

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

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THE CHRIST OF GOD.

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A Sermon

BY MR. JAMES WELLS,

SUNDAY MORNING, 28TH AUGUST, 1870.

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“We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.”—JOHN vi. 69.

THE same truths which become attractive to every soul that is born of God are ever repulsive to those that are not born of God. Hence it is that faith without knowledge is mere fancy. In olden times, when the Israelites believed in God at the first,—the time of the Paschal lamb, and the deliverance through the Red Sea,—their faith then was without knowledge; they did not know or understand that this really was the presence and work of the God of Abraham; and for want of that knowledge their faith gave way, and they became apostates; because, being carnal in their minds, they of course were averse to the great truths that Moses brought in. Just so here, when the Saviour fed the people,—why, he had a very large congregation of five thousand people, and they liked him very much, because they did eat and were filled. But the Saviour appeared in this world for an infinitely important purpose; therefore, when he saw them deluding themselves with the notion that the Messiah was thus merely to feed the body, and better their temporal circumstances, he immediately goes to those things which are of infinitely more importance than it is possible for temporal things to be. Therefore, when they professed to be followers of him, and professed to be concerned for him and attached to him, he said, “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life;” and so he goes on throughout the chapter, illustrating eternal things. But then they attached a carnal where he intended a spiritual meaning,—as he saith, “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” And presently we come to that that almost makes our hair stand on end,

our blood run cold ; it saith that "from that time"—after his declaring these infinitely delightful, attractive, saving, precious truths—"many of his disciples"—disciples of course only nominally—"went back, and walked no more with him." Then they must go to perdition, they must go into the wrath of God, they must go into the bottomless pit, they must go into eternal ruin. The true disciples were better taught ; I do not at all wonder at their answer when the Saviour asked them, "Will ye also go away ?" The others did not know what they had gone away from, any more than the world now knows, in standing aloof from the gospel, what it stands aloof from ; in standing aloof from the free grace and blessed truths of the everlasting gospel they know not what they are standing aloof from. But the true disciples, though as yet in their nonage, yet they knew enough of Christ to feel sure that he was the Christ of God. "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am ?" Some said one thing, and some another ; and even Peter just reached what he was, or hardly that ;—he said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Peter was got thus far, and the Lord declared him blessed, "for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father," saith the Son of God, "which is in heaven." "Will ye also go away ? Lord, to whom shall we go ?" What an universal sweep those few words seem to take ! "To whom shall we go ?" There is no other refuge, no other name, no other way in which the victory we need can be obtained. "Lord, to whom shall we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life." Here we see, then, that the true disciples had a knowledge which those that went away had not ; and that knowledge gave them confidence ; and so the Lord saith, "They shall all know me, from the least unto the greatest." When faith is according to knowledge, why, that faith will stand fast, because such persons know in whom they have believed, and they know what they believe and why they believe ; they can give a reason for the hope that is in them. These are they then that shall not go away. Yet there was one among the twelve, as you are aware, who did not know. People have said Judas knew as much as the rest ; that's a mistake, for if he had he would not have been a thief, nor a traitor, nor a son of perdition. I quite fall in with the words of Dr. Watts concerning a knowledge of Christ,—

" If all the world did but Jesus know,
Sure the whole earth would love him too."

Judas therefore did not know him ; nor am I aware that Judas wrought any miracle, nor am I aware that Judas ever preached a sermon. He was a minister nominally, but he was too busy with the bag and what was put therein to think much about miracles. He thought more about money than about miracles

or preaching ; while others were preaching, he would be devising the way in which he should take care of the contents of the bag. This, I believe, was the case.

But lest I should occupy your time unprofitably, as time is precious, I will come at once to our text, and I shall take a fourfold view of the same. First, *the testimony* :—" We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ ;" secondly, *his Sonship* ; thirdly, *the note of distinction*,—" the Son of the living God ;" fourthly, *the assurance of faith*, in which the disciples lived, and in which all true disciples must live : " We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God."

