

THE THIRTEEN HUNDRED AND THIRTY-FIVE DAYS

A SERMON

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“Blessed is he that waits and comes. to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days.” Daniel 12:12

THERE can, I think, be no doubt that this chapter belongs to the New Testament dispensation and is strongly analogous to the 12th of the Revelation. We have set before us in the preceding verse and in this verse, two distinct periods; the one is a thousand two hundred and ninety days; the other period, that contained in our text, as you see, is a thousand three hundred and five and thirty days; so that the period in our text is forty-five days longer than the period that occurs in the preceding verse. Here, then, are two periods; the one is longer than the other; and the one period belongs to the wicked, and the other period belongs to the righteous. In the preceding period there is the absence of the sacrifice, and the consequent desolation; in this longer period is implied the presence of the sacrifice, and the consequent blessedness. Blessed is he that waits and comes to this longer period. It is just the same doctrine as is taught in the New Testament, thus, “You shall be hated of all men for my name’s sake; but he that shall endure” this opposition of the world, he that shall endure affliction with the people of God, he who knows so well the value of the truth and the hopes of the gospel, as to hold out “unto the end, the same shall he saved.” I think, therefore, you can thus understand the mystic meaning of these two periods; for they unquestionably have a spiritual meaning; and the triumph of the wicked is but for a moment, whereas the rejoicing of the righteous shall be for ever.

There are, therefore, three things for me carefully to notice this morning. The first is, *the presence of that sacrifice which in the preceding verse is absent*. The second is, *the patience of the saints, waiting and coming to the end of this period*. And the third is, *the blessing pronounced upon such*.

First, then, I notice *the presence of the sacrifice with those who shall survive all their troubles*. And can we have anything to enter upon that more concerns us than this? Because, in the first place, there can be no doubt that we are all sinners; and then the question is whether our sins are eternally to master us, or whether we are to master them; whether our sins are to be rivetted as chains that shall bind us hand and foot forever, or whether we ourselves are among the happy

number that are made free from these chains of darkness, and brought into the liberty of the gospel. You are aware that the word *sacrifice* is in the Scriptures used in a variety of senses, and it implies fairly these three things. First, it is used in the sense of atonement; second, it is used in the sense of service, the service of the saints of God; and third, it carries the idea also of sustenance. Now, take away the sacrifice of Christ in what it is, then there is no atonement for sin; then there is no way in which we can acceptably serve God; and then there is no way in which we can be sustained. Let us, then, look for a moment at the presence of this sacrifice. Now, the wages of sin is death. And we never can explain all that is meant in that word *death*; the word *death* as there used evidently has a most tremendous, an unfathomable, and a dreadful meaning; indeed, it means the whole compass of the wrath and judgment of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. "The wages of sin is death." Now, God determined that his holy law should not in one jot or tittle of it fail. And this is a very important matter. I do not assert that God could not have ordered matters otherwise; but we have not to do with what God could have done, or what he could not have done; we have to do with his revealed will; and we have to do with that by which he will as eternally abide as he himself is eternal. It is, therefore, a clearly revealed truth in the Bible that not one jot nor tittle of the law can fail; that its precepts and its penalties must stand, they must be made good. And you would not for a moment dream of imputing any defect to the knowledge of the Lord; you would not suppose, you could not admit the idea for a moment, that the Lord intended to lay all the sins of those whom he has loved with an everlasting love, that he intended to lay all their sins upon his dear Son, but it so happened that some few escaped his notice. We cannot hold this doctrine. We therefore rejoice in the thought, that while the people are spoken of as being elect according to the foreknowledge of God, that it was not the work of man, but that it was the work of God to impute sin to Christ. "He has laid on him the iniquities of us all." And therefore it is that not one fault, original, heart, lip, or life fault, of the objects of his love escaped his notice; all were laid upon Jesus Christ; and Jesus Christ took the sorrows of them all, the griefs of them all, the penalty of them all; and it made the terraqueous globe we inhabit tremble when the Savior did endure the immense weight of human guilt. "He travelled in the greatness of his strength, and with his own arm," meaning, of course, his own omnipotent arm, "he brought salvation." No life, no light, no pardon, no holiness, no peace, no righteousness, no escape from the wrath to come, no favor before God, no obtaining mercy, no attaining unto righteousness, no, not one blessing can be had in any other way than by this sacrificial perfection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here, then, we rejoice, not only in the truth itself, but in the clearness of it. Now, then, in the preceding verse the apostate people have not this sacrifice in this perfection. They may have it nominally, but from them Satan takes the sacrifice in its perfection away, and they, in ignorance, set up something else into the place of that sacrifice. You have plenty of instances of this in the Scriptures. I need not bring forward those instances; I need, not remind you of Cain, or of the Jews, and many others, that through the apostate state they were in Satan took from them this sacrifice. For there is nothing that Satan so much dreads as he does this, a poor sinner becoming acquainted with the perfection of Christ's atonement, with the perfection of Christ's sacrifice. When the soul reaches that, it says, Ah, Satan, I am too much for you now; here I have victory over you. Ah, sin, you hideous monster, here you are slain. Ah, death, you are reigning king of terrors over the children of pride, here you are conquered. Ah, tribulations, here you must all depart. Here is peace on earth, here is glory to God in the highest, here is good will towards men; and where this sacrifice is thus received, there is good will towards God, and the goodwill of God toward us gives us a good will toward him, and thus reconciles us to himself, not imputing our trespasses unto us, but having imputed them unto his dear Son.

