

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

ALL THINGS NEW.

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 24TH, 1865, BY

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AT THE NEW SURREY TABERNACLE, WANSEY STREET.

“He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”—
Revelation xxi. 7.

THIS Book of the Revelation is intended to represent the kingdom which the Saviour established, together with those oppositions that it should meet through time, and those judgments that should be ministered to the enemies of that kingdom, and the successive victories that the saints should obtain, until they were landed safely into that glory that is so beautifully represented in this same chapter. But, at the same time, this book is very repetitional; it gives one version of the New Testament dispensation, perhaps down to the end of time, and then goes back again to the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, and gives another version, that is, another representation of the same thing, in order that by this variety we may be instructed broadly into the mysteries of the kingdom. Hence, at the end of the preceding chapter, we have the general judgment, everything finally decided. After John had done this, he is in the beginning of this chapter taken back again once more to the beginning of the New Testament dispensation, and describes it. And our text may be reckoned the summing up, the conclusion, of the beautiful description he here gives of the kingdom and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. “He that overcometh shall inherit all things.” The “all things” here mean all the things of the kingdom of Christ. The things here do not refer to this world at all, but they refer to new things, not old things; to eternal things, not time things; not but eternal things do come into time, and the Lord’s people inherit them. Now let us be clear upon this, and then we shall go through our subject this morning clearly and easily; that the “all things” mean all the things that are in Christ, all the things that are by Jesus Christ, all the things that will make up the Saviour’s joy, our happiness, and God’s eternal glory. Nor is it my intention to dwell this morning much upon the first part of our text, namely, “He that overcometh.” A great deal is said in this book upon the subject of overcoming, and all that must be by oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. The wild beast to be overcome of course means the whole body of sin at large, called a beast, or a wild beast, because it is alien to everything that is holy, just, and good; and that wild beast of sin, in its

general power, is to be overcome by oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. "This is our victory" over the beast, "even our faith" in Christ. And of course the image of the beast means the embodiment of tyrannical power; that also is overcome by oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we shall do valiantly, through him we shall conquer our mightiest foes. And then to overcome the number of his name is to overcome the number that may be arrayed against us; and we do that also by the delightful truth that more is he that is for us than all that are against us. And then to overcome the mark of his name is to overcome that religion by which men are deluded, and to be blessed with that mark that distinguishes the Christian from other men, and that mark is that vital faith in God which God alone can give. I will therefore not occupy your time this morning upon the subject of overcoming; so we may regard two parts of the verse to be our text. First, *the things to be inherited*. Secondly, *the relationships to be enjoyed*. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

First, then, *the things that are to be inherited*, and they are presented to us in connection with our text in a fivefold form. First, here is a kingdom, a glorious and an everlasting kingdom, to be inherited, standing in contrast to all other kingdoms. And this kingdom to be inherited is called in the beginning of this chapter a new heavens and a new earth. John saith, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away: and there was no more sea." Now this new heaven means nothing else but the kingdom of Jesus Christ; it is called new because it belongs to the new covenant, and because in it there is everything new; none of it belongs to the first creation. The 65th chapter of Isaiah will explain to us what is meant by this new heaven and new earth; it means the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ; it means that state of heavenly glory, that suitability of climate, that suitability of temperature, that suitability of tranquillity, that suitability of spring-like, as it were, state of things in which the people shall luxuriate and be happy. "The Lord shall be unto thee thine everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Hence, in the 65th of Isaiah, "Behold, I create new heavens," which was done when Christ's human nature was created, and when he accomplished the work which he did accomplish, to establish this new state of things, to bring us out of all the inclement climes, to bring us out of all the sultry or wintry climes, to bring us out of all the dark, benighted climes in which we have lived, to bring us into that pure and luxurious clime—if I may so call it,—namely, the Lord's presence. "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create"—now comes the explanation;—"for behold I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." Here, then, is the new heaven; it means that purity and luxuriance—I hardly know how to express myself otherwise—of climate into which they shall everlastingly be brought. We have often sung—at least those of you that can't sing can say, with some degree of admiration, those words of Watts's when contemplating this blissful state of things,—

"There everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers."

And again,—

"There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign;
Infinite day excludes the night,
And pleasures banish pain."

