

SAVED

A SERMON

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By Mister JAMES WELLS

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“And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.” Revelation 21:24

WE are not, through the Lord’s mercy, at all at a loss to know what we are to understand by the light of this city. This city, of course, must be understood according to that interpretation, we may call it, given of it in the second chapter of the Ephesians. We find there sinners called to a saving acquaintance with the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apostle, tracing out the many mercies manifested to them therein, brings before us the state into which they are brought, and says, “You 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.” And so, the foundations here, garnished with precious stones, what are they but the testimonies of the apostles and prophets? And those testimonies may well be called foundations, for whatever is not based upon those testimonies must come to nothing; and the dear Savior, when summing up, as it were, the whole of the testimony of the Scriptures, says, “The Scriptures cannot be broken.” Thus, then, the testimonies of the gospel are the everlasting foundations of the city, and salvation itself is set forth as being the walls and bulwarks thereof. We have, in the first place, *salvation*, “The nations of them that are saved;” next, *their walk*, they shall walk in the light of this city; and *their practice*, for I apprehend the kings here spoken of are the same people, the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honor into this city.

The first thing, then, we have here is that of *salvation*, “The nations of them which are saved.” There is not anything under the heavens that man stands so much in need of as salvation. Salvation is the first thing a man needs; for this reason, that man, both by nature and by sin, is lost, and the dear Savior says that he came to seek and to save that which was lost; and the first evidence of salvation is to know our lost condition, and for that to be a trouble to us. Now, when we have any natural calamities or natural losses, we are sure to feel the force of all those, because they are natural, and we have our natural sense and natural reason to recognize the losses and the afflictions that we may undergo or may be the subjects of. But then, by nature being dead in trespasses and in sins, we are unconscious of what sin is in the sight of God; we are unconscious of what the majesty of God’s law is, and we are unconscious of what our own hearts are. Ah, little do we think what poor, weak creatures we are. But when the Lord is pleased really and truly to convince of sin, and suffer the sinner to try to put himself to rights, in a way of holiness and of righteousness, and

of that which will save him from the wrath to come, will save him from the curse of the law, and save him from that hell which sin has lighted up, and give him an inheritance among all them that are sanctified, I say, what a poor, weak creature such an one, thus convinced, feels himself to be. He reads the following description, and he can truly appropriate it to himself, where it is said that “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint.” How weak is your heart! unable to repent, unable to pray, unable to be holy, unable to be righteous, unable to be heavenly, unable to be anything that is good. “The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint;” there is no part, from the crown to the foot, that is sound, full of wounds, and cruises, and putrefying sores. Such becomes a poor, miserable creature; he wanders in a solitary way, and finds no city to dwell in, and he thinks within himself, Well, if after all Almighty God should be against me, then almighty wrath must fall upon me and must pursue me. If the Creator of the ends of the earth, from whose all-seeing eye there is no escape, if he be against me, oh, woe was the day that I was born; happy and well for me if I had never existed. Where can I fly from his presence? “If I climb to heaven, you are there; if I take the wings of the morning, and flee to the uttermost parts of earth, you are there; if I make my bed in hell, your hand shall find me there;” all things are naked and open to the eye of him with whom we have to do. Now this, then, is that soul trouble that does prove that there is life in the soul. And let me just say another word or two upon the awfulness that such an one perceives of that state in which we are without Christ and without God. You ask the Christian who has known the Lord for many years, has tasted that the Lord is gracious, has been refreshed from time to time, and blessed from time to time, and to whose soul the dear Savior is supremely precious, the man who understands the truth of the new covenant, and knows that it is not by works of righteousness that he has done, but that according to his mercy, God’s mercy, has he saved him. You ask such an one, Now, can you imagine what your feelings could be, or would be, if you could for one moment entertain the thought that, after all the Lord has done for you, he would cease to love you, that he would cease to be merciful to you, that he would cease to be gracious to you, that he would cease to be a Savior to you, that he would cease to be a friend to you, that he would cease to uphold you, that he would cease to care about you, that he would cease to supply and support you? Ask, I say, the established Christian; if he can imagine what his feelings would be. Why, he would say, I should be of all men most miserable; my poor heart would sink into agonies that I can never describe, and the things of time and sense would all appear to me, without Christ and without God, mere chaff; and I feel as though I should spend the remainder of my days in cursing the day that I was born and cursing my own very existence. Is it any wonder that the apostle should say that “If we have hope only in this life, we are of all men most miserable”? Those who are awakened to a knowledge of what they are, if they had hope only in this life, but if that also were taken away, and no hope in this life nor in that which is to come, how unhappy beyond description would such be. But bless the Lord, that never was the case, and never will be the case. Oh, how clear, then, the Scriptures are in making every poor sinner welcome unto the Lord Jesus Christ. But again, when a poor creature thus finds out the lost condition that he is in, then the word of God becomes to him what it is declared to be: “Behold, upon the mountains how beautiful are the feet of him that brings good tidings, that publishes peace.” This is what the troubled conscience wants; this is what the troubled, the convinced sinner wants; this is what the broken-down sinner wants, peace. “That publishes peace.” And in what way is that peace? Why, it is in this way, that God reconciles us unto himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us, having imputed them unto his dear Son; and that the Lord Jesus Christ has put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and that he himself has become our peace. So, we read, “You who were sometimes afar off, are now in Christ Jesus; made near by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace.” If, therefore, you would have release from guilt, if you