First, *the testimony* :—" We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ." Now they would thus conclude that he was the Messiah by the blessings which were by him. I will here, therefore, in the first place point out the provision that is by this Christ, this Messiah, that could not be by any other ; and then, secondly, the counsel of God which we have manifested by Christ Jesus. First then, as the Christ of God he is the way of that provision that we need for eternity ; and as the Christ of God he is the way in which the Lord revealeth his counsel to us. Just a word upon the provision, which I have referred to already. " Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you, for him hath God the Father sealed." Now a little further on in this chapter the Saviour speaks of this meat sacrificially. " The bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." " Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life." I will come to this at once, because it explains everything. The first thought, therefore, that is conveyed by the meat that endureth to everlasting life is his sacrifice ;—that is, his sacrifice is one of eternal worth ; it can never lose its value, it can never lose its power. Therefore the meat that endureth unto everlasting life is, in the first place, the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, his precious flesh and his infinitely precious blood. " He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood." Just as the Levites lived upon the sacrifices literally, so we are to live with God by the sacrifice of Christ. They were to live in the precincts of the temple and in the temple, and carry on the service of God, and were supported in so doing by the sacrifices, which were the best of everything. Therefore as the Levites lived literally, so the people of God are to live spiritually ; it is by the sacrifice, the atonement of Christ that we are to live with God, to live where God is, and to go on with his service. I think this is one thing meant by the meat that endureth to everlasting life. It always does me good to look at it in this light. The

time will never come when that sacrifice will not plead our cause; the time will never come when that sacrifice will not be a treasure that answereth all things; the time will never come when that sacrifice is not the pearl of great price. See then what a precious thing faith is,—for you to live in the belief that you are, in and by Christ Jesus, by faith in him, everything that the perfections of God require; and that God loves you there, and holds you there, blesses you there, meets you and accepts you there while you live; and when you come to die it is in that way that you have an abundant entrance into his eternal kingdom; and when you rise at the last it will be to realize in your whole person, body and soul, that perfection that is in Christ Jesus, and your song to eternity will be, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, to him be glory for ever and ever.” “We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ;” the Christ of God. Oh what a life to live! There is nothing under the whole heaven that Satan so much detests as he does this very truth I am now advancing. Joshua might stand anywhere but before this Messenger of the everlasting covenant; and you may believe anything, and be as pious as a hypocritical world could wish you to be; but if you are once brought to receive Christ in his eternal sacrifice, this meat that endureth to everlasting life, the great enemy of your soul knows he has lost you here; he must be overcome by the blood of the Lamb; he knows he must be cast down by the victory achieved by the blood of the Lamb; he knows that as the accuser of the brethren he is put to eternal silence and shame by the victory wrought by the blood of the Lamb. Now let me ask—for life seems to get shorter and shorter, I was going to say; so many swept away, friends and foes; it all impresses our minds with the words, “Be ye also ready;”—can we say that we thus see the Lord Jesus Christ in his sacrificial character, as the meat that endureth unto everlasting life; that is, that by that sacrifice and the blessings which come by him we shall be for ever sustained? Can we say that we so know the Lord as to endear him as a covenant God? If we know this, then we know the love of God; for what is the endearing unto us of a God in covenant by Christ Jesus,—what is this but the love of God? And if by Christ Jesus we love God, then the inference is safe, and a beautiful inference it is; we put our love, as it were, as the premises, and then God’s love to us as the logical conclusion, “We love him because he first loved us.” If we do thus love a covenant God by this eternal perfection of Christ, that is a proof, given by the unerring pen of inspiration, that God loveth us, or we never had in this way loved him. Here, then, by the blessings that are by Christ Jesus, he is the meat that endureth

