

# SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

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THE KINGDOM THAT IS COME.

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## A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 28TH, 1863, BY

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AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE, BOROUGH ROAD.

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"Thy kingdom come."—Matthew vi. 10.

THERE are people that say that the Lord Jesus Christ's kingdom is not yet come, and they tell us that the very fact of our being taught to pray that it should come is a proof that it is not yet come. And if such people meant that the kingdom of glory was not yet come, that the end of time was not yet come, that the day of the general resurrection and general judgment was not come, I would then agree with them. But this is not their meaning; they have in their eye an earthly kingdom, a kind of a Mahometan paradise; taking the thousand years of the Revelation, not as they ought to be taken—mystically, indicating a long period, the measurement of which is known to God only, but they make out that we are to have, by-and-bye, Christ on earth, and an earthly kingdom; they tell us that this is the meaning. But, for myself, I have not so learned Christ. And therefore it is that we must stand against these traditions of the elders, these precepts of men, these figments, these delusions, these false lights, that would take us away from the main object, namely, that Jesus Christ is unto his people here all that they can need, and there is no other kingdom to come after the kingdom that is come, except that of everlasting glory. And I think in going through our subject this morning it will be pretty clear that both the king and the kingdom of Jesus Christ have come, and that those who are born of God are now in that kingdom, in the kingdom of grace, in the dispensational kingdom; and that such who are now, by regeneration, in the kingdom of grace, have but one more kingdom to look for. Hence the apostle doth not put anything between present justification and eternal glorification; he doth not put an earthly kingdom between our present justification and eternal glorification. "Whom he justified;" that that comes next, in accordance with the righteousness by which the people are justified, is that of eternal glory. I will therefore, this morning, in the first place, show, then, that *this kingdom has come*; and then, secondly, *the propriety of the language of our text, the propriety of still praying for it to come.*

First, then, that *this kingdom hath come.* Only I may, perhaps, before I enter into some details concerning the kingdom, at once, lest you should

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seem at all bewildered in your minds as to what we are to understand by the kingdom—the question is, What is the main principle of the kingdom? Now we can give the main principle of the kingdom—which will make, I think, everything appear very clear to us—we can give the main principle of the kingdom of Christ in one word, that of substitution. You see in the 2nd chapter, as we have often noticed—and I must just have a word upon that this morning before I enter upon details—you see in the 2nd chapter of Daniel, a stone cut out of the mountain without hands, and that stone covers the whole earth, becomes a substitute for everything that is bad, and a substitute for everything that is good; that Jesus Christ, by the setting up of his substitutional, mediatorial kingdom, brings to nought all evil, brings to nought sin, brings it to nothing, and consequently death to nothing, and consequently tribulation to nothing. And then, when we have to part by-and-bye with the things that are good, and right, and proper of a natural kind, then he will be, by this kingdom, a substitute for all that is good; so that the greatest good here is infinitely inferior, I had almost said, to the worst thing there—I speak by the infirmity of language when I say the worst thing there—there is nothing there but that which is good. This, then, is the main principle, yea, the very substantial principle of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Thy kingdom come.” And what can be dearer to us—I say, what can be dearer to us than this? And just so this great principle is beautifully typified by many things. What, for instance, was the coming of Moses? And Moses is called a king; Moses was king in Jeshurun, and the Israelites are called a kingdom. And what was the mission of Moses but to substitute mercy for judgment, to substitute freedom for bondage, to substitute the presence and service of God for the tyranny and service of the great dragon, the enemy? What was it, I say, but a kingdom of substitution? So that that dispensation that Moses brought, at least to those that understood it and believed in it, came into the place of all the miseries of the people. And what was the promised land but a substitute for the land of bondage? So Christ Jesus, my hearer, he came thus, and substituted his wondrous work for all that stood against us. This is the great principle of the kingdom. God the Father’s counsels reign by the mediatorial work of Christ, and grace reigns by the same mediatorial work, Christ by the same mediatorial work; all the promises of the gospel are maintained by the same mediatorial work, our ground is maintained by the same mediatorial work. And if we take this substitutional work of Christ to be the main principle of the kingdom, is it any wonder that that should be said of the kingdom which is said of it, namely, in the first place, that it is a kingdom that cannot be destroyed? Who can destroy the substitutional work of Christ? Who can destroy the perfection of the atonement of Christ? Who can destroy the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ? Adam’s holiness and righteousness were destroyed; the Jewish nation’s righteousness was destroyed; all our holiness and righteousness we had by creation were in the first Adam destroyed. But here, in Christ Jesus, we have a standing that cannot be destroyed. And is it any wonder the apostle should say, “We