"I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy." Now John

saw these new heavens, saw this new state of things, and new earth, or new land, for the word there translated "earth" may be rendered "land," for the sake of explanation, to give us the idea intended. Here is the new promised land. Canaan was the old promised land; that was the promised land flowing with milk and honey, the holy land, the pleasant land, the plentiful land, the land where the Lord dwelt, and the land upon which were the eyes and heart of the Lord from the beginning of the year unto the end. But this new earth, this new land, is a land flowing with milk and honey in a much higher sense, a holy land in a much higher sense, a plentiful land in a much higher respect, a pleasant land after divine order, a land of plenty in the spiritual and eternal sense of the word. Now he that is one with Jesus, then, hath before him this inheritance, hath before him these new heavens and this new earth. The old heavens and the old earth I understand to mean the Jewish heaven and the Jewish earth—how far they may apply in other respects I will not stop now to inquire; the first heaven—the Jewish heaven—their city, and temple, and the presence of the Lord in the holy of holies, passed away; the first earth, the land of Canaan, as the place of God's presence, blessing, and abode, passed away. But here, in these new heavens, God himself is the temple, and therefore they can never pass away; God himself dwells in this heavenly land for ever and ever, therefore it can never pass away. Here, then, are the blissful new heavens and new earth, and he that overcometh everything contrary to it, he that layeth hold by faith of what the Saviour hath done, shall inherit these new heavens and this new earth. The Lord is wise in hiding from us this pure clime, in hiding from us this beautiful country. One of old declares he cannot tell, when called up into these luxuriant climes—these ecstatic climes, the very atmosphere of which thrills the soul with joy unutterable, "whether in the body or out of the body, I cannot tell." What must it be, then, to live in such a country as that, and to be, in our personal state, in sweet accordance with the same? Hence the Old Testament saints saw this better country, and they endured anything and everything that was needful for them to endure, rather than make this earthly country their home, rather than make this world their home, for they desired a better country, and they confessed that the country in which they then dwelt was not good enough for them, and that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth; and as they confessed that, they were in that like Jesus Christ. He never attempted to make a home of earth; he never looked to this world as being anything to him but a scene of sorrow; he looked at this world only as the battle-field into which he came and wrought that victory that none but an incarnate God could achieve. So the Christian. So the Christian; the more he looks at the world in the same light the Saviour did, the better; the more the Christian is enabled to look to the future glory, the new heavens and the new earth, the better. "He for the joy set before him." "I," saith the apostle, "press toward the mark for the prize of my high calling," called in Christ Jesus. We are aiming at an empire, we are aiming at an everlasting kingdom, we are aiming at new heavens and a new earth. Ours will be achievements well worth gaining; yea, that country which we are to gain, an incarnate God thought it worth all that he suffered in order to be there, and bring his followers home. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." Can we say, then, that we are brought to receive the Saviour as having passed the old heavens and the old earth away? He has passed the Jewish ritual away, his own sacrifice taking the place thereof; he has passed the first heaven and the first earth away; they are past and gone, and he has established these new heavens and this new earth; and if we are lovers of the country that we have not yet seen, and are seeking after that, we shall have a standing there, where no fault will ever be laid to our charge. You have read that scripture in the last

chapter of Isaiah upon this, where it saith, "As the new heavens and the new earth,"—this new state of things, "which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord"—no adversary, no storms, no volcanoes, no earthquakes, no winter, no sultry heat, can ever reach there;—"so shall your seed and your name remain." "Your name shall remain;" they are named after the King of the country, they are named after God himself; and there they are to remain, for there is no going out there; when once there, there for ever. That is one thing we are to inherit, then—the kingdom of Jesus Christ—called, among other things, new heavens and a new earth. I am quite aware that millennarians stand opposed to this view of things;—that I have nothing to do with. I read in my Bible that "we are blessed with all spiritual blessings," and I must keep to spiritual things. I believe that the things essential to our mortal bodies will be no use whatever to our raised bodies at the last day, for our bodies will be spiritual. And when I rise from the dead at the last day, if you were to come to me then with the best feast that men could provide, I should smile at it; with the richest adornment that human wisdom could devise or human skill put together, I should smile at it; with the greatest honour that one creature could clothe another with, I should smile at the whole. I should say, I need none of them; they are not any use to me; I am now risen into another order of things far above them; I am gone far beyond them; my supplies are of another kind; my feast is spiritual, my adornment is divine, mine honours godlike. So that we must keep to the spiritual meaning of the holy Scriptures in these things.