unto everlasting life. I may here say, what a precious thing is faith. You will often find it hard work to believe, truly so, what I am now saying. When we are in afflictions, we look at the Lord through those afflictions, and we have all sorts of hard thoughts of him ; and think if we were God we would do a great many things better than he does. That is about, I think, the language of old fallen nature. But when we can leave all those, and look at what he has done for us in sending such a Saviour as this ; when we can look at him as blotting out every fault, as having nothing against us, declaring that all things work for good,—how different is our feeling then. But I suppose if any one had gone and preached that doctrine to Job, there would have been a difficulty in believing it. When one messenger came and said, There is one part of your property gone ; Never mind, Job, it all works together for good ; and then when his property, his children, and his health, were all gone, it is hard work then, under such seemingly adverse circumstances, to believe that all things are working for good. But the Lord says it shall be so, and is so ; and when we are thus enabled to behold him in Christ, and in the truth of his word, then we can love him, and have good thoughts of him. He knows what materials we are made of, he knows what we are, he knows how to deal with us ; and all his rough dealings with us are in love ; if he answereth us, as Joseph answered his brethren, roughly, it is only to bring us out of every false refuge, and endear to us the Christ of God. Christ is God's well-beloved Son, and he will take care he shall be the well-beloved Saviour of all the people. So then the sacrifice of Christ and the blessings which are by that sacrifice, these put together are the meat that endureth to everlasting life ; and we are to labour by faith and prayer for that meat ; that is, we are to seek the enjoyment of our God by the sacrifice of Christ, and to seek the blessings which are by the priesthood of Christ, for he is a Priest of good things to come.

Not only have we by the Lord Jesus Christ this eternal supply, but an assurance we shall never come to want. What wonderful words are those, "He that cometh to me shall never hunger,"—never know what want is, shall never come to want ;—"and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." Let us linger here for a moment. What a short time it is with those of you that have to live the longest ; if you do not belong to the Lord, what a short time it is before you will thirst, and will find no kind of supply before you. You will have to pass through, or rather to remain in a region hungry and hardly bestead. You may look upward, and curse your God and your King ; it is but a little while, if we do not belong to him, before we must sink to those regions where no drop of water can come, where no sustenance can be found. Most of you know his name, you know his

truth, you love him. How poor our best services are in a way of gratitude to him for thus making us to differ. "He that cometh unto me shall never hunger," never come to want. David recognises this: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." "In my Father's house is bread enough and to spare." And yet ministers, and I among them, are such silly things as to think sometimes, Well, I have preached pretty well from every text in the Bible, and some of the texts a dozen times, and this chapter and the other; I don't think I can get anything more; I had better leave off. What silly things we are! Why there is ten thousand times ten thousand and twice told more in the Bible than we have taken out of it; and besides, we have not lessened it by the few pitchers of water we have fetched from the fountain, the few fruits we have plucked from the tree; we have not lessened it by what little we have brought to the Lord's people. Not get on? You go home, read and meditate upon the Word of God, and the Lord; and by the time next Sunday comes your mind will be full, and your heart and soul will be full, and Jesus Christ will be precious, God will be glorious, and you will almost wish the service was going to begin at seven o'clock in the morning instead of eleven. Those who are devoted to God in private are often so favoured that they cannot get half time enough in the service to say one half of what they would like to say. Such is the wonderful fulness of provision: "He that cometh unto me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." And just so with your troubles. You say, I got through the last trouble, but how I shall do now I do not know. I am not so strong as I was; very weak in body, and I think I get increasingly stupid and perplexed; I do not think, somehow or another, I can bear things so well as I used to do. Well, if you cannot, the Lord can, you know; that is how you must settle it. "Even to old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Do not let us measure our state by what we are; let us measure our state by what the Lord is. When the twelve men went into the land of Canaan, ten of them measured things by what they were when set by the side of the Canaanites; but the others measured things by what God was when he was set by the side of the Canaanites; and when they set God by the side of the Canaanites,—We may be grasshoppers, say they, in the eyes of the Canaanites, but what must the Canaanites be in the eyes of the Lord? Reputed as nothing. Why, if they were ten times as numerous and gigantic as they are, we have nothing to do with that; the business belongs to God; he is to give us the land; he is to cast out the enemy before us; he is to say, Destroy them; he is to do the work; all we have to do is to believe in him and do just as he

