundred years have elapsed; and yet but a small portion of mankind, comparatively, has hitherto been evangelized, and two-thirds of our race still lie benighted in all the degradation, and pollution, and hopelessness of heathenism. And shall these things always be? Shall sin and death's dark reign never end? Or shall the Gospel continue to advance in the same dull ratio, and generation after generation in the meantime pass away unvisited and unblest

by its heavenly consolations, and unsustained by its elevating sanctifying hopes? We know not, dear brethren, the *time* of the end. God has not told us how long the present dispensation will continue; but He has told us for our encouragement *what* the end will be, and also, by what means that end will be accomplished. The words of the text clearly point out to us, and assure us of the universal conversion of mankind; and they likewise describe, or at least, imply, the means by which this blessed consummation will be attained.

Let me first direct your attention to the character under which God is here represented; and then, secondly, to the connection of this with the world's conversion.

I. "O Thou that hearest prayer." Is there any character more suitable or encouraging in which the great Author of all things could reveal Himself to us His sinful creatures? We might have supposed it infinitely beneath His dignity to notice such insignificant and polluted beings. He is the King Eternal, immortal, and invisible, the only wise God. The heaven of heavens cannot contain Him, and He charges even His angels that excel in strength with folly. He is the High and Holy One that inhabiteth Eternity, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, "glorious beyond

thought and power Divine ;” and will He deign to regard us the fallen inhabitants of earth, and will He even condescend to visit our sinful abode, and permit us to present to Him our prayers and supplications? Can there be communion between beings so opposite; fellowship between the finite and the infinite, the sinful and the sinless, the apostate, rebel, worthless creature, and Him who for His own good pleasure created all things, “God over all, blessed for ever?”

Yes, dear brethren, it is even so. He has prevented us with the blessings of His goodness, and has shewn as great a difference between His love and ours, as between His Omnipotent, all-creating, all-pervading power, and our contracted, finite, and dependent weakness. His ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. He has revealed Himself as the hearer of prayer. He has Himself directed and commanded “that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men ;” and as He has threatened to pour out His indignation upon the families that call not upon His name, so He has promised His special blessing and favour to all who do thus seek Him. “Call upon Me,” He says, “in the day of trouble, and I will deliver thee.” God’s temple was called pre-eminently the “house of prayer ;” for it was there that all Israel were commanded to appear before

Him, and that His ministers were appointed daily to present the supplications and the thanksgivings of His people. "Praise waiteth for Thee, O God, in Zion; and unto Thee shall the vow be performed." "The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon Him; to all that call upon Him in truth." The design of one of our Lord's parables was, that men might learn from it "always to pray, and not to faint;" and Jesus repeatedly assured His disciples that whatsoever they should ask in His name, believing, they would receive. And what God in His love and condescension thus appointed, He has abundantly and most graciously heard and answered. "He never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye My face in vain."

He has caused innumerable examples of prayer answered to be recorded for our encouragement; in Abel's accepted offerings; in Abraham's granted request for the life of Ishmael; in his servant Eliezer's success at Padan-Aram; in Jacob's deliverance from the anticipated wrath of Esau; in the preservation of Israel from repeatedly threatened destruction on the intercession of Moses; in thunder and rain sent at the prayer of Samuel; in David's escape from the murderous designs of Saul; in Elijah's triumph over the idolatrous priests of Baal; in Hezekiah's deliverance from the armies of Sennacherib; in Daniel's safety in the den of lions, and the preser-

vation of the three noble confessors in the seven times' heated furnace ; in the strengthening of our Lord in Gethsemane ; in Peter's release from prison ; Paul's rescue from the dangers of shipwreck ; and others instances too numerous and too well-known to need repeating.

The Lord did hear and grant the petitions that were presented to Him ; and in every case His ear is equally open to our prayers, and His heart and hand as ready to promote His people's good ; whether to supply some urgent need, or to strengthen in the hour of severe temptation, to support them in seasons of affliction, or to preserve them in seasons of prosperity, to bestow upon them their daily bread for this life, or to enrich them with all spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus for the better life that is to come. His infinite and unchanging love ever inclines Him to regard with sympathizing favour and most ready acceptance all the requests which they make known to Him ; while His unerring wisdom suggests the answer that is best, and His Omnipotent power secures its infallible fulfilment. Neither our unworthiness nor insignificance ever causes Him to disregard our petitions, nor does the infinite multiplicity and variety of His concerns ever lead Him either to overlook or neglect them. He can as easily hear the prayers of a million as of one ; and if the very hairs of our

head are all numbered, and a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without our heavenly Father's notice, O let us never for one moment doubt that every petition we make goes up before Him as incense, and that the lifting up our hands is as the evening sacrifice. Yea, have we not ourselves experienced ; is there one of us who cannot testify that God has indeed granted and fulfilled the desire of our hearts? Have not difficulties been disentangled, and dangers removed, and afflictions been mitigated, and blessed, and sanctified? Has not light sprung up in darkness, and joy in sorrow, and unexpected friends been raised up in adversity, and the circumstances that we dreaded most been turned and altered by Providence, so as to produce the very opposite effects to those which we in our ignorance and fear anticipated?

And if such results have taken place on earth, if such answers to our prayers have been here vouchsafed, oh, what may we not expect hereafter? what treasure laid up, unknown to us, in heaven—friends, relations, saved through the effectual, fervent prayers of the righteous, and the saints themselves raised to greater heights of glory, because of their unceasing earnest supplications here below? Yes, God bestows abundantly above all that we can ask or think. Before we call He hears, and answers while we are yet speaking. And all this is through

the intercession of His Son, our great High Priest in heaven. Him the Father heareth always. It is His prayers that secure acceptance for ours. He is the one and only Mediator between God and man, the way, and the truth, and the life, and no man cometh to the Father but by Him. Part of His Mediatorial office is intercession for the transgressors—not only sacrifice, but prayer—not only the perfect offering of Himself once for all, but the fragrant incense of His supplications continually, until the last object of His redeeming love shall have been safely brought to glory. Let us never forget that it is by this way only that we have access to the Father. It is not for our sakes, or because of our fervent, persevering supplications; for the very best offerings we can bring, the purest prayers we can present are ever unholy and unworthy; it is not on this account, but because Jesus died, and ever liveth to make intercession for us, that God is the hearer and answerer of prayer.

II. 1. And it is on this account also, secondly, that the world's conversion is connected with the subject that we have been considering—“O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.” In the second Psalm the Father is represented as addressing the Son, and saying to Him, “Ask of me, and I will give Thee the heathen for thine

inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." Jesus in His sublime prayer also, mentions that the Father has given Him power over all flesh. That power we find was given in answer to His request before the foundation of the world, when in the counsels of the ever-blessed Trinity it was determined to save man, and the work of his redemption was committed into the hands of the eternal Son. This universal acknowledgment and dominion of Christ were likewise bestowed in consideration of His humiliation and sufferings, as the glorious reward which He justly merited. "Wherefore," that is, because of His becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, "God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." On this double ground, therefore, the conversion of the whole world is guaranteed. It has been irrevocably promised to Christ by the Father, in answer to His request, and it has been infallibly decreed and bestowed as the reward of His voluntary abasement, perfect obedience, and atoning death. All flesh shall come unto God, because all flesh has

been given unto Christ for His inheritance, and because He gave His life as a ransom for that inheritance. It is a purchased possession. The sinful ruined race has been bought back, redeemed by the life-blood of the Redeemer, and they are secured as His inheritance by the Father's unalterable decree, and by His own unfailing intercession on their behalf. If God's promise can fail, then, and not till then, may we despair of the world's regeneration. But “He is not a man that He should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent.” “Hath He said, and shall He not do it; or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?” “O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come.”

2. Again, God has promised to pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, even the Spirit of grace and of supplication; and it will be in consequence of men knowing Him as the hearer of prayer that they will come to Him, and believe, and worship, and obey; just as the nation of Israel, on God's answering the prayer of Elijah by fire from heaven, bowed their heads and acknowledged, “The Lord He is the God; the Lord He is the God.” What is the substance and the glory of the Gospel? Is it not simply and sublimely this, that there is a free and everlasting salvation for every one who calleth upon the name of the Lord? that the same Lord over all is

rich unto all that call upon Him? that Christ by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and that all grace and glory are offered to every one that asketh in His name? Men cannot believe until they hear the Gospel; but let the Gospel in its fulness and simplicity be everywhere proclaimed, and God's Spirit sought and obtained in all His world-extending influences, and then all flesh will indeed come unto God. A nation will be born in a day. The knowledge of salvation, and the belief and conviction that God is nigh unto them that call upon Him, and that merely asking in faith is the condition of receiving, with the deep consciousness of need, and the remembrance of accumulated guilt—all this, the effect of the world's great Pentecost, and *that* the result of the Son's mediation and intercession, and His successful intercession proceeding from God's love to man, and His character as the hearer of prayer—all this, directly flowing in these several streams from the everlasting Father as the great source and fountain of all good, will melt man's obdurate heart, and lead to repentance and restoration and salvation those millions upon millions who had long bowed down to idols, and given God's praise to graven images.

3. And the prayers of God's people will also be greatly concerned in these mighty results, and will have considerably aided to produce them. Our Lord

taught His disciples to pray for more labourers to be sent into His harvest, and undoubtedly He implied also that they should pray for the success of those who were sent forth; and the double duty is equally binding upon all Christ's faithful followers. The harvest is plenteous, but where are the reapers? and where and what are the prayers we offer on behalf of those who are bearing the burden and the heat of the day, and who are gathering fruit unto life eternal? Assuredly the majority of Christians forget that God is the hearer of prayer, or they would not thus neglect their Lord's command. They are glad to know that idolatry will one day cease, and all the ends of the earth rejoice in the salvation of God; but they use not the means which He has appointed for this purpose, namely, the united, fervent supplications of His people, and observe not the connection between thus seeking and obtaining this glorious result.