would have release from sin, if you would have release from Satan, if you would have release from despair, if you would have release from the wrath to come, if you would have release from the curse of the law, if you would have release from the sting of death, if you would have release from the bondage in which you are, all that release must come simply by faith in the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. How sweet the thought that the person of Jesus Christ is to every poor sinner revealed in his real dignity where the Holy Spirit is the teacher! He gives a sinner to see that Jesus Christ is God as well as man. "Feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood." Such a one begins to see that there is not anything (and this is a subject, as you well know, I, and indeed every one that feels it is by grace that he is saved, loves to dwell upon), such an one begins to see that there is not anything which the precious blood of Jesus cannot do. And if a poor sinner dreams that he somehow or another is worse than any other, the Lord has a word for such. "Come, let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though red like crimson they shall be as wool:" "and if you be willing and obedient," says the Lord in connection with that scripture, "you shall eat the good of the land." And such persons are willing; they are willing to listen to the tidings of peace which are by Jesus Christ. And this accords entirely with that scripture in the 27th of Isaiah, "Or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me." And that strength I understand to be what Zechariah calls the stronghold, the blood of the everlasting covenant. Here, then, God appears in his love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins: here salvation appears in all its freeness and its fulness; here the Holy Spirit's testimony rises above every obstacle and every objection. So that I say, unto such the tidings of the gospel become what they are declared to be, good tidings; because they publish peace, they publish salvation, and they publish the delightful truth that Zion's God reigns. The Lord reigning there, I think we ought to understand in accordance with the clauses with which that clause stands in connection. There are good tidings, and so the Lord by good tidings overcomes all evil tidings. What a sweet thought is that to the Christian! Whatever evil tidings his sins might have brought to him, whatever evil tidings circumstances bring to him, whatever evil tidings Job's messengers one after the other bring to him, yet there are good tidings that shall, in the Lord's own time, and in the Lord's own way, unto every one that believes, good tidings shall overcome all these evil tidings. We have nothing to do but stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, and by-and-bye these good tidings overcome the evil tidings. I think that is one thing meant there by the Lord reigning; he causes these good tidings to prevail over all evil tidings. And hence it is said of the good man, that he shall not be afraid of evil tidings, because his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord that those good tidings he possesses by Jesus Christ shall overcome all evil tidings. And then that he publishes salvation, and that this salvation swallows up condemnation, overcomes condemnation. "They shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; shall not be ashamed or confounded, world without end." Here, then, this salvation is, I say, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is very, very much said in the Bible about salvation, and salvation is presented in a great variety of forms, because, as I have said, it is everything. For after all there is no medium; we must either be lost or else be saved; we cannot be partly lost and partly saved. Hence, we find at the last great day there will be but two classes, the lost and the saved; so that we must belong unto the one or unto the other. The nations, then, of them that are saved, are those that are taken thus under the chastening hand of God. He wounds, he humbles, and he corrects; and "you will" says one, "prepare their heart;" so that the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue, are both alike from the Lord. They, then, that are saved, are those that are brought into this knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And including in this salvation, for that is one of the essential elements of salvation,