tells us ; and if the day should be too short when we are to have a glorious victory, he will cause the sun and moon to stand still until the victory is complete ; we shall get the advantage, and he will get the glory. His truth must stand ; " I shall not want." Why, Christians are the only people in the world that are really well off ; no other people are really well off ; and yet they are the greatest grumblers under the sun ; at least if I may judge you by myself—I really feel that I am ; and many of the Israelites were cut off for murmuring ; and were it not for a better covenant and a better Mediator I must have been cut off for murmuring long ago. But with all my murmuring, I do not murmur at God's truth ; I murmur at many of his dealings with me, but not at his truth ; there is something there that settles all other things. This provision is by Christ Jesus ; you cannot have such a provision as this in any way but by Christ Jesus ; nowhere else can you have the meat that endureth unto everlasting life, because there is no other sacrifice that endures to everlasting life, there is no other righteousness that is everlasting. Secondly, you cannot have an assurance of full supply anywhere else. " He that cometh to me shall never hunger ; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." That cannot be said of any other person. " Jehovah is my shepherd, I shall not want." " My God shall supply all your needs." Therefore " we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ," the meat that endureth to everlasting life, and by whom all our needs shall be supplied.

I will now notice the counsel of God as set before us in this chapter. The people said, " Lord, evermore give us this bread ; " but when he said, " I am the bread of life," there was the offence. How many of our poor fellow-creatures in our day are seeking to go to heaven ? they wish to go to heaven ;—" evermore give us this bread ; " but tell them what mediation really is, tell them of God's immutable covenant, tell them of what regeneration is, tell them of what soul-trouble is, tell them what it is to be cut up and to be cut down, to be humbled, to be as it were broken to pieces, and to see ourselves in all the loathsomeness of our condition as sinners, and tell them of the completeness we have in Christ,—then they won't listen to it, they go away from it directly. They wish to go to heaven ; but, poor things, being blind to their real condition, the very truth that savingly attracts the spiritual mind is repulsive to such, and so they fly from it, manifesting the solemn truth that with all their excellency of character in other respects, the mind is carnal, and the carnal mind is enmity against God, and it is sure to show itself in some way or another. Now the Saviour sets before us in this chapter the counsel of God very beautifully. He says, " Ye have seen me, and believe not." Then, to give us to understand

that the unbelief of a man cannot overturn the counsel of God, he says directly, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." That verse should always be quoted as a whole; not that I always do so either, perhaps, but still we get the meaning better if we quote the whole verse. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that is thus given by the Father to me I will in no wise cast out." But those that come to him, and are not given by the Father, those he will cast out. Well, say you, do some come to him not given by the Father? Thousands, I believe;—they come to him in profession; one sets aside his sovereignty, another sets aside his Godhead, another sets aside the purity of his manhood; another sets aside his perfection; and if you watch the professing Christian world, you will find that one sets one thing aside, another another, till at last you have nothing left. One takes his deity away, leaving only his manhood; then Irvingism takes the purity of his manhood away; so that first they make him only a man, and then make him a sinful man as well. So these come to Christ professionally, but they are not given by the Father to Christ. "Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." When God the Father gives a sinner to Christ, he chastens the sinner, convinces him by his Spirit that he is a lost, ruined, helpless creature, and he is brought to Christ to receive him in all he is—Christ's atonement, and dignity, and righteousness; his sovereignty, his covenant, his truth. The poor sinner learns his poverty and wretchedness, and says of all these blissful truths, Give me them all; give me this, for there is nothing like it. Now every one that the Father giveth unto Christ is given in this way; and "I will in no wise cast him out." He will not cast the wise virgins out, but he will cast out the foolish ones; he will not cast out the poor, the hungry, the needy, the wretched, the miserable; but "the rich he sends empty away; the mighty he putteth down from their seats, and exalteth them of low degree." Here, then, is the counsel of God—that Christ will cast out none that come to him rightly. The Pharisee came, but he did not go down to his house justified; but the publican went down to his house justified. There is a great talk in our day about coming to Christ, and coming to Christ; but it is a solemn truth that we may come to him wrongly, in a wrong spirit, and be lost at last: there are plenty of evidences of this in the Bible. Therefore let us from time to time examine ourselves, whether we be in *the* faith, whether we are convinced of our state and of our need of these things, so as to embody all that Christ is, not to set anything aside, but to receive him as he is. Then another part of the counsel of God is the eternal safety of the people. I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of