It was not so that David acted, whose words we so frequently use in the 67th Psalm, in which, like him, we ask that “God's way may be known upon earth, His saving health unto all nations.” It was not so the prophet acted, when “for Zion's sake,” he says, “I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest; until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.” It was

not so that Jesus intended us to act, when as one of the subjects of our daily petitions, He taught and commanded us to pray that His Father's kingdom might come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven. If then we have never duly felt the importance of this subject before, or seen the intimate connection that there is between our earnest prayers and the world's conversion, let us endeavour to do so henceforth ; and be it the matter of our continual supplication, even as it is of the intercession of Christ in heaven, that "all the ends of the earth may remember themselves, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the people worship before Him."

And with united, fervent, and effectual prayer, let there be also the diligent use of every other suitable means, and a deeper interest felt in every way in this great and glorious work. Let us never forget that we owe everything to the Gospel and the cause of missions ; for they were missionaries who first proclaimed God's peace and truth in England, and but for their labours we might still have been a nation of savages and idolaters. Let us freely send to others what we in God's great mercy have so freely received.

And let us not forget also, how much we are indebted to many heathen lands for our material comforts, for commerce, wealth, and other ad-

vantages. From India and China very many articles of our food and clothing are obtained, and there is perhaps not a family or individual in our land who does not use something which has been provided by those who have never heard of the only God and Saviour, and who are perishing for lack of knowledge. How many amongst us have been enriched by the produce of heathen hands! What untold wealth has come to us from India! And what are we doing for them in return, or what for our Master's sake, and for the precious immortal souls for which he died? Alas! my brethren, the scale on which our missions are conducted is altogether inadequate and unworthy—inadequate to the vast heathen world's necessities, and unworthy of our wealthy Protestant Church and nation. O let us view the work in its magnitude, and urgency, and grandeur, in the pressing wants of 700,000,000 of our fellow-men, and in the glory that redounds to God, and the happiness to man, by every immortal, blood-bought soul's conversion. Let us entreat God more earnestly to send forth a larger supply of faithful labourers, and let one and another ask himself the question, Why should not I respond to the heathen's cry, “Come over and help us”?

And let our gifts be liberal, and becoming both the world's great wants, and our great mercies; no

grudged offering, or insufficient return for all that God, my brethren, has done for us. And let our prayers ascend more frequently for God's blessing on the workmen and their work—that the labourers may be able to sow beside all waters, and that the seed sown may bear fruit a hundred-fold unto life eternal. "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come." All shall know Thee, from the least unto the greatest. "The Ethiopian's land shall stretch out her hands unto God." "The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto Thee; the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto Thee." "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee. For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He is the Governor among the nations."

O most blessed day and longed-for! when Jesus shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied; when He shall take unto Him His great power and reign, and all the families of the earth shall be blessed in Him. That day of glorious jubilee, my brethren, we trust is drawing near. Christ's messengers are going forth to every land to prepare His way; and when the promised out-pouring of the Spirit of grace and of supplication shall be vouchsafed, all the dry bones of Heathenism, and Mohammedanism, and every other false system will

spring up into vigorous spiritual life, an exceeding great army, and God be all in all.

Be it yours, my brethren, to hasten the promised millennium, by your sympathising efforts and fervent supplications—by each giving and helping as the Lord has prospered him—feeling that you never can do enough for Him who gave Himself for you, and esteeming it the highest privilege you can here enjoy to be permitted to assist in winning souls to Christ. And in conclusion, let us all remember that in another sense also, all flesh shall come unto God, namely, before Him in judgment; and with that solemn scene in view, let us each give diligence first to make our own calling and election sure; and then, to the utmost of our ability, to promote that of others. And when that hour arrives may we all be permitted to rejoice in the knowledge and salvation of a prayer-hearing God, who answered us in our day of trouble, and to lift up our heads in His presence, because our redemption draweth nigh!

SERMON VIII.

GOD'S NAME GREAT AMONG THE
GENTILES.

“For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles: and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.”—*Mal.* i. 11.

It is a melancholy account that we read in this chapter respecting the people and priests of Israel; and it is necessary briefly to refer to it, in order fully to appreciate this prophecy of days of blessed contrast contained in the words of the text.

The Jewish nation appears, in the prophet's time, to have degenerated into the lowest possible condition as regarded their religious character. They had polluted God's temple and altar, by presenting there the most vile and contemptible offerings; and they were so mercenary and selfish that they would not even shut the doors, or kindle the fire of His house for nought. Most amply had God provided for the comfort of the priests and

levites in the lands and cities and offerings set apart for their exclusive use and benefit, and most explicitly had they been commanded in the law of Moses never to present to the Lord anything that was in the least degree defiled or imperfect. While a son honoured his father, and a servant his master, God and His temple and service were neglected, and profaned, and contemned. "Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar," Jehovah complained, "and ye say, Wherein have we polluted Thee? In that ye say, The table of the Lord is contemptible. And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto thy Governor, will He be pleased with thee, or accept thy person, saith the God of hosts?" "Who is there even among you that would shut the doors for nought? neither do ye kindle a fire on mine altar for nought. I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts, neither will I accept an offering at your hand," They treated the service of God with a disrespect such as they would never have dared to show to any earthly master. They were universally covetous, grasping, oppressive, and profane. As we read in the third chapter, they were a nation of "sorcerers, and adulterers, and false-swearers." "They oppressed the hireling in his wages, the widow and the

fatherless, and turned aside the stranger from his right, and feared not the Lord of hosts." Yea, "they robbed Him of tithes and offerings, and said, it is vain to serve the Lord; and what profit is it that we have kept His ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts? They called the proud happy, and they that worked wickedness were set up, and they that tempted God were delivered." They were indeed fit for the refiner's fire, and were only not utterly consumed because their long-suffering God changed not. But overlooking the intermediate time of judgment for their aggravated and accumulated sins, in the words of the text God foretells the period when, not by Israel only, but by all nations, His name shall be exalted, and when, instead of their polluted offerings of the refuse and the diseased of their flocks, there shall everywhere be presented unto His name incense and a pure offering; "For my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." Israel for a time should, for their abuse of His goodness, give place to the heathen whom they despised, and God would provoke them to jealousy by them that were not His people. But Jew and Gentile are doubtless both included in the text, and these words direct our attention to the time of millennial glory, when all nations shall be blessed in the seed of Abraham,

and call Him blessed. Of that glorious time Jacob prophesied, when on his deathbed he declared, that "the sceptre should not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh came," and that "unto Him," the Prince of Peace, "should the gathering of the people be." Often does the sweet singer of Israel foretell the same glad period, and in one of his psalms in terms nearly similar to those of Malachi. In the 22nd he says, "All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before Thee:" in the 46th, "He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth:" in the 47th, "For God is King of all the earth, God reigneth over the heathen:" in the 65th, "O Thou that hearest prayer, unto Thee shall all flesh come:" in the 86th, "All nations whom Thou hast made shall come and worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name:" in the 113th, "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the Lord's name is to be praised." These are only a few specimens, my brethren, of prophecies from the Psalms respecting the future and universal conversion of the Gentiles. Others will readily occur to your memories, as the 2nd, the 45th, the

67th, used in our Afternoon Service; the 72nd and the 87th,—all, with many others—distinctly missionary Psalms, in which the inspired bard of Israel foresaw and celebrated by anticipation the blessed day of the world's regeneration, that time predicted by all preceding and following prophets, from Enoch to Malachi, and of which our Lord and the apostles, in the New Testament, also give us the clearest and the fullest assurance.

The time would fail, were I to attempt to produce quotations on this subject from each inspired writer, and they are so easily found by the use of a reference Bible, and also so interesting to all who long and pray and labour for the coming of Christ's kingdom, that I will request you to search for them yourselves at your leisure, and now more particularly direct your attention to the words of the text—"For from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts."

I. First, we see the UNIVERSALITY of Christ's kingdom here predicted. The wide interval between the rising and the setting sun denotes the utmost limits of the earth. As David so sublimely

says in the 19th Psalm, respecting the glories of creation, and the universal presence and influence of the natural sun. "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handywork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. 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. In them hath He set a tabernacle for the sun. 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,"—so shall it likewise be with regard to that brighter light which arose at Bethlehem. The glorious "Sun of Righteousness" has risen for all lands, "with healing in His wings;" and as Isaiah foretells, "the Gentiles shall come to this light, and kings to the brightness of His rising." Those Eastern Magi who followed the wondrous star westward, and presented to the infant Saviour their gold and frankincense and myrrh, were prophetic first-fruits of the harvest from among the heathen, as well as connected with the fulfilment of Balaam's prediction, that "a Star should come out of Judah, and a sceptre should rise out of Israel." From the east the light and triumphs of the Gospel proceeded, and they have spread or are spreading to the utmost bounds of

the west. Gradually but surely, like the increasing flood of morning light, did the risen, healing beams of the Sun of Righteousness penetrate and prevail over the darkness of the western world; first in eastern Asia, then in Europe, and afterwards in the new world of America. And still onward and universal will be their progress, until China, and Japan, and India, and Persia, and Arabia, and Egypt, and Africa have all received the lamp of life, and the whole circle of the world has been irradiated, and no dark places of the earth remain "filled with the habitations of cruelty." Thank God, for the wide circuit which His truth has already made. His word has now been translated into every important language of the world, and more than 70,000,000 copies have been disseminated by the British and Foreign Bible and other societies, in 169 different tongues. Upwards of a million and a quarter of converts have been gathered from among the heathen during the last sixty-five years, and almost every land is now open to the messengers of salvation. Long and dismal has been the night of sin, and ignorance, and idolatry; but there are hopeful tokens that the dawn has indeed commenced, and that the glorious day predicted by the prophet is at hand, when "from the rising of the sun even unto the going

down of the same, God's name shall be great among the Gentiles," and when "in every place incense shall be offered unto His name, and a pure offering."