receiving a kingdom that cannot be moved"? This substitutional work of Christ is the great principle, the very substance of the kingdom. Hence, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." Now let us look closely into this matter. Jesus Christ, some tell us, is not yet king; he is to be king by-and-by, but he is not yet king. But my Bible saith that he was born king. Which am I to believe, the traditions of deluded men, or the testimony of the living God? "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" What Jews were they of whom he was born king? Not the literal Jews. No. The Jews of whom he was born king are the spiritual seed of Abraham, those who shall be, by the grace of God, Jews inwardly, circumcised in the heart and in the spirit; these are the Jews, the praisers of the Lord. And Christ was born king of these, and we rejoice that he was born king. And, as we have so often said, his substitutional work was to be the ground, the basis, upon which his eternal throne should rest.

And Jesus Christ was not only born king, but the people worshipped him as king. He entered into Jerusalem, and they worshipped him there as king. "Hosanna to the king that cometh in the name of the Lord." And the Saviour did not put the little children down, even the little children, when they worshipped him as king. He sanctioned it, brought a scripture to show that they were right, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast ordained strength." Hence it is said, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; for, behold, thy king cometh unto thee, having salvation; he is meek and lowly, riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass." Now, then, he was born king, he was worshipped as king. And when Nathanael said, "Thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel," the Saviour did not deny it; no, but rather confirmed it, and gratulated Nathanael upon the revelations made to him, and promised him, in entire accordance with the scripture we read this morning, "To him that hath shall be given;" and promised to Nathanael those farther revelations, the heavens being opened, and more abundant glories yet to be revealed to him. Thus, then, Jesus Christ was born king, Jesus Christ was worshipped as a king, Jesus Christ was acknowledged as a king, and Jesus Christ declared before Pilate that his kingdom was not of this world. He did not deny his royalty, but declared that his kingdom was not of this world. Thus, then, Jesus Christ was king, and Jesus Christ is king. Only we must not separate—if we do, we lose the beauty of his royalty—we must not separate his royalty from his priesthood. You will observe that the people of God—and I wish you to take particular notice of it, for it is a testimony, if you know only half as much of your own heart as I know of mine, you will be glad with all your heart that the people of God are never spoken of as being made kings apart from the priesthood of Christ. Hence the two are united; kings and priests unto God. This is by virtue of union to the Lord Jesus Christ. And this reign is according to his eternal priesthood. Here it is, "Because the

Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek;" it is because of this that he must reign until all his enemies become his footstool. Thus, then, he is king over a spiritual kingdom, a people that bow down unto him, a people that are to have under all their troubles and in the face of all their foes unbounded confidence in God; only that confidence in God must be by Jesus Christ. And if you feel sometimes exceedingly discouraged in this, are ready to say, Well, I do not know; I should like to have this confidence, so as to know that I am really and vitally in Christ's kingdom; but then I am such a poor sinful creature, my sins are innumerable, and I am such a poor guilty creature, that I feel a sort of tremulousness before God, and I fear all is not right. Well, now, if the Lord be pleased when you have those exercises of mind to whisper such words as these to you,—“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though red like crimson, they shall be as wool;” if you be willing to believe this, and receive this, and abide by this; if you be willing and obedient, for it is of course the obedience of faith, you shall eat the good of the land; and who can tell what that good is? Why, it is the bread of everlasting life; it is the fruit of that tree that beareth fruit all the year round, and all manner of pleasant fruits laid up at our gates. Here, then, it is, my hearer, we are to have this confidence in God. Look, then, first, at the principle of the kingdom, substitution; and then look at the fact that the dear Saviour was born king, worshipped as king, acknowledged as king; himself declared he was king, and he is set on Zion's heavenly hill as king, king of Zion, and must reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever.