forgiveness of sins. Hence it is said of one that he should go before the face of the Lord and should give them the knowledge of salvation by the remission of their sins. A salvation that does not contain that forgiveness of which the Lord speaks, certainly is not the Lord's salvation. He, in that salvation by which he saves, speaks in this way: "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." And while that is declarative of great love and of eternal mercy, I must confess that when I look to Calvary's cross, when I look at what Jesus Christ is, when I look at what Jesus Christ has done, when I look at the dignity of the person of Christ, when I look at the ample, shall I say the infinite and all-sufficient atonement that Christ has made for sin, I do not wonder that the Lord should say, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." We must read that, and all such scriptures as that, in the light of what Jesus Christ has done. He endured the curse completely, which fallen angels and lost men never can do. With them there will be always something not yet suffered, there will be always something not yet endured, there will be always something not yet reached; Sin will always rage, and indeed, they will always go on to eternity sinning as well as suffering; so that if their sufferings could lessen the penalty, their sins will go on to increase the penalty; and it is said of Satan, he sinned from the beginning. But not so with Christ; he not only suffered without sinning, but in a way that compassed the whole curse. He drank, shall I say, the cup dry; he endured the sword of justice, and made that atonement that no other is needed. Hence the magnificent declarations of the word of God upon this matter, that "he has by his one offering perfected forever all them that are sanctified:" and that he has, by his precious death, obtained eternal redemption, and that he has accomplished the warfare, established pardon, and brought in the double grace now and glory hereafter. That, then, is the saved man whose lost condition has been a trouble to him, a grief to him, a burden to him, and has severed him from an ungodly and empty professing world and has set him seeking with all his soul and heart after God, with, "What shall I do to be saved?" and met with the suited and beautiful answer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shalt be saved."

We have, in the next place, in our text declared *the path in which they shall walk*; that "the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it;" that is, the light of this heavenly city, the light of the kingdom of God. And if you ask what this light is, we are told in connection with our text that "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." Now that which in one place is called the glory of God is in another place called the salvation of God; so that very salvation which Christ wrought, that is God's glory; it is that in which he delights, it is that by which he is glorified, and that forever and forever. How heartily does the soul approve that faithful saying that is so worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners. Oh, how heartily and sincerely does the saved soul approve of Christ's righteousness. Oh, how it cleaves to him in that righteousness. Justified by his righteousness. "I will go in the strength of the Lord God; I will make mention of your righteousness, even of yours only." This righteousness is like the great mountain. How entirely the soul approves of it and cleaves to it. The thought is delightful that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who thus walk with him in this righteousness, by faith in this righteousness. And ten thousand times, from time to time, does the soul bless the Lord Jesus Christ for working it out, and bringing in this everlasting righteousness. And then there is walking with him also in his atonement. Oh, how the soul appreciates the atonement, the precious blood of Jesus! "To you that believe he is precious." And in the light in which we thus walk we see, or shall see, all we wish to see. If we wish to see the end of all that is against us, it is in the light of that sacrifice that we see that end. There it is the redeemed come to Zion, by that, and there it is sorrow and sighing shall flee everlastingly away. There is, then, a