Not in vain have the watchmen of Zion been looking, and longing, and labouring and praying. Most evident and complete success has crowned their efforts in many Gentile lands—in Burmah; where there are 100,000 converts; in India, where there are 154,179; in Africa, where there are 150,000; in the West Indies, where there are 250,000; in the South Seas, where whole islands and tribes have been evangelised; in Rupert's Island, and Greenland, and Labrador, where many thousands are now believers, who a few years ago were bowing down to idols. Even in China, so long hermetically sealed against Europeans, and where missionary work has comparatively but recently commenced, there are 3000 converts, and into the language of that vast empire of 400 millions, the entire Scriptures have been translated. Surely, my brethren, we should thank God for what has been accomplished, and be encouraged to pursue our evangelising labours with increasing zeal, devotion, and liberality. We have God's own oath and promise, that "unto Him every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess," that "the little one

shall become a thousand and the small one a strong nation," and that all "the ends of the earth shall fear Him."

II. Secondly, the words of the text foretell the *perfection* and the *purity* of Christ's kingdom. "And in every place, incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering." Romanists and others suppose that the offering of the mass is predicted in these words, or that it means the celebration of the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ in every place, when His Gospel shall have triumphed. It would be but a waste of time to endeavour, at any length, to prove that this cannot be the prophet's meaning, and I would only observe that St. Paul assures us that by one offering the Son of God has perfected for ever them that are sanctified, and that there is no more sacrifice for sin; and that he also gives us, I think, the correct interpretation of these words in the last chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, in which he says, "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name." The incense, and the pure offering, my brethren, are the free-will offering of the heart and soul and life, of our persons, and substance, and time, and influence, and of all we are

and have, to the Lord. "By the mercies of God," St. Paul beseeches believers to "present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is their reasonable service," and it is the sweet-smelling savour of this, which frankincense and myrrh represented and typified. God only values our offerings so far as they proceed from the heart, and are the expressions of our love and gratitude and devotion to Him and His service. Incense, as one of the most fragrant productions of the earth, fitly represents acceptable worship, and the offerings under the law were especially to be characterised by their purity and perfection, and, as already noticed, it was the absence of these qualities in the sacrifices at the temple, and the offering, instead, of the lame, and the blind, and the sick, that so justly provoked God's displeasure. God demands, and deserves from us, the best. He has redeemed us, that we should be unto Him a peculiar people, zealous of good works. He has not spared for us the costliest treasure in the universe, His own eternal Son, and with Him He has promised freely to give us all things—His Holy Spirit, the remission of our sins, and everlasting life; and shall we, dare we offer unto Him the refuse and the vile, serve Him with that which costs us nothing? Nay, my brethren,—

“ Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were an offering far too small ;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my life, my soul, my all.”

Let our offering be pure and perfect. Christianity is a religion of the heart and spirit. The true worshippers are those who worship the Father in spirit and in truth. He seeketh such to worship Him, and that worship is confined neither to Samaria nor Jerusalem. It is world-wide. It is the religion of Adam, of Enoch, and Melchizedeck, and Abraham, and Job, and David, and Cornelius, and Paul, and Augustine, and Luther, and Leighton, and Chalmers. Its essence is in the new and contrite heart, in the simple and entire reliance of the soul on God through Christ, in the unreserved devotion of our entire being, of body, soul, and spirit to Him and His cause. And as the consequence of this, or in connection with this, there is the sacrifice of praise continually. Christians indeed “rejoice evermore,” and “in every thing give thanks.” “This is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning them,” and it is the heaven-born instinct of their souls. They are “living sacrifices,” ever fragrant, blessing and praising God, for their joys and for their sorrows. In different parts of the earth such incense is continually ascending to heaven, and the pure offering of myriads of renewed

hearts is daily presented to the Lord of Hosts, from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same. We cannot indeed say—O that we could!—that in *every* place God's name is yet hallowed; but we know infallibly that ere long it shall be, and that there shall be "new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," and "that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain." "Yet have I set my king," Jehovah says, "upon my holy hill of Zion," and "in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering."

III. The text, thirdly, informs us that *God alone will be exalted* in the universal spiritual kingdom of His Son. Twice He says, "My name shall be great among the heathen." This implies, first, that God's name will everywhere be known; secondly, that it will be acknowledged; thirdly, that it will be feared, honoured, loved, and supremely exalted. When "the idols shall be utterly abolished," "the Lord alone," Isaiah says, "shall be exalted;" and He will be exalted, because He will be universally known as the only God and Saviour, and as the righteous Judge of all the earth. "Many shall run to and fro," Daniel foretells, and "knowledge shall be increased;" and Isaiah and Habakkuk predict, that "the earth

shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This will be effected, first, by the universal preaching of the Gospel, and by the world-wide dissemination of the Scriptures, translated into every language; secondly, by the exhibition of God's righteous judgments, which will compel the attention of mankind, and result in their acknowledgment of Jehovah's universal and supreme authority; and thirdly, by the out-pouring of His Spirit on all flesh. "The Gospel must first be published among all nations," our Lord declared; God says, "All shall know Me," "from the least to the greatest;" and "I will set my glory among the Gentiles, and all the heathen shall see My judgment that I have executed," referring to the destruction of Gog and Magog on the mountains of Israel. "And it shall come to pass, in the last days, that I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh." All shall first know God, and then they shall all acknowledge Him, worship Him, love and serve Him only, and for ever. "His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him. All nations shall call Him blessed. And blessed be His glorious name for ever." I enter not, my brethren, into the subject of times and seasons. I only glance at the glorious consummation, when God's name, that is, God Himself, shall be great among the

heathen ; and would remind you, that while these glorious results will only be effected through the influence of His Almighty grace, God Himself has appointed the employment of human agency, and has committed unto us weak and sinful men the work of teaching every man his neighbour, and every man his brother to know the Lord ; and has commanded us to preach His Gospel to every creature. Many societies are engaged in this divinely-appointed work, and I invite you, dear friends, to assist the Church Missionary Society in its world-wide efforts to make known the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to hasten that blessed time foretold in the text. This honoured Society is doing a great work among the heathen, and at 148 stations is employing 280 Missionaries, and 2,155 Catechists and Schoolmasters ; who by preaching and translating the Scriptures and other books, and teaching in thirty different languages, are endeavouring to win souls to Christ. It is instructing about 36,000 heathen children in the principles of the Gospel, and has more than 120,000 Converts, and 22,000 Communicants in its various missions, as seals to its faithful labours. But it needs a hundred-fold larger means to meet the necessities of the perishing heathen world. There is only one Protestant Missionary in India for every 352,000 of its inhabitants ; and in China there is only one for every

four millions! More than two-thirds of our race, or seven hundred millions of immortal souls, are still without the knowledge of God, and are "giving His glory to another, and His praise to graven images." Instead of incense and a pure offering being presented to His name, the heathen world is every where defiled with unutterable iniquity, abomination, cruelty, and bloodshed.

Who then, my brethren, will help and embark in this noble enterprise of saving souls from death? We ask your aid in money, in sympathy, prayer, and vigorous active efforts, as workers, subscribers, collectors; and, if possible, as Missionaries in this blessed cause. It is the cause for which your Lord and Saviour died, and for which He ever lives to make intercession. It is the cause of humanity, of blessing, and good-will, and peace, and eternal life to dying, immortal, sinful men. Its success is promised by Him who cannot lie. Its progress is evident, marvellous, and encouraging. Its field is the world; its means, the preaching of the everlasting Gospel; its end, the conversion of precious souls, and the glory of the Eternal Trinity.

Again, I invite you to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and to hasten by your gifts, and prayers, and service, the coming of God's kingdom, when His name shall be great among the heathen; and when in every place of a regenera

world, "from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, incense shall be offered unto His name, and a pure offering." O may we all accept His gracious invitation to Israel recorded in the third chapter of this prophet: "Bring ye all the tithes unto the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts; if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it."

It is this Pentecostal blessing that we need, my brethren, for ourselves, and for His work at home and abroad, among Jews and Gentiles. He has infallibly promised it, and it is perhaps only our want of faith and zeal and liberality and devotedness that restrains it. We are not straitened in Him, but in ourselves. We want more Christian simplicity, honesty, fidelity, and consistency. We need to have our hearts enlarged, our faith increased, our hope and love intensified, brightened and expanded. "Lord, revive Thy work," should be our daily and united prayer: and then, my brethren, should we see our labours blessed, and God's kingdom come; and while rejoicing in the spreading millennial glory, we should increasingly be aiding its mighty progress. Willing hearts would every where cast into the church's treasury

their costliest gifts, God would speak the word, and great would be the company of the preachers, and the glorious anthem would soon be heard resounding through earth and heaven, "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth."

SERMON IX.

THE WISDOM OF WINNING SOULS.

“He that winneth souls is wise.”—*Prov.* xi. 30.