After these few remarks, I will now just point out as clearly as I can some of the operations, advantages, and responsibilities of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ. The operations of the kingdom of this king were to be progressive. Its business was to convert sinners to God by regeneration; for “except a man be born again,” mark that, “he cannot see the kingdom of heaven;” and “except a man be born of water and of the Spirit”—or, as we sometimes render it, I think with equal propriety, spiritual water—“he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” Let us look, then, how its operations are variously illustrated. It is spoken of thus: the kingdom comes and converts sinners to God, brings them into harmony with Christ's priesthood, brings them into harmony with the reign of grace, brings them into harmony with God's eternal mercy. And such are subjects of the kingdom; they see what a firm foundation that is upon which the kingdom of heaven rests, and they do rejoice and bless God for thus delivering them from the powers of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Such persons are called wheat. Then the enemy sows tares among the wheat; that is, the wicked one converts people to a religion, to Christianity in profession, and that such people still retain their poisonous hatred to the truth of God, their aversion to electing grace, or if not aversion to it they pervert it, admit it and pervert it, and that is quite as bad; it is the same principle in another shape, it is nothing else. Such persons remain at war with the real royalty of the gospel. By-and-bye the householder sees tares among the wheat, and the servants said, “Shall we go and root these tares up?” No; do not persecute them; persecute no one; let them alone. Use no carnal weapons, use no abuse, use no slander, use no reviling, use no oppression; let your warfare be holy; if you make war, do it in righteousness; let your weapons be spiritual, let them be of God. And is not this come to pass? Do we not see the two orders of professors? For of all professors, there are in reality but two orders, the seed of the wicked one and the seed of the Holy One. The one receives the truth in the vitality and love of it, and the other hates it. Now the Saviour likens the kingdom of heaven unto this. And yet people

tell us his kingdom is not yet come. Well, the Saviour says this is one figure of his kingdom, and I am sure this part is come to pass; I have not the slightest doubt about it, but I am quite sure there are some who may be called wheat, and are wheat; and I have no doubt there are some that are still tares. Thus, then, this kingdom in progression converts people; and Satan, who is ever trying to imitate God, and to imitate God's work, he also converts people by his ministers. Now there are some who make no profession at all; we know that they are on their way to hell, though it is better for a man to make no profession than to make a hypocritical one, certainly it is; a man that is moral, I have a respect for such a man. Still, at the same time, when people boast of making no profession, it is like boasting of belonging to the devil instead of belonging to God; it is like boasting of going to hell instead of going to heaven; it is like boasting of being without God and without Christ, instead of being of God. Now, then, if the righteous scarcely be saved, what shall the end of such be? Then, when we look at some that make a profession, and yet not reconciled really to the order of Christ's incorruptible, immoveable kingdom, not assimilated to him, why, then, such are tares, and they shall be gathered together, cast into the furnace of fire, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall those who are brought vitally into this kingdom, in harmony with its spiritual order, in harmony with its foundation, Christ's substitutional work, in harmony with God's eternal counsels in this kingdom, they shall not hurt nor destroy; "then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun"—namely, as Christ Jesus, for they shall be like him—"in the kingdom of their Father."

Then, again, the kingdom of heaven also in its operation is likened to the plantation of a mustard seed, and this becomes a great tree, so that fowl of every wing come and lodge in the branches of it. And so, in the 17th of Ezekiel, there was to be the cedar planted, and fowl of every wing, namely, the ingathering of the Gentiles, were to come and lodge in this tree of life. And did not the kingdom of heaven begin with small beginnings? See the babe in the manger, not even in the inn. Look at the babe; he is but a babe. That was a very small beginning. And men must come a long distance to bring a little gold to enable Joseph and Mary to fulfil the Lord's command, and to take the young child and flee into Egypt out of the way. Why, it was a very small beginning. And so, when there were only a hundred and twenty in a room together, who would have thought that a few even out of that hundred and twenty would turn the world upside down as they did? It had a very small beginning. But presently comes the day of Pentecost, and then this antitypical, paradisiacal, four-branched river branches out east, west, north, and south; and what thousands, ten thousand times ten thousands of immortal souls have been brought into this kingdom, have drunk of these rivers of God's eternal pleasure! And this kingdom has progressed, does progress, and will progress until perfection shall mark every department; until perfection shall mark every subject of that kingdom, every promise of that kingdom, every precept of that kingdom, every relation of that kingdom, every glory of that kingdom; for here it is in eternal perfection Jehovah thus shineth out of Zion. But is it not a truth, then, that sinners out of every caste have been brought to the tree of life? Have they not lodged there? have they not been happy there? have they not, if I may use such a form of speech, there warbled out as well as they could the notes of everlasting love? and have they not sat down under the tree with great delight, and found the fruit thereof pleasant to their taste? Truly they have. Then another description of the operation is leaven cast into three measures of meal, till the whole be leavened. He likens the kingdom of heaven to this; not the kingdom of glory, but the dispensational kingdom of heaven as it now is. And these Millenarians, that give us a kind of Mahometan heaven to look for, tell us that the