him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing;"—no other person could say that. Moses lost a great many, and so did Joshua; but Christ could say, "I shall lose nothing; but will raise it up again at the last day." Here the original gift of the Father and the resurrection at the last day are united; they are put together by the Lord Jesus Christ. That is my Jesus Christ, that puts these things together; my being given to him and brought to him stands inseparably connected with my resurrection at the last day to eternal glory. That is my Jesus Christ; not a free-will Christ, not a chance Christ, not the Pope's Christ, nor any other man's Christ; he is the people's Christ—the people that are given to him by God the Father. Then the Saviour adds something else to encourage us. He is fond of encouraging us;—he used to watch any little grief, or sorrow, or trouble that rose in the minds of the disciples; he always had a word for them to encourage them; and so here he says, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Here our seeing Jesus Christ and the resurrection at the last great day are put together, and there is no conditionality in it; it is all absolute and positive: "I *will* raise him up at the last day." I need not remind you that four times in this chapter does the Saviour use these words,—"I will raise him up at the last day." I do not know how some of our dear friends, whom I sincerely love, that hold the doctrine of the Millennium, make out that the resurrection is to be at the first day of the Millennium. That is rather awkward; the Saviour says that the resurrection is to be at the last day; and if it be at the last day, why, it cannot be the first day. Some of my Millennial brethren have said that the saints will be raised up at the very beginning of the Millennium,—the first day; the Saviour says the resurrection is to be at the last day. And I think, friends, on reading carefully, you will find that the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust will take place on the same day; they will be, perhaps, not an hour apart; for the Saviour will not be long raising up his people;—they are to be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and they will ascend in almost a moment to the position in which they shall witness the resurrection, judgment, and perdition of those that are lost. What a tremendous day is this which we have before us, the last day; yet the Saviour seems to delight in the same, because then shall glory in perfection have commenced, and all the saints of God shall realise the truth of his blessed word—that their needs have all been supplied according to the riches of God in eternal glory.

I notice, secondly, *the Sonship*. I will mention five reasons, out of

the many that may be named, why he is the Son of God in a way no other can be. First, because he was created by the forming power of the Holy Ghost in a way no other creature ever was. This is one reason why he is the only-begotten Son of God, because none other was ever formed as was the infant or the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The second reason why he was the Son of God in a way none other can be is because he was a complex person;—he was God as well as man. No other creature was ever born in oneness with eternal deity. Hence "the Word was made flesh;" and when it was made flesh it became incorporated with the divine Word: and "we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father." His human nature was formed into vital oneness with his deity; so that both natures formed but one person. He has two personal natures, but he is not two persons, but only one person; he is at the same time both the root and the offspring. The third reason why he is the Son of God in a way none other is, is because of his infallible purity. The purity of angels failed; the purity or holiness of Adam failed; and the whole race of that federal and natural head are corrupted through his failure; but the purity of Jesus is infallible. Say you, then, do you hold that it was impossible for him to sin? Decidedly I do; I should not hold that if he were not God as well as man. For Jesus Christ to sin, deity must sin;—he is but one person, and whatever he does as man belongs to his whole person. His purity, therefore, is infallible.

*" His life was pure, without a spot,
And all his nature clean."*

The fourth reason why he is the Son of God in a way none others ever were, is because he embodies blessings which no other person ever did. Noah was to be a blessing, but Noah's was a temporal blessing, bringing in the covenant of providence, "This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." But Jesus Christ brings in the covenant of grace. Moses was blessed and others were blessed for temporal work; but never since the foundation of the world to that time, and it will never occur again—you will never find an angel again descend and say at the birth of another what he said at the birth of Christ,—"Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour." Then came the multitude with their mighty anthem,—"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, goodwill towards men." The fifth reason I assign (and of course you must not take these to be all the reasons, I can only give a sample) why he is the Son of God in a way no other can be, is because he included in his Sonship count-