walking by faith with Jesus Christ. There are no disagreements arise, there is perfect oneness. It is true we stumble sometimes, perhaps a little, from want of a clearer understanding of some points. Hence, when the Savior was about to leave his disciples, sorrow filled their hearts; but he said, "If you loved me, you would rejoice because I said, I go unto my Father; for my Father is greater than I." Now they did love him, but his going to the Father was a department which at that time they did not understand, and therefore did not love him in that department in which they did not understand him. Just the same as we, in a great many of his dealings with us, we often say, Well, if I were the Lord, I would not deal thus with my children. But then we do not understand his dealings at the time, and we know not the meaning, and consequently do not love him in those respects in which we do not understand him. Whether it be his truth, or whether it be his dealing with us, we cannot love him where we cannot trace the hand of love, where we cannot see that he is dealing in love with us, where we cannot understand him. Hence it is we have so many exclamations in the Bible as to his mercy being clean gone, he has forgotten to be gracious; and all such scriptures as these are expressive of the same experience that we have. And although the word of God declares that all things work together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose, yet at the same time, I say, where we cannot understand, there we cannot love. But bless the Lord! whatever stumbling there may be in some of his dealings with his children, yet there is no stumbling as to what the Savior has done. Hence the Lord says he will lead them forth by a straight way. And we always know that the work of Jesus Christ has made everything straight; we know all is straight there, all is complete, all is settled, all is perfect, all is eternal, all is shining, all is well there. So, then, there is where the soul is saved, and cleaving unto that same salvation by which it is saved. And it always grieved the prophets exceedingly, and it always grieved the apostles exceedingly, when they saw people that seemed to be saved, and that ran well, begin to deviate a little from that salvation by which at first, they professed to be saved. "Having begun in the spirit, are you made perfect by the flesh?" Now it is no small mercy, then, to be kept close to the salvation by which we are saved. And perhaps this is one reason why the Lord directed the Israelites, and of course it applies to us as well, "You shall remember that you were bondmen in the land of Egypt; you shall remember all the way the Lord has led you and shall remember how you were brought out." And so says the apostle to those who were saved among the Gentiles, "Remember that you, being Gentiles in the flesh; and remember that you has he quickened when you were dead in trespasses and in sins;" as though he should say, Do not forget the hole of the pit whence you are dug; do not forget the sunken quarry of nature out of which you are hewn; do not forget Abraham your father as a pattern of faithfulness, abiding by the truth. Let us, then, desire the grace of our God, whereby to abide by the same gospel, to mind the same things, to abide by the same salvation. Why, my hearer, I make no hesitation in saying that every Israelite that understood the nature of the salvation he had had from Egypt, if that Israelite had taken that salvation with him, and had taken with him a living remembrance of that salvation, they never would have set up the golden calf, they never would have become idolaters, they never would have gone away after other gods. Oh, then, it is a good thing to remember what we were, and how we were saved at the first, and we are saved the same now. And so, it is one of their privileges to abide by the same Jesus Christ, for he is the same yesterday, today, and forever; to abide by the same salvation, the same gospel, the same promises. The Lord is not capricious; he doth not change his people away for other people. If the Lord did that, then we might stagger; but he does not do so.

"Whom once he loves he never leaves,

But loves them to the end.”