THESE are the weighty words, my brethren, of him who excelled all other men in wisdom. “God gave to Solomon,” we are told, “wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.” “For he was wiser than all men; and his fame was in all nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar-tree that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all people to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.” We may judge of Solomon’s vast attainments by the mere remains

and specimens of his wisdom that we possess. Not one-third of his proverbs have been preserved and recorded in the Bible; and of his divine songs, but two or three exist in the Song of Solomon, and in probably one or two of the Psalms. He was doubtless naturally remarkable for wisdom, as we may infer from the character of his prayer when he ascended the throne of Israel. He asked not for wealth, or honour, or the life of his enemies—the things which men in general, especially a young monarch, would be likely to desire—but for understanding to be given him, that he might wisely govern the mighty nation which God had entrusted to him. And his prayer was granted; God added to his natural gifts, and increased and blessed his understanding, and gave to him, besides, the riches and the glory which he did not seek; and has caused his name to descend to earth's latest posterity, embalmed and fragrant and immortal, in the wise and weighty and pleasant proverbs that he uttered, and the song of songs which he wrote.

Not among the least important of the words he spoke, are those recorded in the text—"He that winneth souls is wise." May a measure of his wisdom be given to us, my brethren, while we endeavour to ascertain and enforce the important truths they contain.

Let us first consider, the object of the winner;

secondly, what is meant by winning ; and lastly, the wisdom of those who win.

I. "He that winneth souls is wise." While Solomon spake of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop, and was familiar with every department of natural history, we have but little *recorded* of his observations on these subjects, but much of his study of the human heart, and of the folly and vanity of mankind. The Bible is not a book of science, of geology, or astronomy, or history, or philosophy. God knew that men could discover such subjects for themselves, and that much of the happiness of life consists in such investigations. He has therefore left them all these ample fields of knowledge free for the exercise of their various talents and tastes ; and He has caused to be recorded in the Scriptures other subjects, to which men are not so naturally inclined—yea, to which they are by nature averse and alien—subjects which the study of His works cannot teach, relating to Himself, man's origin, fall, redemption, eternity, holiness, judgment, heaven and hell. His Word is not opposed to the different scientific pursuits of men ; and so far from discouraging them, exhorts us to the deep and universal contemplation of His works ; whether the majestic glories of the heavens,

or the lesser manifestations of His character and attributes in our lower world.

Men half-informed, and with fallen, sceptical minds, often fancy and assert that there are discrepancies between the two—between the word and the works of God—but as time rolls on, and fresh discoveries are made, and their little minds take in more of the wonders of Him who is infinite, they find that the mistakes and the errors and the contradictions are in themselves, and in their narrow, one-sided, crude, and imperfect theories; and in the end they will all have to acknowledge, “Thy word is truth;” “For ever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven;” “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” and “Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

But it is of the soul that Solomon speaks. “He that winneth souls,” he says, “is wise.” It is with the soul that the Bible chiefly has to do. It begins by telling us of the soul’s origin. It is not of the earth, earthly, like the body, and the structure of every other creature below. They were all formed out of the elements of matter, and man’s upright, noble, and superior form—that body which he often almost adores for its beauty and symmetry and strength, had its origin in the dust on which he treads, and to which it shall so soon return. But the soul’s source of being is God Himself. Its

nature is like His own, spiritual, immaterial, deathless, and eternal. It is God's own breath. He breathed into the earth-formed animal body, and man became a living soul. It is in its nature heavenly and divine, and but for sin probably might have equalled that of angels. Man is allied to both worlds; his body unites him to earth, his soul associates him with heaven. It is the soul that constitutes the man—that gives man his dignity and superiority over all the rest of earth's inhabitants. Many other creatures excel him in strength and size, and in the acuteness and power of some of the senses, of vision and scent and hearing for instance, so remarkably possessed by many of the inferior creation; but he alone is endowed with a reflecting, conscious soul, with a mind that can master the fiercest of them and the mightiest; that can guide and use all nature for his necessities and profit and pleasure. God has committed all things below into his hand, and he is rapidly becoming acquainted with Creation's most secret laws, and has learnt from the electricity of the heavens how to communicate his thoughts with lightning's speed to the ends of the earth. The soul can explore all nature, the depths of ocean, and the heights of heaven. It can measure the orbits of the most distant planets almost as easily as a line of railway, and can correct an error

of millions of miles* by its powers of calculation and the accuracy and delicacy of the instruments which it constructs and uses. It can unravel the most intricate mazes of the past, discover and dis-entomb cities three thousand years old, decypher and photograph the language spoken by Ninus at Nineveh, and Sesostris in Egypt, and Israel at Mount Sinai. Its powers and its energies are unconquerable; and prompt him and enable him to traverse every land and climate, and to bring to light the long-concealed mysteries of ages — the sources of the Nile, and the interior of China.

But of what avail are all these labours and triumphs of the mind, these evidences that the soul is divine and spiritual and immortal?

In the midst of his most interesting and important works and investigations man sickens and sinks, and dies; and all he does, though it makes him wiser and greater, yet fails to make him holier and better. The soul is, alas! fallen and sinful, as well as capacious, immaterial, and immortal. It has lost its affinity with God its Creator, and no longer resembles the image of righteousness and true holiness in which He formed it. It yielded to temptation and fell, and departed from its divine and holy source; and its natural dignity only renders

* As in the recently corrected distance of the sun, which is found to be only 91,718,000 miles from us instead of 95,000,000.

its present condition of alienation and depravity and ruin the more deplorable. Its glory is not its greatness, but its goodness, and that has by sin departed. It is no longer one with God, but separated from Him; no longer pure, but polluted; no longer happy and free and safe, but wretched, enslaved, and lost. It is full of contradictions and extremes, a wreck and a ruin of that which was once perfect and beautiful. It still has aspirations that reach to heaven, longings which nothing but the Infinite can satisfy, but is overpowered and subjugated by the strength of sin, dragged downward more quickly than it ascends, by the evil and the viciousness inherent in it since the fall. Man everywhere has sinned. "We all like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way." "There is none righteous, no not one." And because all have sinned, death has passed upon all. We all have violated God's righteous law, and the curse has in consequence been inflicted on all. Hence universal sorrow, anarchy, idolatry, abounding, innumerable, ineradicable evils. Man is not only fallen, but of himself hopelessly, irrecoverably fallen. He has never raised and delivered himself, never been able to cure the source of all his sorrows,—the soul, whose departure from God brought disease and death upon the body, and all our mortal worldly woes.

II. But secondly, God has in His infinite mercy done that which man could not do ; He has devised means whereby His banished may return. “ He so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” “ He sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.” Thank God, lost, ignorant, fallen, wretched souls may be won, have been won, and shall be, to His eternal praise. His Gospel reveals the means of recovery and salvation, and every believer in it is charged with the duty of endeavouring to win them. This is the great object of the Christian ministry, and of all our Missionary Societies, and it is also that which every individual believer should likewise seek. To save souls, to win them to Christ and heaven, is a privilege and duty confined to none exclusively. It is yours, my brethren, as well as ours ; it is every parent’s, with regard to their children ; every master’s and mistress’s, in relation to their servants ; every teacher’s, towards the young intrusted to their care and training ; every Scripture reader’s, with respect to those to whom they minister. We are all our brother’s keeper, though the extent of our duties may differ, and the way and mode in which they are to be performed. To *win* souls is the highest and most important

object of life, and all else we do should be in subservience to this. Souls are everywhere perishing around us, at home and abroad, in the town and in the country, in the palace and in the hovel, clothed in purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day, or barely covered and protected by their flimsy, filthy rags. There is a call and there is work for all, among the ignorant and the debased, the drunkard and the fallen, the careful and the careless, the worldly and the wise, the buyer and the seller, the covetous, the gay, the doubting, the deceiver, and the deceived. There is error to be withstood, and vice to be confronted, and sorrow to be alleviated. Souls are in danger in every conceivable position and circumstance of man's chameleon life; helpers, teachers, preachers, everywhere are needed at home and abroad, and He that winneth souls is wise. The marginal reading, that is, the original meaning of the word, win, is take or catch—at once suggestive of the danger of the object and of the skill and diligence with which we should seek to save it. To gain or win souls should be our great aim, and to accomplish this, like St. Paul, we should employ every means in our power—become all things to all men—that by all means we may save some. Those ignorant we should endeavour to teach; the doubting we should confirm; the careless should be warned; the gain-

sayer withstood and convinced. Those involved in error should be skilfully and patiently untaught; the backsliding reclaimed; the self-righteous and stout-hearted shown their hollowness, wilfulness, and worthlessness. Preaching Christ, and warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, is the apostle's mode of winning souls, and his end, that he might present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Men are not to be scolded into repentance, or driven as beasts of burden, or acted on as mere machines. They are to be dealt with as reasonable and responsible beings. The truth with all its strong and divine claims is to be brought before them, and they are rather to be won than warned into godliness. Although knowing the terrors of the Lord, yet St. Paul says, we *persuade* men; and the *goodness* of God, he says, should *lead* us to repentance. God draws by the cords of love, and by the bands of a man, and His ministers and servants in every capacity should do the same. Love often melts and conquers, while terror and severity only repel and harden. He that *winneth* souls therefore is wise.

III. This is, thirdly, earth's highest wisdom, and the fittest subject for the exercise of man's loftiest talents. In no other sphere is there such urgent necessity, such opportunities of usefulness, or

such incalculably glorious results. He who could form the justest estimate of the value of the whole world and of a single human soul, represents the former as utterly worthless in the comparison. In God's word folly is the synonyme for sin, and wisdom the equivalent for holiness. To save ourselves is the first part of wisdom; and others, those near and those far off, the next. It is to seek the highest end, eternal salvation and God's glory, by the employment of the best means, which is the true definition and character of wisdom.