less millions of others. When he was born, the whole election of grace were virtually born; when he became man, when he took our nature, in so doing he took upon him the seed of Abraham, and "it behoved him to be made in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and a faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." Therefore, his birth, his wonderful Sonship, included the sonship of countless millions. Hence "he that sanctifieth"—that is, Christ—"and they that are sanctified,"—that is, the people,—"are all of one;" he is the Son of God, and they are sons of God, heirs of God, and joint heirs with him; and so at the last he will say, "Here am I, and all those whom thou hast given me."

I now come to *the note of distinction*,—"the Son of the living God." I think the term "living God" is here placed in contrast to idols and to false religions, according to that scripture in Isaiah xxvi.,—"O Lord our God, other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee only will we make mention of thy name. "They are dead,"—that is, with the people of God; "they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise." True, Lord, but thou shalt rise, thy lovingkindness shall rise, thy dear Son shall rise, thy glory shall rise, thy praise shall rise, and we shall rise too by and by, far above all heavens. "Therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." I have but one left now—my covenant God, and I want no other. "Thou shalt have none other gods beside me;"—no, Lord, that I will not. "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Thou art the living God; all the rest must die; but this God never dies, his people can never die; their lamp can never go out. Abraham saw a burning lamp pass between the pieces of sacrifice;—that is it; that religion that gives me faith in the sacrifice of Christ, that is the lamp that will never go out. And they were to bring pure olive oil,—and let the olive be a symbol of life and peace,—to cause the lamp always to burn. Let the golden oil of God's grace freely flow into my soul, that will keep the lamp burning. "For Zion's sake will I 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." Can you extinguish his salvation? No; there is our lamp; there is our living God. So that, bless the Lord, as the dear Saviour has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Oh, what a lovely life! The apostle saith, "The life that I now live is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." So, then,

our God's religion never dies, he never dies, we can never die, but are in that respect as the angels of God,—can die no more, being the children of the resurrection.

But lastly, *the assurance of faith*,—"We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." We have doubts and fears enough about temporal circumstances; and when affliction sets in upon us we have doubts and fears as to whether we shall get over it or not; and we have many doubts and fears sometimes as to many of our dear friends, and some doubts about our enemies too; and all of us more or less are tried at times with doubts and fears as to whether after all we have come the right way, whether we really are in the narrow way. But if we added to all these doubts and fears a doubt or a fear as to the reality of the Christ of God and his truth, that would be wretched to the last degree. It is a firm belief that he is the Christ of God that helps us somewhat to bear the other doubts and fears; a firm and satisfactory persuasion by God's blessed truth and his power and love, that Christ is the Son of the living God. We do not live, therefore, a life of infidel doubt concerning the Scriptures. Attacked we may be at times, but then that cannot last long. Oh how nice it is to take up one part of God's blessed word, and then go to another part, and lay the two parts together, and see how wonderfully the one shows up the fulfilment of the other. When you come to Bethlehem—800 years before he was born, the little hamlet in which he was to be born was actually named; and yet circumstances, when the time drew near, seemed very much against it;—there were Mary and Joseph fifty or sixty miles off; and it seemed as though,—Well, it is within a few days, and he will not be born in Bethlehem now. But he was, you see—oh yes. And oh what a shocking thing this is! Perhaps Joseph and Mary would say, "Herod has sought his life, and we are obliged to go into Egypt." Prediction foresaw it:—"Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Ah, but this is a very shocking thing that Archelaus reigns, and we cannot settle down in the southern part of Judæa, but are obliged to go down into the north. Oh, never mind; it is written, "He shall be called a Nazarene." And then we come to his death and resurrection,—see how every prediction is answered. Then if you come to the ingathering of Jew and Gentile, it was all foreseen and predicted. It is very nice to live in full assurance that this is the Christ of God. Bless the Lord for a sweet assurance of his truth, and for grace to own him, and serve him, and glorify him from time to time. Amen.