Now, my hearer, if you belong to the apostate world, for the whole world, mind you, is in a state of apostasy, when I say apostasy I am not now referring to persons that have given up their profession of religion, and have thus apostatized, I must take the term in a larger sense. The whole human race, when the Fall took place, fell from God, apostatized from God, and all of us by nature are without this sacrifice. The sacrifice Satan takes away. As the apostle expresses it, as though his mind was led to this very Scripture at the time, as though he should say, At that time Satan was allowed to keep that sacrifice from you, and to keep you from it; at that time you were without Christ, "but now in Christ Jesus you who were afar off are made near by the blood of Christ." These are the people, being thus brought to know where it is that they have an end to sin, the power of Satan, and to death; these are the people that are brought out of their apostasy; these are the people that are brought out of their state by nature; these are the people that are brought into fellowship with the blessed God. Then the second thing implied in the presence of this sacrifice is that of service. None can serve the Lord acceptably in any other way. It is true a poor sinner may be ignorant of the way of salvation; his prayer shall be heard, though at present that poor sinner is very blind, and very ignorant, and very much out of the way. Do not let me say a word, therefore, to discourage one that is just beginning to feel. If you are just beginning to be concerned about your state, however ignorant you are as to what Christ has really done, and however blind you are as to the real excellency of his mediation, yet, if you are concerned about your state, and if you are praying to the Lord that he will open your eyes, and that he will guide you right, and that he will deal with you as he has been wont to deal with those that have sought his face in times past, and with others around you, that he would show you the good and the right way, you may at present, perhaps, be not enlightened in a great many things, and you may have a great many notions which are natural to us all, but still, if you are concerned in your soul for your eternal welfare, however ignorant you are at present, let me remind you that there is in Zion an high priest, Christ Jesus, who does have compassion on the ignorant and them that are out of the way. But then he does not keep them in ignorance, and he does not keep them out of the way, but in his own time brings them into the way, and the way is that which he himself has done. So, then, bless the Lord, here is every encouragement. And if you say, My guilt is great; ah, if you could but measure the two, namely, Christ's sacrifice and your guilt, you would see that your guilt is as nothing to that atoning power to save; and if you could measure your sins, and measure the mercies that, are by that sacrifice, you would find that though your iniquities are infinite, yet there is a greater infinity and multitudinousness in the mercies of God that are by Christ Jesus the Lord. Let me not, then, discourage the one that is just looking out of obscurity. There was a time when I knew nothing of the way. I mean, after I was concerned to know the way; but then the Lord keeps up the restlessness, will not give you rest, until you know where perfection is found, and that is in Christ. Now, second, I say it means service: "Presenting your bodies a living sacrifice;" including the soul, not the body without the soul, of course, "which is your reasonable service." And how is that to be done? Why, by the constraining love that is brought into your soul by the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ. I think there is something very sweet in such a feeling as this, that you are brought into such an acquaintance with Jesus Christ, and with the counsels of God by him, that you would not run away from him if you could, that you would not run away from his truth if you could, that you would not run away from his house if you could. It is not by the external commands, exhortations, and precepts, all, of course, important in their place, but it is not by these, though they are helps in their place, yet it is not by these that the Christian is kept right. It is the work of grace within him that keeps him right; he is a new man. Hence, he is the same now that the Christians were of old. It is