leaven is generally spoken of in the Scriptures to denote something bad, and therefore the meaning of that scripture is that men should bring in error, and assimilate the kingdom of God to that error, and then Jesus Christ should come and reign on earth, and get the leaven out, and put the kingdom right again. Now this is only distorting that scripture to answer their own earthly purposes. The word *leaven* there must be evidently understood in the good sense. Now, mind, it is not the meal that is compared to the kingdom of heaven, but the leaven; he likened the kingdom of heaven to the leaven, which a woman took and added to three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened. And I will not here stop to ask the question why it is called three measures of meal; I will not stop to notice that point, because it would take me out of the way of what I want to say. Let us come home to personal experience. Ever since the truth of God came home to my soul, it has been assimilating my soul to it; my soul has been assimilated to God's counsel, my soul is assimilated to God's way, my soul is assimilated to the hope of the gospel. And sometimes so assimilated to this heavenly leaven, this blessed truth of God, that we seem for a few moments sometimes to lose sight of everything else. How sweet those moments are, when our burdens are gone, our wounds are healed, our cares are taken away, and we feel free, and feel that this God is our God! Then how little we think of poverty or riches! how little we think of earthly care! how little we then think of these things! Ah, we say, they are only shadows. It is true some of them are very dark shadows, and they sometimes very much alarm us; and sometimes, when we go into these dark shadows, we cannot see our way out. But when assimilated sweetly in our minds and feelings to the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, we see a glory, a peace, and a blessedness that shall satisfy our souls when the kingdoms of this world with us shall be no more. But I must not tarry upon the operations of the kingdom. See the advantage, then, of being thus brought into this kingdom, and assimilated to Christ, assimilated to God's counsel, assimilated to the order of this kingdom.

There are also very solemn responsibilities to this kingdom—very solemn. The foolish virgin, no oil in the vessel; the graceless professor, no grace, no right knowledge of the bridegroom, no right understanding of the order of the eternal oneness between Christ and the church; that man, while he bears the name of Christian, is trying to gain acceptance with God in some shape or form apart from Christ, and that man will have to give an account to God of his profession. "Friend, how camest thou in hither?" So that we shall have to give an account to God of our profession, all of us. We must all appear, without exception, before the judgment-seat of Christ, to be judged, not according to the quantity, but according to the quality of our works; for "whatsoever is not of faith is sin;" to give an account of ourselves, and to receive according to that that we have done in the body, whether it be good, or whether it be bad. Oh, how many thousands there are that think that when the Saviour shall at last present the kingdom to the Father, they will be able to give a good account! The man with the one talent, representing the professor with the mere letter of the truth,—at least, that is my view of it,—he thought he would be able to give a good account. Here is thy talent, here is that dangerous gospel, was not safe to trade with. I knew that thou wast an austere man, and so I put no confidence in that free grace trade, or in that free grace talent; but I have gone and done my duty; I have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and I have done wonderful things. What is the answer of the Saviour? "Depart from me, thou wicked servant; out of thine own mouth will I judge thee." This kingdom, therefore, hath its solemn responsibilities. We must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may give an account of himself. Oh, my hearer, let me sum up in this part before I go to the

next part of my subject. Is the substitutional work of Christ, as the great principle upon which everything else rests, revealed to us? Are we in entire harmony with that? Do we lean upon it? Is our confidence in God, our love to God, and our decision for God, regulated by that? If not, then woe, woe be unto us if we die in that state! Are we assimilated to God's counsels? for he reveals unto the heirs of promise, the heirs of this kingdom, he hath promised them that love him, that love him after the order, the due order of this kingdom,—he hath promised them that love him, if we are assimilated to his counsels, then we can give a good account of ourselves by that order before God. I always have spoken, and I always shall, as long as I speak, speak out as in the sight of the living God; I wish to do so more and more; I wish to speak more and more in the fear of God. And what I was going to say, then, was this, but of course it is but the expression of a poor fallible creature; but I speak it as my feeling, and it is this: I would not be that man that can, either in private or in public, cast a slur upon election, and say, Ah, it is in the Bible, but it is of no consequence, no occasion to believe it;—I would not be that man that can cast a slur upon the perfect liberty of the gospel by which the Saviour is so honoured, and that demonstrates the eternal perfection of his work, and say, Ah, you can be a Christian as well without it as with it;—I would not be that man for the whole world. I would not be that man that can cast a slur upon God's everlasting covenant, and say, Well, I am not one of your *hypers*, always talking about the covenant; I am for practice; which is only another way of casting a slur upon God's truth. I would not be in that man's shoes for all this world. Now that is my feeling; I can't help that feeling; if I am wrong, I can't help it. There is nothing under heaven I more deeply feel upon than this. It is this solemn feeling I now have that has kept me so earnest and so decided for what I believe to be God's order of truth; that has kept me so long, and I believe will keep me until I draw my last breath, within the circle of the everlasting covenant, in the sweet liberty of the gospel, dying in his kingdom. For a man cannot die in his kingdom if he is not first brought into it; but if he is brought into it he is in that kingdom for ever. There is no breaking in; there is bringing in, but no breaking in; and, bless the Lord, there is no going out, and no complaining in the streets. Happy is the people which is in such a case; happy is the people whose God is the Lord. Thus, then, Jesus Christ was king; and thus, according to Daniel's prediction, in those days, the days of the Roman kings, the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed. Now, if you like to admit the Millenarian figments and delusions, do so; but if you do, just in proportion as you do, you will go after what will never come to pass. No, my hearer, we must abide by the apostle's decision, "We look not at the things that are seen, for they are temporal; but at the things that are not seen, for they are eternal."