To win souls is to defeat Satan of his prey, to rescue them from everlasting misery and despair, to glorify God, and to increase the eternal joys of heaven. It is to be the instruments of securing the highest bliss and glory to those won, and of promoting thereby our own and that of countless angels, who rejoice over every sinner that repenteth. O then, my brethren, be this wisdom yours and mine; let us use with increasing diligence every talent and opportunity, all time and influence, wealth and energy for this purpose, to win souls, to save those for whom Christ died; our brethren at home, and our perishing fellow-men in heathen and Mohammedan lands. They have all like ourselves immortal and God-breathed souls; though they have, alas, forgotten their lofty origin, and have debased themselves lower than even the beasts that perish. They know not

God, nor Christ, nor truth, nor holiness, nor heaven. They need to be won, my brethren, from the paths of sin and death; and the Church Missionary Society invites you to be fellow-workers with it in the glorious work of making known the only means which can win them,—the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. Our divine Master has commanded us to proclaim it to every creature. He has appointed us all to be fishers of men, to seek and to find those pearls of inestimable value, immortal souls, that they may shine in His kingdom with ever-increasing lustre, and that in their glory He may be glorified. O let us endeavour to win them, my brethren, in every land. Let us send abroad faithful and skilful labourers, and let us sustain them in their arduous work by our deepest sympathies, earnest supplications, and liberal offerings; and then, when summoned hence, we shall each be able to answer, “Here am I, Lord, and the souls which Thou hast given me,” and receive the reward of those who are “wise,” and who “turn many to righteousness,” even to “shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever.”

SERMON X.

“THE SONS OF THE STRANGER.”

“Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of My covenant; even them will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar; for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.”—*Isa.* lvi. 6, 7.

As the sons of the stranger, and on the present occasion, when the claims of the distant heathen are to be commended to your sympathy and support, these words of the evangelical prophet ought to be as the sound of heaven’s richest melody in our ears, and find a grateful and adoring response in every heart. To us, my brethren, are the words of this salvation sent, and they say unto us with the emphasis of a personal interest—“He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”

We will consider from them, first, the call of the Gentiles; secondly, the blessings and privileges promised to them; and, thirdly, the character of those to whom these promises belong.

I. The prophet's mind was full of the coming great salvation, and in chapter after chapter in this portion of his writings, he foretells and describes the calling and blessedness and glory of the far-off Gentiles. They are the sons of the stranger, of those who were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." Israel was God's first-born. As a nation they had been brought nigh to the High and Holy One who inhabiteth Eternity; and for a time all other nations were left to themselves, to the light of nature and of conscience, or rather to the darkness and the degradation of nature, to the righteous consequences of transgression, and to shew how utterly wretched and hopeless is man's condition without the knowledge and favour of God, and that of himself he never can acquire the one or regain the other.

The world by wisdom knew not God. God foresaw this, and therefore having given men some thousands of years to make the experiment without success, to humble them and to prove them, and to

know what was in their heart, He, in the fulness of time, with His own arm brought salvation, and inspired His servants the prophets to foretell the coming deliverance. Obscure glimmerings of this blessed truth had from the first appeared, and a few first-fruits from among the Gentiles had been gathered into the heavenly garner, in a holy Melchizedek, Jethro, Job and others, of neighbouring stranger lands. Jacob had foretold that unto Shiloh should the gathering of the people be; David, that all the ends of the world should remember themselves, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations worship before Him; and Isaiah, in a previous chapter, the eleventh, that there should be a root of Jesse, which should stand for an ensign of the people, that to it should the Gentiles seek, and his rest should be glorious. In innumerable other passages he and other prophets predict the same great salvation. This, as the time of Christ's appearance drew near, became increasingly the burden of their prophecies; and the aged Simeon recognised the fulfilment of them all, when, taking the infant Saviour in his arms, he blessed God, and said, “Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word: for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation, which Thou hast prepared, before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the

glory of Thy people Israel." "Other sheep I have," Jesus Himself said, "which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd." Yea, so important a place does this hold in the prophetic Scriptures, and so far, in consequence of their relative numbers, does the conversion of the Gentiles exceed in glory that of Israel, that in the view of both, Jehovah declares in the 49th chapter of this prophet, "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be My servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Thus clearly and thus fully are the sons of the stranger foretold as joining themselves to the Lord and taking hold of His covenant. That covenant is "the sure mercies of David," "ordered in all things, and everlasting," which was all his salvation and all his desire; and is the same that God had before made with Abraham, when He had promised that in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed. He was the father of both the believing circumcision and the uncircumcision. He was justified by the same faith which now saves us. He saw Christ's day, and was glad. And so likewise did Enoch, and Abel, and others. They all died in the faith of the

world's, and not only of Israel's, Saviour; of the seed of the woman preached to our fallen first parents in paradise; of Him who was from everlasting, the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, according to the eternal covenant and purpose of God, partially revealed to us in the second Psalm, in which the Father says to the Son, “Ask of Me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.”

II. Let us now, secondly, observe the portion which God promises to give to these sons of the stranger. “Even them,” He says, “will I bring to My holy mountain, and make them joyful in My house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon Mine altar: for Mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.” The blessings promised in the fifth verse may doubtless also be added to these—“I will give them in Mine house and within My walls a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters: I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.” God promises, first, that He will bring them to His holy mountain. This means that they shall be introduced to the privileges and honours and blessings of His kingdom. The holy mountain is the Christian Church and

dispensation, God's holy hill of Zion on which He has set His King Messiah, Mount Zion, to which believers, St. Paul says, have already come, according to the prophecy in the second chapter of Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations," not only Israel, but "all nations shall flow unto it." I would not say that this is the full and only meaning of the words, but it is the sense in which they are at present being fulfilled in the calling and conversion of the Gentiles; and St. Paul's application of the term Mount Zion to the Christian Church, justifies this interpretation of the prophet's words. He also in his first Epistle to Timothy calls the Christian Church the house of God, and in His Epistle to the Ephesians says sublimely, referring to the conversion of the Gentiles,—“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone: in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. In whom ye are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” I believe in the literal Israel's literal

future glory and preeminence, and that in a higher sense still “the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains,” “when the Lord of hosts shall reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His ancients gloriously,” when there shall be “new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,” when “they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God’s holy mountain,” and when “the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea ;” but in the mean time most truly and most blessedly are the words of the prophet being realized in the conversion of the Gentiles, yea, of all, Jews or Gentiles, who are brought by His grace to His holy mountain, and made joyful in His house of prayer. There is a fulness of blessing in the Gospel of Christ of which all may be partakers, and receive grace for grace. There is the assurance of free and full forgiveness, of reconciliation and peace, of guidance, renewal, protection, consolation, and safety. The grace that brings them assures them that it will keep them. They are first found of God, and do not, and of themselves, cannot seek or find Him. He brings them, they do not come of themselves, to His holy mountain—“Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.” “No man can come unto Me, except the Father, which hath sent Me, draw him.” God

brings them by His providence and by His Spirit. He calls men nationally and individually, and is daily adding to His Church wherever His Gospel is preached such as shall be saved. In the mountain of His Church He has made unto all nations a feast of fat things, and He invites all freely to partake of them; and though many refuse, He again sends forth His servants, and by the preaching of His word and the effectual power of His Spirit, He compels multitudes to come in, that His house may be filled,—not forced against their will, but induced and influenced by the sweet constraint of grace, and drawn by the silken golden cords of love. And the King Himself is there amongst them, and every one is clothed in the wedding-garment, and partakes of that which is meat indeed and drink indeed, of fat things full of marrow, and of wines on the less well refined. "Peace, peace," says the loving invitation, "to him that is far off, and to him that is near, and I will heal him." "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto Me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed;" "for thy Maker is thine husband." "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little

wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment ; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.” “ O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires ; and I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord ; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” “ No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper ; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment Thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord ; and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord.” Such are a few of the predicted blessings of those whom God brings to His holy mountain.

In similar terms we find the Apostles writing, and the Saviour Himself speaking in the New Testament. “ Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,” says St. Paul, “ through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “ In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” “ We joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “ There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.” “ Who is he that condemneth ?” “ Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect ?” “ It is Christ that died.” “ It is God

who justifieth ;" and "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "My peace give I unto you ; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." "Your joy no man taketh from you." "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given me be with me where I am ; that they may behold my glory." "Because I live, ye shall live also." "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." All these, and many other blessings, constitute the provisions of our Father's house : there is enough and to spare, the feast is always spread, and truly blessed are those who are called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, and who are brought to God's holy mountain. He makes them joyful in His house of prayer, and accepts all their sacrifices and services of love and gratitude, all the freewill offerings of their renewed and contrite hearts, and their faithful labours in His service. His house was then, as now, pre-eminently the house of prayer, and it was there especially that He mani-

fested His glory and His goodness. “We wait for thy loving-kindness,” David says, “in the midst of thy temple.” “One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty, or delight, of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.” God had promised special blessings in the place where His honour dwelt to all who truly sought Him. He loved the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. He had chosen Zion as the place of His glorious rest, and desired it for His habitation ; and He never said to the seed of Jacob there, Seek ye my face in vain. Often had He made His people joyful in His house of prayer, and accepted their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices. He had said by His servant David, “I will abundantly bless her provision : I will satisfy her poor with bread. I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy.” After Solomon’s devout dedication of God’s house, we read that the glory of the Lord filled the house. “And the priests could not enter into the house of the Lord, because the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord. And all the people bowed their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshipped and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.” Then, as in Ezra’s time, the joy of the

Lord was their strength. He made them joyful in His house of prayer, and filled their souls with His spiritual presence, the visible display of which was so overpowering. That outward glory is no longer manifested, and yet the glory of the latter temple is greater than the glory of the former. God's spiritual presence is far more abundantly vouchsafed. "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world;" and "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." The whole Church is God's spiritual temple, and every individual believer may be as the holy of holies, a habitation of God through the Spirit, and may with boldness enter into the holiest of all, into the very presence of the God of glory, and by faith sprinkle and plead the atoning blood before the mercy seat, assured that, like the high priest of old, he shall not depart without a blessing. We have an altar, a sacrifice, and a priest; the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man, that is, the body of the Son of God, Himself in His sinless manhood and Infinite Deity, both the offering and the offerer. In Him the Father is well pleased, and in Him the beloved, He accepts all who truly repent, and unfeignedly believe His holy gospel. "By Him therefore," the Apostle says, "let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips,

giving thanks to His name.” All our offerings, our prayers and praises, are acceptable unto Him by Jesus Christ. They are a sweet savour unto God through the fragrance of His prevailing intercession, and the one offering by which He has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. The words of the prophet remind us, my brethren, of what is the chief character of God’s house, and it is only as we rightly regard it and use it, as God has Himself ordained, that we are warranted to expect a blessing in attending it. “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.” It is not a place where we should come to hear man speak, to spend an idle hour, from the mere force of custom, or for any selfish worldly purpose. It is the house of God, the house of prayer. We should come here to know His will, to confess our sins, to implore His mercy, to seek His grace and favour, to praise and magnify His glorious name. It is the place where His honour dwelleth, where He waits to be gracious, to make His people joyful, and to show them His salvation. But they must come with their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices, with humble, penitent, contrite, and obedient hearts, and pleading the alone merits of the Lord their righteousness. They must join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants, keeping

the Sabbath from polluting it, and taking hold of His covenant.