said that they had opportunity to return, but they desired a better country, and they would undergo, which they did undergo, the loss of all earthly comforts, the loss of all earthly hope, what hope could they have of ever settling down what you may call contentedly and comfortably in life? For the truth's sake, rather than give way, they wandered in deserts and in mountains, cultivating a little bit of land here, just to get a morsel of bread, and then off again, and cultivate a little bit somewhere else, and just keep body and soul together, that is all they could do. But then, as the sufferings of Christ abounded in them on the one hand, so the consolations of Christ abounded on the other hand. Here, then, I say, they served God willingly; they served him with all their hearts and all their souls. But take away this, sacrifice; how then can you serve God? How can you come before him? His holiness would be such a barrier to you, and his justice would be such a barrier to you, and his integrity would be such a barrier to you, that if you could go and lay down at the foot of Sinai all the beasts of Lebanon; if you could go and lay down at the foot of Sinai all the silver and gold of the world; if you could go and put at the foot of Sinai, as a right to have access to God, all the good works that men and angels ever performed, the fire of God's wrath would burst forth, and consume the whole, and you too. All would be hopeless all would be useless. But when you come to the tabernacle, as in the wilderness, when they came to the tabernacle, where the sacrifice was, where the mercy-seat was, where the sprinkling of blood was, the humblest services were accepted. And when they were about to build the tabernacle, one brought a handful of goats' hair, another brought a little bit of silver, and another a little bit of gold, and another a little bit of something to help make the curtains, and another a little bit of something else, the humblest services, and they were all accepted there as expressions of love to God, as expressions of decision for God, as expressions of gratitude to God. So here, in Christ Jesus, our humblest groans and sighs, our humblest prayers, our humblest praises, yes, a cup of cold water here given in faith to a disciple, because such an one is a disciple, shall in no way lose its reward. Blessed is he that belongs to this order of things, where the sacrifice is, where you can serve God in peace, where you can serve God in confidence, and where you will find that Jesus Christ is meek and lowly in heart. Said one, I read that Jesus Christ is meek and lowly in heart; but then God is not meek and lowly in heart, say you, if Jesus Christ is. You must not say so; you must not say that, because if you do you are wrong, God so loves you, that is, if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, and love his blessed name; God is meek and lowly in heart towards you, or else I very much misunderstand the Scriptures. For the Savior says, "He that has seen me has seen the Father;" and he is "the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." And for me to be told, which we are told, that Jesus Christ is meek and lowly in heart, and then to be told that God does not humble himself to behold such a poor sinner as I am, and then to be told that God is not meek and lowly in heart to sympathize with us and to bear with us, that would be to sever God from Christ, and Christ from God, and make them unlike each other. And I often think we really lose ground a great deal, it really must be the work of the enemy, in trying in our minds to sever God from Christ, to make out that while there are a great many pleasing, indeed, nothing else but pleasing, sympathetic, and suited excellences in Christ, yet he is man, and therefore such excellences cannot belong to God; whereas Jesus Christ is nothing else but the expression of God's love to us; Jesus Christ is nothing else but the carrying out of what God is to us. Christ is not the cause of God's love to us, but the expression of it, the effect of it, the carrying out of it. Why, my hearer, when we are brought into this view of the matter, we do not then wonder at the Savior's words: is there not something of the sort when he says, "When you pray, say, Our Father"? But then, Lord, there is an infinite disproportion between me and the great God, and how can such a poor creature as I am, say "Our Father"? Well, but I am now, as though