Why, then, should we for one moment forsake the fountain of living waters, this covenant God in this eternal salvation, and attempt to hew out to ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water? But the Lord will make us feel that with him is the plenteous redemption that we daily need; that with him is the forgiveness we daily need; that with him is the fountain of life which alone can keep us alive, and that with him are all those riches of which the apostle thus speaks: “My God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” So then walk in the same grace, in the same gospel, in the same salvation; abide by the same things. There is no dullness about it; there is nothing about it that is excessively sentimental or disgusting; there is nothing about it that will grow old, or wear out; it will always be fresh, always new, always glorious, and always blessed. Then, again, walking in this light means also to walk with God the Father. “Have fellowship,” says John, “with us, for truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.” We see here the greatness of his love, the eternity of his love, the immutability of his love, that that love is in Christ Jesus; and we cleave thereto in the testimony of it. “I have loved you with an everlasting love, therefore in loving-kindness have I drawn you.” So that we walk in the light not only of salvation, the same salvation by which we are saved, but in the light of God’s love. John, as you are aware, in his first epistle especially dwells very largely upon this walking in love. And what is there in God the Father, unto those that are saved, but love? There God is love. And then again, they walk with God also in his electing them. Hence the Savior says, “You have not chosen me;” do not impute the election to yourselves. Sensible we shall daily be that nothing, but grace could ever have inscribed our names in God’s eternal book. There will, therefore, be a walking with God in election, and at times, blessing his holy name for the manifestation of election unto us. I know very well Satan hates this doctrine, and stirs up the minds of people against it, to try to distort it. Now then, the Lord help you to take a right view of election. Mind this, election never shut any man from heaven; election never excluded any man from God; election never did any mischief, and never will. Some people talk of election as though it was an act that excluded a part of the human race from heaven and from God. Why, my hearer, this is slandering election; this is belying it; this is distorting it; this is misrepresenting it. And what, think you, if you live and die a perverter of God’s word, will become of you? Do you not read of some that wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction? And, therefore, see that you impute effects to their *right causes*. Man is shut out from God by sin; man is shut out from the presence of God by sin; man has lost everything he had in creation and by creation by sin; and all must have gone on, and all must have been lost, if electing grace had not stepped in and chosen some. Therefore, we glory not in election because all are not chosen; but if all had been chosen, if all had been saved, it must have been upon the same principle. It lay with God to choose angels or men, which he pleased; and he was pleased to pass by angels, fallen angels, and choose man. Or it lay with God to choose neither of them, if he chose to do so, or to choose all; to do just as he pleased. And do you not think it is much better for us to be guided by the word of the Lord, and to acknowledge our own ignorance, remembering that he is the potter, and we the clay? And besides, let our religion be, at least, in the first place, a personal matter; and if we are brought to feel that nothing but electing grace, nothing but grace could have chosen us, and we have reasons to believe he has chosen us, for if we were not dear to election, electing grace would never have been made dear to us; so that having been made dear to us is a proof that we are dear to it. We walk with God, therefore, in his electing grace. “If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise, work is no more work.” I

have lately dwelt upon that scripture, and I may perhaps here just once more remind you of the force of it. I very much question whether the force of that scripture I have just quoted is always recognized. The apostle is not there speaking of salvation, but of election, 11th of Romans; he says, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace;" and then, if it be of grace, now read it this way, That if it be unconditional, for that is the apostle's idea; if election to eternal salvation be of grace, that is, if it be unconditional, then it cannot be any more of works; that is, it cannot be any more conditional; otherwise, unconditionality is no more unconditionality; and if it be of works, that is, if it be conditional, then it is no more unconditional; otherwise, conditionality is no more conditionality. So that the apostle's argument there is that election must be either conditional or else unconditional; it cannot be both, it must be one or the other. Now, what are you prepared to say, then? Can you say it is conditional? Can you say that the Lord has chosen you upon some condition? If so, what is that condition? Is there anything good about you, you have ever done, or possessed, or hope to do, as a reason that you should be chosen to eternal salvation, to eternal life, to eternal glory. So that the apostle's argument there is that it must be either conditional or else unconditional; it must be something bought, or something given; it cannot be both. And we know which it is, and being of grace, "the election has obtained it, and the rest were blinded." And thus, then, they that are saved shall walk with Jesus Christ, and with God the Father in his everlasting love, and in this electing grace. This is the freedom of the gospel; this is gospel ground; it is the land the length and breadth of which you are to walk through ; it is the land that flows with milk and honey; it is the land in which everyone ultimately shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid; it is the land upon which the eyes and heart of the Lord their God are from the beginning of the year to the end; it is that delightful land where, ultimately, there shall be no adversary nor evil occurrent. And thus, they shall walk in the light of it.