III. These words, my brethren, shew us, in the last place, the character of God's accepted worshippers. First, they are those who join themselves to the Lord. Though He draws them and brings them to His holy mountain, yet it is as rational and responsible beings; and they may resist and quench His Spirit, and like Israel perish through unbelief. He requires and deserves our willing homage, the free, loving, spontaneous offerings of the heart, and will not accept the half-hearted, the deceitful, and the hypocrite, the lame, and the blind, and the halt, and the withered, those who only render Him a reluctant service on the Sabbath, and give the rest of the week to sin, who give to Him what they do not care to keep for themselves, who ask not, how much? but how little, can I spare for His cause who gives me all? who spend the best of their days and energies in pleasure and selfishness, and the world, and hope that repentance in old age or on their death-bed will atone for all the past, and make all safe for the future. No, my brethren, this is not joining themselves to the Lord, but to Baal, and Baal's wages will be the portion of such. You must join yourselves to the Lord; choose whom you will serve;

Like Joshua say, As for us we will serve the Lord; we will love His name, and keep His Sabbath from polluting it, and take hold of His covenant. His house to us shall be the house of prayer. This one thing, like the Psalmist, we will desire; and we will ask the great Lord of the temple to purify our hearts from all worldly and sinful desires and thoughts, and to enable us so to wait upon Him as to renew our strength.

Sons of the stranger and foreigner! Men and brethren! once far off, but now brought nigh by the blood of Christ! to every one of you are the gracious words of the prophet addressed, and if you will now join yourselves to the Lord, and take hold of His covenant, He will bring you to His holy mountain, and make you joyful in His house of prayer; your burnt-offerings and your sacrifices shall be accepted upon His altar: and He will give unto you a name and a place better than of sons and of daughters, an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. O, incline your ear and come unto Him; hear, and your soul shall live; and He will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. And think, dear brethren, while thus richly blessed yourselves, think of the millions of your fellow men, who are still strangers to this covenant of promise. O regard with pitying eye, and praying

heart, and liberal hand, the seven or eight hundred millions who are still bowing down to idols, and aid the Church Missionary Society to send abroad preachers of the everlasting gospel. Two-thirds of mankind know not their God and Saviour. They are utter strangers to the blessings and privileges which you possess. They have no light to guide them, no hope to comfort them, no knowledge of a present, loving, pardoning God, and no assurance of a bright, holy, and joyful eternity after all this sinful life's sorrows.

O, my brethren, pray for them, feel for them, assist them, with a largeness of heart commensurate with your own inestimable mercies, and with their deep, manifold necessities! And may it please Him who gave Himself a ransom for all, speedily to bring all the sons of the stranger to His holy mountain, and to fill the whole earth with His glory. Amen.

SERMON XI.

—
JESUS LIFTED UP.
—

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”—*John* xii. 32.

WE are left in no doubt as to our Lord's meaning in these words, as the evangelist tells us in the verse that follows, “This He said, signifying what death He should die.” The hour was now come when the Son of man should be glorified. The days of His ministry on earth were nearly over, and there only remained the last great event to be consummated, His death on the Cross as the ransom and life of the world. We are told in the verses previous that certain Greeks had come up to worship at the feast, and that they desired to see Jesus. This led Him to speak of His approaching glory, when all nations should be blessed in Him; and also of the hour of darkness and of dread which must precede His exaltation and the world's deliverance. His human nature shrank from the unparalleled sufferings which were before Him, and

prompted the prayer, "Father, save me from this hour." It was but a passing cloud, however, the natural fear which, as man, He felt; and submission to His Father's will, and the remembrance that for this cause, for the very purpose of suffering the death of the Cross, He had come unto this hour, enabled Him to triumph over nature's weakness. He had foreseen it all from the beginning, from eternity; and though the burden was sufficient to have sunk a whole world of transgressors into perdition, He was willing freely to bear it in their stead, and to make His soul an offering for sin. Thus it behoved Him to suffer, and then to enter into His glory. Satan, the prince of this world could not otherwise be cast out. Man could not by any other means be redeemed. God's glory required that He, His own Eternal Son, should thus take the sinner's place, and by death remove the curse of transgression, and restore fallen man and his polluted earth to a greater than their pristine glory. From the beginning God had foretold that His Son should thus suffer, from the first prophecy of redemption given in Paradise, that the seed of the serpent should bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, while it, Christ, should bruise satan's head. The sacrifice of Abel's firstlings typified the offering of the Lamb of God. Isaac bound, and in intention offered on the site of the Holy Mount,

represented Jesus, the only begotten of the Father, meekly yielding up His life, as the Lamb which He had provided before the foundation of the world. All the sacrifices under the law were emblematical of the Son of God, whose blood alone can cleanse from sin. David, in the 22nd and other Psalms, clearly foretold a suffering and rejected Messiah, who would be forsaken by His Father, as well as abandoned and crucified by men. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death," he says; "They pierced my hands and my feet. They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." "My, God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He even mentions the vinegar and the gall which would be given to Jesus in His thirst, while Isaiah and others foretell similar particulars of our Lord's sufferings and death, as His betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, the purchase of the potter's field, the end of the wretched Judas, the cowardly flight of the disciples, the mode of death, crucifixion, which was Roman, not Jewish. All these and many more particulars had been written of the Son of man; and to fulfil them, He had come unto this hour. There could be no harvest of saved souls He intimates in the 24th verse, unless He, the corn of wheat, fell into the ground and died; and had He not been *lifted* up from the earth as a sacrifice and curse, the human

race would long ago have been *driven* from it, for ever branded with the mark of God's righteous wrath, and suffering the just vengeance of transgression. The glory of the Son of man all turned on His facing and conquering this hour of darkness. The hosts of satan were gathering thickly round Him. It was the hour of His enemies, and the power of darkness; yea, also, and more trying far, the hour of His Father's indignation against the sins of men, all concentrated on their substitute, His only begotten and beloved Son. O, how could all this be borne except by love Omnipotent? Jesus as man felt it, and may we not say, also as God—as the everlasting Son of the everlasting Father? The deity and humanity of Jesus were united; and who can say how far the Son of God did not suffer, as well as the Son of man? He was God manifest in the flesh; and He bare the sins and the punishment of the whole world. How could any mere creature sustain a burden so infinite? No, my brethren, it was necessary that *He* should be lifted up, He, the King of Glory, the only begotten of the Father, God of God, Jehovah, the I AM, the First and the Last, the Almighty. He, the Word, was in the beginning with God, and was God. By Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible. And not only were they *created* by

Him ; but they are *sustained* also by His power. “ *By Him all things consist.*” And they are all *for* Him, likewise ; He is their end, as well as their author and preserver. The Man of Sorrows is God blessed for evermore. The despised and rejected of men is the object of adoration to all the hosts of heaven, and of fear to all the lost spirits in hell. He who was crucified in weakness is the source of all existence and power. Pilate’s prisoner is his judge. He could have had no power at all against Him, except it were given him from above. All the hosts of heaven were at the service of the Son of man. He could have called for twelve legions of angels and have annihilated His enemies. All creation in the beginning experienced His power, when out of nothing He summoned every thing into existence. Every hour since He completed the works of His hands, all things have continued only by His sustaining providence ; and, once more, when He shall come to judge the quick and dead, shall all creation tremble at His presence ; and from His face the heavens and the earth shall flee away. It is well for us, my brethren, to remember the dignity of Him who suffered the death of the Cross, and to recollect that all the virtue of His sacrifice results from the union of His Godhead with His manhood. It was as God-man that His blood could atone for the guilt of all transgressors. He

is the Lord our righteousness. As a mere man He could not have either saved Himself or redeemed His brother. Nor was He God incarnate only as a teacher, as the light of the world, or as a sinless and perfect example, a witness and martyr, as many represent Him. He came not merely to dignify and sanctify human nature, or to suffer only in order that He might sympathize with us, and comfort us in our many and manifold trials, and temptations, and sorrows. All this is true, and precious, and scriptural; but it not the whole truth, or all that we require as sinners in the sight of God. The death of our Lord is most distinctly and repeatedly represented in both the Old Testament and the New, as an atonement, a ransom, a substitution, and sacrifice, by virtue and for the sake of which our sins are forgiven; God reconciled; satan, death and hell vanquished; and man redeemed, delivered, restored, justified, exalted to heaven, and for ever glorified. "He gave Himself for us," St. Paul says, "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." "He bare our sins in His own body on the tree," St. Peter testifies; and He "hath washed us from our sins in His own blood," is the testimony of St. John. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," was foretold of Him by Isaiah. "Surely, He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. He