Jesus should say, I am like you, and I am like God. And it is by Jesus Christ we may say, "Our Father." And is it not said in the 103rd Psalm, "Like as a father pities his children"? None but the own father knows how to pity the children, depend upon it; no, you cannot: there is no artificial law can act upon the sympathies, the feelings, like the natural law. Well but, say you, is God really our Father? Certainly. He quickened us by his power, and it is a vital paternity and a vital filiation. Therefore, "Like as a father pities his children, so the Lord pities them that fear him." So, the Savior, as you know, makes use of this very relationship to encourage us. "If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him?" Thus, if we belong to where this sacrifice is, what is the result? We get rid of the abomination; we put nothing into the place of Christ. When the sacrifice is taken away, and something else put into the place thereof, then desolation comes in. But we, by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, get rid of desolation; we get rid of death; we get rid of all that would destroy us, and come into present and eternal plenty. Then the third thing implied in the presence of the sacrifice is not only atonement for sin, and accepted service to God, but also sustenance. For all who thus receive Jesus Christ, all who thus serve God by Jesus Christ, they are to be in that service sustained; they shall eat, as it were, his flesh; his sacrifice shall be their sustenance, the blood of the everlasting covenant shall be their delight. Now this threefold view is beautifully represented in the Book of Revelation, to which I will refer, after just reminding you that it is said of these people that belong to this order of things where the sacrifice is, and where they serve God acceptably, it is said of these people in this same 12th chapter, that "many shall be purified." Now how are these people purified from the apostasy indicated in the preceding verse, how are they purified from the abomination that substitutes something into the place of Jesus Christ, and how are they purified from the desolation, and brought into this new state? The apostle Peter, by the Holy Ghost, shall answer. "Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth;" that is, you have received the truth. And you recollect the words we read this morning in the 15th of John; "Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." So it is God's blessed word that has entered our souls, and shown us our need of the sacrifice, and then revealed the sacrifice itself; and so purifying us from error, from apostasy, and bringing us into reconciliation with God. It is the truth that has enlightened us, to give us to see that our humblest services by faith in Christ are accepted of God as expressions of love to his blessed name, by which he condescends to speak of himself, humble as our services are, as being glorified. "Whoso offers praise glorifies me." They are purified then by the truth; not the truth without the Holy Spirit, nor with the Holy Spirit without the truth; for the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth, and that truth by which we are sanctified and consecrated to God, that truth is gospel truth, that truth is the truth as it is in Jesus. They shall be purified and made white; there is their perfection in Jesus Christ; there it is, made white. Now the 7th of the Revelation presents these three meanings, viz., the perfection these people have in Christ, their accepted service of God, and their sustenance. "What are these which are arrayed in white robes, and whence came they?" These are they that came out from the apostasy, that came out from the abomination, that came out from the desolation; "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white;" the robe indicates character, and therefore it means the character, and the character indicates the person; it is only a poetic form of speech meaning their persons. "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood" "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;" here is their perfection before God. "Therefore: now notice the language, "Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." "And he that sits on the throne shall dwell among them." Here, then, is their perfection, and here are their services accepted of God. And now mark,

“They shall hunger no more;” no, for they have the bread that endures to eternal life; “neither thirst anymore;” for they have the living water that shall spring up to everlasting life; “neither shall the sun” of persecution, “light on them, nor any heat,” as they stand there. “For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.” How shall I point out to you the infinite difference between these two orders of things? In the one case the sacrifice is taken away, something else put into the place of it; desolation follows, their period ends, their hope ends, their confidence is as a spider’s web, and down they sink, to rise no more. May the Lord make us, who do know something of the terror of the Lord, from which we are delivered, increasingly concerned to enjoy fellowship with him in and by the gospel. Here it is, then, sin is atoned for; here it is that we may serve God; and here it is we shall be sustained. I believe, but for this order of things, no prophet could have gone on, no apostle could have gone on, no minister could go on, no Christian could go on. No; the minister would say, I go and preach the gospel? I must be free from sin first. I am not holy; I am not righteous; I have a law in my members bringing me into captivity to the law of sin. Oh, wretched man that I am, I must not go. Whereas, that is the very man to go, because, conscious of what he is, he will never preach up anything but Jesus Christ; because nothing else is of any use to him, he will know from his own experience that nothing else can be of any use to others. Now, it is said of these people that are thus purified, and shall be made white, that they shall be tried; “The wicked shall do wickedly.” Cain shall do wickedly; Cain shall remain a wicked enemy to God’s truth. Ishmael shall mock Isaac; he shall do wickedly. The Pharisees shall crucify Christ; they shall do wickedly. “The wicked shall do wickedly.” God leaves them to Satan, and Satan puts a lying spirit into the mouth of Ahab’s prophets; and Satan put elements, uniting with the elements of Judas’ heart, into his heart, Satan put it into his heart; and Satan instigated Ananias and Sapphira; and Satan was the teacher of Simon Magus, when he thought the gifts of the Holy Ghost could be bought with money. And thus, “the wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand;” they shall not understand their need of this sacrifice; they shall not understand what the service of God is; they shall not understand what this sustenance is; they shall know nothing of this divine sustenance we have in Christ Jesus. “But the wise shall understand.”