Now what am I to do? Your time is gone, and I am only half through the subject. Yet I must just give you a hint of what I was going to say. I notice, then, *the propriety of using this prayer*, "Thy kingdom come." What does it mean? The apostle shall explain it; he, the apostle Paul, shall give us four words; we may add to those a great many. "The kingdom of God is righteousness." Well, then, Lord, thy righteousness come. When I am in trouble, Lord, bring in thy righteousness to bring me out of that trouble. "Deliver me in thy righteousness." When I am afar off, oh, bring me nigh by thy righteousness. When I am cast down, raise me up by thy righteousness; when I am guilty, pardon me by thy righteousness; when I am weak, strengthen me by thy righteousness. "I will go in the strength of the Lord; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." Thy righteousness come. "The kingdom of God is righteousness." This substitutional righteousness, I do pray that may come more and more into my soul, and more and more

into your souls, and more and more into the souls of the people. And saith the apostle, "For therein"—namely, in that gospel of which he was not ashamed—"therein is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith." So, then, thy righteousness come to me from time to time. And what is this but asking the Lord himself to come? for he comes by Christ's righteousness; Christ comes by his own righteousness; the Holy Spirit comes by the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And so we said before the kingdom is come, and yet we now pray that it may still come. "Thy kingdom come." Thy righteousness come. Lord, exalt me from day to day in thy righteousness. While sin, and Satan, and tribulation bring me down, and cast me down, and make me miserable, and make me almost curse my very existence; if thou art pleased to step in with the blood of the everlasting covenant, burst my bonds in sunder, and bring me up into fellowship with thyself, then I can—

"—Tread the world beneath my feet,  
And all that earth calls good or great."

The very fact of being taught to pray for it to prove it is not come! I think it is a proof it is come, for, "When ye pray, say, Our Father." If I have a praying heart, that is a proof the kingdom is come; for there is not a soul in this kingdom that hath not a praying heart. And therefore, so far from praying that it may come being a proof it is not come, it is a proof the kingdom is come to such. "And peace." And are we not everlastingly troubled with something or another, and do we not want peace with God renewed? "And joy in the Holy Ghost." And have we not plenty of sorrows, and do we not want the restoration from time to time of joy? "The kingdom of God," saith the apostle, "is not in word, but in power." And do we not want more and more power? Now in this one sense we pray the kingdom may come, then; but there are many more senses in which we are to pray that the kingdom may come. Second, we are to pray not only for the kingdom to come to us, but we are to pray, "Thy kingdom come" in the conversion of others. Oh, let the same blessed kingdom, the same gospel that hath converted us, convert others. Let the same power that hath brought us in bring others in. Let the same power that hath delivered us from the powers of darkness, and translated us into this kingdom, bring others into the same kingdom, where there is redemption—for there is redemption nowhere else—where there is redemption and forgiveness of sins. And then, lastly, passing by a great many things that have been delightful to me in private, we pray for the ultimate kingdom to come. The ungodly man makes feignedly a covenant with death. Ah, I shall not die yet; he comforts himself with that. The ungodly man makes an agreement with hell. Ah, I shall not go to hell; God will never serve me like that; that is the way he takes his comfort. Not so the real Christian. No; the real Christian looks for and hastens unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire, the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth and the works therein shall be burned up. Then shall the Lord say, "Come, ye blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." But I must add no more.