was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed When thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin." Jesus Himself says, that He would lay down His life for the sheep, and that He would shed His blood for the remission of sins. Yes, my brethren, the glory of the Cross consists in the atonement which was there made for the sins of men, by which God's righteous laws were honoured, sin's penalty borne, love and justice, righteousness and peace, reconciled, united, manifested, perfected. Jesus meant all this, and much more, when He spoke of being lifted up from the earth. "This He said, signifying what death He should die." As a Jew it was not likely that He would be crucified, and, humanly speaking, much more probable that, like Stephen, He would be stoned, or, like James, beheaded. But God's law had declared, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree," with reference to the curse which in the fulness of time, fifteen hundred years after these words were written, the Messiah in His own Divine Person should bear, and bear away, on Calvary. The uplifted brazen serpent also had typified this mode of death. Prophet after prophet had foretold the same momentous fact. "They pierced my hands and my feet." "They shall look upon Him

whom they have pierced." Thus it behoved Christ to die the accursed death of the Cross ; the most vile, and the most agonizing, His sacred Person suspended between heaven and earth, as if abandoned and accursed by both. By this God manifested in its deepest intensity the evil of sin, and His holy abhorrence and hatred of it, even when by that very offering He was providing for its forgiveness and destruction ; and His love, and mercy, and grace, and pity, were making channels of salvation through every flowing vein of the tortured body of His beloved Son. Lifted up for us was the only begotten of the Father, and deeply it concerns us, like the pious women who stood gazing at a distance, to behold this wondrous sight, and to mourn for the sins which rendered the death of the Son of God necessary.

Especially does it concern us all to realize what the Divine sufferer said, that when He was lifted up from the earth, He would draw all men unto Him. Jesus knew that there would be virtue in His death ; that it would be the world's medicine, healing, and life, sin's overthrow, satan's confusion and destruction, God's glory, man's salvation, and the earth's renewal. The infinite interests of eternity were suspended on the work He had to accomplish on the Cross. It was the condition of man's deliverance, the means of sin's atonement, the regaining of Paradise, and the

opening of the kingdom of heaven to all believers. From it influences and effects were to proceed precious as immortality, immeasurable as infinitude, pure and spiritual as God Himself, endless as eternity. Those crimson streams would wash the vilest humbled sinner whiter than snow. That reputedly and imputedly guilty, and condemned, and dying One would justify many; and even some of His murderers. Those pierced hands and feet and side would bless and embrace earth's most cruel and polluted inhabitants. That head crowned with thorns was earning crowns of unfading glory for all believers. He, the smitten, scourged, despised One was bearing our sorrows; and purchasing places of dignity and happiness for His people in the many mansions of His Father's house. Was He compelled to bear His Cross? Was He mocked, spitted on, calumniated, reviled? Did they cast lots for His vesture, and divide His garments among them? Had He during His life no place on which to lay His head, and at His death was every indignity and suffering inflicted on Him which human and hellish malice and ingenuity could invent? Was all this fulfilled, my brethren, in the lifting up of the Son of man? Then, in all this the Scriptures were fulfilled, and by all this salvation was procured.

Jesus draws men by His Cross. It is the

great magnet of the universe, by which sinners on earth are attracted and saved, and from which influences proceed which affect both heaven and hell. The angels desire to look into these things. They, as many think, are confirmed infallibly in their holy and happy state by the redemption of the Son of God, which is said by St. Paul to reconcile all things to God, both things in earth, and things in heaven. And Satan and his fallen hosts are conquered by the Cross. Jesus on it spoiled those principalities and powers. By virtue of it the prince of this world is cast out. His power is broken, the foundations of his kingdom are destroyed, and ere long he will be bound and bruised under the feet of God's saints, and all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever. Already Jesus has drawn many unto Him; one, and he a great transgressor, even on the Cross; many thousands soon afterwards at Jerusalem, and many tens of thousands in heathen lands by the labours of the first apostles and evangelists. The despised Cross has proved to multitudes God's power unto salvation. The mightiest nations have felt and yielded to its Divine magnetic influence. It has caused the stoutest enemies to fall before it. It has conquered by the omnipotence of love. Even Saul the persecutor could not stand against it, and

was compelled by its subduing and renewing power to exclaim, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" It drew by its heavenly virtue Jews and Gentiles, the civilized and the savage, the Greek and the Scythian, the bond and the free, the Centurion and the Senator, the treasurer and the jailer, those of Cæsar's household, and those of the household of Lydias—a great multitude which no man could number, men of every nation, and kindred, and people, and tongue. The story of the Cross, of God's love to sinful man, has made conquests such as Heaven alone could make, has enlightened the most ignorant, converted the most prejudiced, renewed the most depraved, softened the hardest, and purified the vilest of the human race. Jesus draws men unto Him; and often the most unlikely, hopeless, and reprobate. And how does He effect this? By His word, and by His Spirit. He makes His word quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. It is not so of itself although divine, but as applied by His Spirit. The word is the sword of the Spirit, the instrument which He formed, and which He only can effectually wield. It was thus Jesus drew His disciples on earth. They were begotten and cleansed by the word, which was instinct with life from Him who was filled with the Spirit without measure. It was thus on the day of Pentecost. Peter's

preaching, attended by the presence and demonstration of the Spirit, brought three thousand to repentance. The Eunuch's conversion was effected in the same way by Philip preaching to him Jesus. Cornelius, and Lydia, and the jailer, and others, were drawn to the uplifted Saviour in like manner; and everywhere it pleases God by the preaching of Christ crucified to save them that believe. The Spirit operates through the word. To that we must look, and on that depend.

Jesus *draws*, He does not *drive* men to be saved; but He will draw effectually and infallibly all who do not resist His grace and quench His Spirit, all who earnestly seek Him, and faithfully and sincerely follow Him. He deals with us as men, and draws us with the cords of love. He tells us what great things He has done and suffered for us, and now for ever lives to secure and give to us. He is now seeking to draw us by His Spirit; and is saying, "Look unto me and be ye saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." All the families of the earth shall yet be blessed and saved by Him, Satan be cast out, and the whole world filled with His glory. All those for whom we have prayed, in imitation of His own example on the Cross, all Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics shall acknowledge Him, renounce their errors and prejudices, idols, and unbelief, and fall

down before His Cross, and confess that He is Lord, Messiah, and King, to the glory of God the Father.

We pray that His kingdom may come, and that He would draw all men unto Him. O let us see, my brethren, that we be drawn ourselves, that we look upon Him whom we have pierced, and mourn; that we kiss the Son, bow to His sceptre, obey His laws, rejoice and glory in His service. May He now draw us all by His grace, and keeping us close to His Cross below, hereafter exalt us to His throne, where, while He crowns us, we shall all cast our crowns at His feet, and crown Him Lord of all. And O let us also seek to be the means of bringing as many of our fallen brethren of mankind with us as we can to be partakers of the same glory. We have all numerous opportunities afforded us of promoting the cause of our Divine Master, and of winning souls to Him. He indeed only can draw, but He draws by the means which He has ordained, the circulation, and reading, and preaching of His Gospel; and in answer to the prayers, and in proportion to the zeal and self-denial and faithful labours of His people. Help then, my brethren, the great cause of Christian Missions, and let every one cast into the treasury of his Lord liberal offerings this day to extend His kingdom throughout the world.

The Church Missionary Society asks you, by the love of Him who was lifted up for you and all, to afford it more ample means, that it may send forth Missionaries to the ends of the earth. Its one object is to bid all men look unto Him and live. Who will help it, pray for it, work for it, or go forth in its blessed service? O Thou who wast lifted up, draw us, and we will run after Thee! Give Thou the word, and great shall be the company of the preachers; and speedily take unto Thee Thy great power and reign for ever and ever! Amen.

SERMON XII.

“THE MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD’S
HOUSE.”

“And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.”—*Isai.* ii. 2—5.

It is not perhaps perfectly clear whether these glowing words of the evangelical prophet refer chiefly to the future glory and pre-eminence of the *Jewish* Christian Church and nation, or to the universal prevalence and supremacy and blessedness of the Redeemer’s kingdom generally, as embracing Jews and Gentiles. Both events appear

to be predicted and included in the prophet's words. We know from many other portions of inspired truth, that there is a glorious future in reserve for Israel; that all Israel shall be saved; that all the scattered millions of Abraham's natural seed shall be gathered and reunited under the universal sceptre of the Son of David; that Jerusalem shall be rebuilt, and be the throne and palace of the great King, the Lord of the whole earth; and that while Gentile kings and converts shall be the honoured instruments of bringing back the dispersed of Judah and Israel, they, the sons of Jacob, shall be employed to extend Christ's kingdom throughout the earth, and that the "receiving of them" shall be as "life from the dead" to the yet unchristianized portions of the world. Both views, we conceive, are intended by the prophet; for the Gospel shall universally triumph, and connected with its glorious success shall be both the agency and pre-eminence of converted Israel.