Now we come to *the patience*. “Blessed is he that waits.” This is one of the most encouraging forms in which the word of God represents us, waiting. What is the whole life of a Christian, in a sense, but waiting? When I was first brought into the liberty of the gospel, I thought I was going to heaven at once. I hoped I was going to die. But I am not gone yet; I trust I shall by-and-bye. I have been waiting ever since, and we are waiting now. I must confess I am a very great admirer of stability; I like to see it. There seems to me to be a great deal of honor due to those who have borne the heat and burden of the day and have stood fast. Many bless the Lord! there are about the country that have for many years stood fast. When we see members of churches continue for their five, ten, fifteen, twenty, five-and-twenty, thirty years, as some of you have, why, honor is due to such. What confidence the minister has in such! how highly he respects them! He loves the young members, but then they must be tried before he can feel towards them all the veneration, and all the love, and all the confidence, and all the assurance he does toward those that have been so long tried, and have worn so well. The minister’s estimation and confidence must necessarily be more or less regulated by the firmness of the people. When we see people running away at everything, some little thing offends them, and off they go, back again, perhaps, in a week or two. Some wonderful minister springs up, and away they go, in and out, in and out; sometimes there and some-times not; take a sitting, and not fill it up half their time. Now, if such persons should

continue in that course for a thousand years, if they could live so long, the minister could never have much confidence in them, because every time they go away he does not know whether they will ever come back again; and he also knows that his services have not much benefited such, or else they would not go away from them. Why, when I was a little boy I was put to minding sheep, and I never knew a sheep that was always running about to be any good. I recollect two or three, and they would run about here and there, nibble a bit of this thorn, and then a bit of that, and so on all the day; and they were always dreadfully poor, and they gave me so much trouble that I wished they were sold or dead. But then they were not good enough to sell, and they were not fat enough to kill. And so, these people that run about. But when the people cease to run from the minister, remain firm, his testimony the same, his experience the same, his ministry the same, and the people abide, and abide firmly, these are the people that do gain, in the course of years, very great confidence. And so, the deacons the same. The apostle says of those that use that office well, they purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith. I do not know what I should do if we had to change the deacons, as some churches have, every year pretty well; I should run mad. I desire to be thankful that it is not so. One of our deacons has been, I do not know how many years, between thirty and forty years I think, pretty well, and as firm as ever, and many of them for twenty years, and I hope you will all continue until death do us part. I like to see stability. "Blessed is he that waits and comes to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days." So, then, we have, I hope, a goodly number in London, and a goodly sprinkle about the country, that know what they believe, know what they go to the house of God for; not to be amused, but to seek the Lord; not to be entertained for an hour, but to be profited for time and eternity, to meet with that which shall sustain them under their burdens, direct them in the perplexities of human life; and that shall strengthen them in the inner man, and enable them to go on crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to walk near to the Lord, as near as he shall enable them, and to rejoice whenever a sermon has this effect, that it endears the Savior, strengthens the new man, and causes the soul, shall I say, as it were to set out afresh. Why, says such an one, I was ready to halt, and my foot had well-nigh slipped, I had well-nigh given up possession of what little hope I had; it was nearly gone; but your mercy, Lord, came in and quickened me, made me alive, and took me on afresh. Like Gideon's army, I was faint, and hardly pursuing, but now another token of the Lord's favor sets me on again, strengthening my position; and now I will wait, for it is well worth waiting for his love, his salvation, his glory, that eternal rest and joy which are by Christ Jesus; they are well worth waiting for. I may wait for a thousand other things and be miserably disappointed, but here I shall not be disappointed; here I have sure ground; here is a God that will never leave me nor forsake me. Now forgive it if it seem wrong in me to say it, I am entitled, I think, at my stage of life, to make remarks that a young minister could not properly make, but I do not know any minister that has been favored with a more stable people than I have been favored with. We have not had what you may call any real shaking. We have had just a few capricious ones, just the same as we have now, in order to make one prize the firm ones the more, in order to enable us to make the contrast, and make us love the firm ones all the more. So that in this respect I ought to bless the Lord that I have been highly favored. Hence, I never have to leave my home on a Sunday morning and think, Well now, I have been in my soul this morning earnestly praying for the people, and for the deacons, and for the churches, and for the ministers, and for myself, and when I go to chapel perhaps there will be only about half a dozen there. Bless the Lord, that is not the case. I am pretty sure to find the main body of you. As I said just now, there is here and there just one, but I take notice of them only just to contrast with all the others. They are welcome to go

about all they can; if they are the Lord's, when their feet are sore, they will be really glad to sit down and trot about no more.

But I must notice, lastly, that those who belong to this longer period, this order of things, *they are blessed*. But go you your way till the end be, for you shalt rest and shall stand in your lot at the end of the days, when sin, death, and sorrow shall be no more.