I say nothing this morning, for we cannot crowd everything into one sermon, about the ordinances of God, for they are all included in the idea of walking in light. Salvation has its laws, its precepts, and its ordinances. But I hasten to the last part. "And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." A king signifies one that rules or reigns. And so, the Lord's people; they are kings in this earth, in the old earth; they reign over the old earth, and they shall reign in the new earth. In these two respects they are kings. They reign in the old earth. They reign over the earth. Take the 8th of Romans as expressive of how all this is brought about. The Lord Jesus Christ reigned in life and in death; and by faith in him, they standing as is shown in the 8th of Romans, justified and freed from sin, there is no tribulation, there is no loss, there is no adversary, nor height, nor depth, nor things present, nor things to come, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate them from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus. They hold fast the truth, and so they are the kings of the earth, they reign over the earth. There is not anything can subject their souls to the captivity of enmity against God in which they once were there is not any power of darkness that can bring them into the captivity, and darkness, and ignorance under which they once were. They remain in the faith, and they stand fast in the liberty of the gospel, and thus go forth conquering and to conquer. But then they shall reign in the new earth as well, as the next chapter shows. There they shall see the Lord's face and shall reign for ever and ever. Now as to these kings bringing, then, lastly, I notice, their glory and honor into this city, that must be understood in a two-fold sense, spiritually and temporally; or, in other words, testimonially and practically. Their glory is Jesus Christ, their glory is the gospel, and therefore, they bring their glory and honor into this city testimonially. Very, very much may be said upon this part. I had intended to have laid before you here some samples of this, but time does not admit of my so doing. I will therefore just remind you

of some who have done this, who were kings and priests to God, and who have brought into the church of God, and shall I say into the city of God, and themselves now are in that city of God, where there is no more sighing, crying, or dying, that these have brought testimonially as well as practically their honor and glory into this city.

The whole of the 11th of Hebrews is an illustration of this. Abel brings in his testimony, and by his testimony he is yet spoken of; and that which is included in that testimony of faith in the more excellent offering, therein laid his honor, therein; laid his glory. Enoch the same, Noah the same, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob the same and, indeed, all the worthies; no, I may say all the prophets, and I may also say all the people of God; for unto Jesus Christ give all the prophets witness. So that they all bring in a harmonious testimony, their testimony is the same. And hence the several typical salvations that you have in the Scriptures would, if faithfully dealt with, produce an entire harmony of testimony. For instance, what difference was there in relation, supposing the testimony was truthfully given, what difference was there among the Israelites in Egypt? They were all exempted from the angel of death simply by the paschal lamb; so that they would all bring, testimonially, the same honor and glory, they would bring the same testimony. So, when they were delivered from Egypt, they would bring the same testimony, that is, those who were faithful, of the same salvation. And those who were sustained through the wilderness, they would bring the same testimony, the same honor and glory. All would speak out the goodness of God, all would speak out the mercy of God. And so, you will find in the 7th of the Revelation, those who were saved they have amongst them but one testimony. There they were, with palms of victory in their hands; they had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and they had but one testimony, and so with a loud voice they ascribed salvation unto God and the Lamb. And in that same testimony there was their honor, there was their glory. And you cannot enter heaven without it. When we come to a dying hour, if we have not this testimony to take with us, we cannot enter heaven. You cannot enter heaven without the truth; you cannot enter heaven without Christ; you cannot enter heaven without the Spirit of God; you cannot enter heaven without faith. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord;" that is, believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. And thus, you will see, then, that those who are thus saved, and walk in the light of that salvation, and are made kings and priests unto God, they bring that harmonious testimony wherein consists their honor and glory, into the city. And so, the Lord of old said, relative to the typical people, "None shall appear before me empty."