In the words of the text, the mountain of the Lord's house is generally understood to mean the Church of Christ, or the Gospel dispensation; and its elevation above all other mountains and hills, to denote its universal supremacy over all the false and worthless, the demoralizing and soul-destroying and God-dishonouring religions of men. "All the idols," the prophet elsewhere says in this chapter, "He shall

utterly abolish.” The days of every human and Satanic system are numbered. However ponderous and extensive they may be, casting like the lofty hills their gloomy shadows over the greater portion of the human race, they are all destined to fall and flee away before the face of Him who sitteth upon the throne, and before the light of truth and holiness which He has committed to His Church, and commanded her to send forth to every creature. Darkness has covered the earth, and gross darkness the people. The world by wisdom has not known God. From the ignorant and evil heart of man, or from the inspiration of the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that so long has worked and still works in the children of disobedience, have sprung up false lights, religions and systems of error and cruelty, of priestly pride and national debasement and defilement, which have spread their baneful influence over every land, and raised barriers like great mountains to obstruct the light of heaven, and led their deluded followers to flounder in the slough of despond, and to perish in the valley of the shadow of death. Alas! how many and how varied are the false religions of mankind, and how cleverly adapted by the father of lies to the condition and circumstances of the several nations among whom they predominate. In the earliest ages men were led by easy

stages, first to deify the hosts of heaven, to give God's glory to the most glorious works of His hands, and then to people all creation with deities, with gods of the air and earth and water, of the winds and woods and streams, of fire and disease, and peace and war, of professions and places and persons, yea, even of birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things, of the most loathsome reptiles and the most vicious passions, of monsters of crime on earth, and even of devils of every hideous form in hell. So utterly fallen is man, and so unable to recover himself from his self-created state of misery and ruin. He could destroy, but he cannot save himself. "In me," God says, "is thy help." The God of heaven has set up a kingdom which shall supplant and supersede every other—a kingdom which cometh not with observation, but in its origin is compared, by the prophet Daniel, to a little stone cut out of the mountain without hands—a kingdom of light and truth and purity, of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." It is not a kingdom of this world, but heavenly, spiritual, and divine. Its beginning is small, but its progress is onward and sure, and it is destined to be universal. All other kingdoms shall be included in it, and all hearts in each kingdom. "Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be

made straight, and the rough places plain; and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God.” That is, every difficulty shall be overcome, every stubborn heart subdued, every hard heart softened, every dark and prejudiced mind enlightened—the towering mountains of man’s pride brought low, every empty soul filled, every grovelling soul exalted. All ignorance will be dispersed, all idols abolished, every citadel and stronghold of Satan overthrown, and henceforth and for ever occupied by its rightful owner, the Son of God. “The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it.” In glorious and universal pre-eminence Jesus shall reign on Mount Zion, on the throne of His father David; and “of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end.” “The little one shall become a thousand, and the small one a strong nation.” Over every difficulty and every enemy, over every kindred and people and island and continent, over the licentious delusions of Mohammed, over the refined deistical religion of Buddha, over the complicated superstitions of India, and over all the rudeness and cannibalism and devil worship of the poor degraded African, the wild Red Indian, and South Sea Islander; over each and all, the pure, the truthful, the beneficent religion of Jesus shall prevail. “The mountain of the

Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains." It will be conspicuously triumphant, and universally conspicuous. Every eye shall see Him, every knee bow down before Him, "every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Should any refuse to acknowledge His sceptre of love, He will break them with a rod of iron. "He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people." Some proud hearts will resist His righteous sway, and as we read in the second Psalm, shall "take council together against the Lord, and against His Anointed." The great battle of Armageddon on the mountains of Israel, will be the last scene of opposition, when united nations of idolaters and unbelievers will dare to try their strength with the Almighty. But they will be dispersed as chaff before the tempest. Those who survive will be convinced of their iniquity and their impotency; resistance will cease, and converted Israel will be acknowledged as the Lord's elect and honoured people; they will return the mercy of the Gentiles who were the instruments of their restoration, by proclaiming their now acknowledged Messiah to the ends of the earth; the world's millennium will have come, all men shall believe in Israel's God and Saviour, and be blessed and glorified in Him. "Come ye," they shall say to each other, and "let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house

of the God of Jacob.” A universal spirit of enquiry will have been awakened. Men will everywhere be asking the way to Sion, with their faces thitherward. “Ten men shall take hold out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, We will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you. “O house of Israel, let us walk also in the light of the Lord.” The law of the Gospel will again have gone forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. Knowledge will have increased, through the many messengers and agencies of truth then running to and fro. And with the desire of knowledge, of the knowledge of God’s ways, there will also be the determination and the power to walk accordingly. “He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.” The great covenant-blessing will be universally realized,—“I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least unto the greatest.” In short, the prophecy of Joel, that God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh, will then have received its complete fulfilment. It will be the day of His power, and therefore all nations shall be made willing.

The prayers of His Church and people will have been answered, and the object of all their anxious and persevering labours accomplished. All our great Missionary and Bible and other evangelistic societies and agencies will have done their work—helped forward the earth's regeneration, and prepared for the Lord's triumphant return.

But it will be the Lord's doing, whatever may have been the means employed; His hand will be pre-eminently and everywhere visible. "The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains." It is His house; His the beginning and the end; His the glorious design and the beautiful proportions; His its deep, divine foundations, and His its graceful top-stone; His its ministering servants, grateful offerings, spiritual, rich provisions; His its robes of white and crowns of glory, thrones and harps of gold, and songs and palms of victory. All are His—of Him, and through Him, and by Him, and to Him are all things.

We are too apt, my brethren, to forget this great truth, and in our littleness, and partiality, and selfishness, to identify ourselves too much with this or that particular church or communion, instead of concentrating our efforts simply on the Lord's cause, the mountain of His house, His kingdom of grace and righteousness. We are divided when

we ought to be united, and our divisions are our weakness. But it will not be so in the glorious day spoken of in the text. “Then the envy also of Ephraim shall depart, and the adversaries of Judah shall be cut off. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.” Men shall then “beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all God’s holy mountain.” Every unholy passion will be extirpated, and with it every hateful, hurtful, word and action. The Church will not only be universally extended, but also universally purified. All strife, and envy, and ambition will cease; and love, and peace, and harmony everywhere take their place. All sedition and anarchy and bloodshed, all prejudice and pride and ignorance, all ungodliness, oppression and cruelty; all unbelief, impurity, licentiousness, and intemperance; all sabbath-breaking, lying, swearing, deceit, disobedience, self-will, and will worship, and every form and principle and degree of evil will be for ever banished and eradicated, detested and destroyed. A new world, “wherein dwelleth righteousness,” will then be the happy abode of all Christ’s loyal subjects. Every heart will be His throne, every dwelling the abode of peace, every day

a sabbath, all nations one holy brotherhood. The curse of briars and barrenness and painful labour will be removed, and there will be no more seas and storms of trouble and danger, but universal fertility, abundance, safety, peace, beauty, glory, and overflowing, endless happiness. Such, my brethren, will be the end, when Jesus shall return in majesty and glory the second time, without sin, unto salvation.

And let us remember that this second advent concerns us individually, just as it does the world generally and universally; and that if we would then share in the glory and felicity of Christ's kingdom, we must now have that kingdom established in our hearts, in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "The kingdom of God is within you." It is spiritual and invisible, before it manifests itself outwardly either in individuals or in nations. Pray then, that this kingdom may come into each of your hearts, not in name only, but in "power, and in much assurance, and in the Holy Ghost." "Come ye, let us walk in the light of the Lord." Let this be your language and desire. The law has gone forth out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. The Gospel, in God's mercy, has come to you, and all its precious blood-bought blessings are freely offered to every one of you. Only, like those

mentioned in the text, be willing to be taught God’s ways, and determined to walk in His paths; and then, assuredly, my brethren, the Mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains in your hearts. It will there make all things new. It will rectify and harmonize all that now is so conflicting and discordant. It will expel every rival; all the idols there it will utterly abolish; the darkened mind will be enlightened, and the will and the affections, once alienated and at enmity, will be concentrated and absorbed in God. And loving Him, we shall love each other. Weapons of destruction will be converted into instruments of peaceful husbandry, and war shall be learnt and known no more. Labour will be pleasure, and the earth shall everywhere yield her increase. “God, even our own God, shall give us His blessing, and all the ends of the world shall fear Him.”

The Mountain of His house is rising into glorious pre-eminence in many lands, and your aid is this day solicited, that the Church Missionary Society may more widely contribute to its establishment throughout the earth. Never before were such opportunities afforded of extending His kingdom in the world. Almost every barrier to its progress is now removed, and our missionaries are endeavouring to evangelize the capital of China, and have

carried the Gospel of God's grace even to the Arctic circle.

The peculiar feature of missionary work in the present day, are the openings in every part of the world — in Central Africa, Patagonia, Turkey, China, and the utmost limits of Rupert's Land — as if God in His providence were bidding us to go forth in His name, and win all these and other nations for His Son. But alas, how feeble are our efforts, how utterly inadequate the means and the agents, and how cold and few the prayers we offer, to carry out this mighty enterprise! Thank God, the Church has been aroused from her long and deep slumber, but she is still acting as one only half-awake, and needs to put forth much greater strength and energy in order to fulfil her high and holy mission — to establish the Mountain of the Lord's house in the top of the mountains and hills of every false religion of mankind.

In conclusion, my brethren, let us each remember that the universal must begin in the individual, and that in order that you and I may share in the world's millennial glory, we must now be partakers of God's saving and sanctifying grace. "Come then, let us walk in the light of the Lord." It streams on us from the eternal throne; it shines refulgently everywhere in God's inspired word; but we need spiritual vision to perceive, appreciate, and

enjoy its healing beams. Shine inward, therefore, O Spirit of the Lord! Disperse the darkness and overcome the prejudice of nature, and manifest to us the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Take of the things of Jesus, and show them unto us; and breathe peace, and love, and harmony into every soul. And, O Thou divine and exalted Saviour, take unto Thee Thy great power, and reign! Let Thy kingdom come into every heart, and home, and nation; and when Thou shalt return in all the might and majesty of Thy Godhead, may we all welcome Thy appearing, and share in the eternal triumphs and felicity of Thy chosen! “Even so, come Lord Jesus, come quickly.—Amen.”

FINIS.

LONDON:
WILLIAM MACINTOSH,
24, PATERNOSTER ROW.