Second, they shall not only inherit these pure climes, but they shall have a personal state suited to it. You know that when summer comes, or spring, there is sometimes a beautiful morning, a beautiful day; but there are, perhaps, three things hinder you from enjoying it. First, you are very poorly in body; secondly, you are very miserable in your mind; thirdly, you are very crooked in your circumstances. You say, It is a beautiful day, but it only mocks my woe; I feel no pleasure in it. And so, what would heaven be unless we were constituted so that we should be like it? And then, if we are like it, we can enjoy it. Now if you are as healthy, and strong, and comfortable in your body as the day is beautiful, and as lightsome in your mind as the day is lovely, and as straight in your circumstances as the sun in its course, then you and the day together will be very happy; the day will be happy, and you will be happy, and all will be happy together; but for want of this you cannot be happy. Now let us hear what John saith upon this preparation for heaven. "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." Let us see if we can understand this. "I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven." Now this is a metonymical form of speech; the holy city here is mentioned, but the citizens are meant; and they came down from heaven. So then, if the holy city there means the citizens,—the place mentioned, but the people meant, which is a very frequent form of speech,—let us see if we can get at this, and not fall into the paltry notion of Christ coming to reign on this little bit of an earth. Reign on earth! Why, this earth would not be a quarter big enough for him, if it was all earth and no sea—not a quarter. When we look at the millions, the unnumbered millions, a number that would surpass the arithmetical powers of the highest angel in heaven, with the aggregate of the Saviour's blood-bought people, what would be the use of this peppercorn of an earth? Why, I should want half of it myself, pretty well. You do not say that? Do you think I am going to be shut up in a corner then, as I am now,—sit down and eat my dinner in a prison, sleep in a prison, live in a prison; for what are our houses? Little bits of prisons, little bits of huts, that is all. Heaven is an infinite scene, a scene worthy of an incarnate God. This earth can never be worthy of the glory

of an incarnate God. "There was no more sea" is, I think, explained by Lamentations 2nd and 13th, "Thy breach is great, like the sea." There being therefore no more sea may mean that there shall be no more breach between the blessed God and his people. Remember, our Emmanuel is infinite, his people are a number that no man can number; and do you think we are going to be incommodiously crowded together, as though there were hardly room to move? No, that will not do; I do not think that would be the glorious liberty; I think it would be grievous bondage, myself. Well now, it is said of the holy city, that is, the citizens, they come down from heaven. Now go to the 10th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, and you will see some strange creatures come down from heaven—fourfooted beasts, wild beasts, fowls of the air, and creeping things. They came down from heaven; strange they should come down from heaven. And Peter saw them as they were in themselves; he did not yet see them in what God had constituted them. "Rise, Peter, kill and eat. Not so, Lord, for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." What, Lord, these ugly creatures? Yes, Peter, that is what they were in themselves, but election hath chosen them out of it all, constituted them one with Christ. Christ hath taken away all their ugliness, all their beastly qualities, all their deformities; and these men, these creatures, in what God has constituted them, are holy as Christ is holy, are holy as God is holy. So the Christian is sanctified of God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, by-and-bye called; how called? Called by being born of an incorruptible seed, that liveth and abideth for ever. And thus the Christian adds to his holiness, his spiritual birth, and his holiness comes down from heaven. I did not get my spiritual birth from earth, but from heaven; I did not get my holiness from earth, but from heaven. I can distinguish between earthly holiness and heavenly holiness; earthly holiness will always set people gratulating themselves upon their own supposed goodness, and gratulating one another. Hence we have in most of our churches ten times more earthly holiness than we have heavenly holiness. Heavenly holiness will make a man reject all confidence in the flesh, and make him stand out for Christ, and Christ alone, as his sanctification. Divine holiness unites the soul to God in eternal election, in the Saviour's eternal victory, and in a covenant ordered in all things and sure; for the word Berith, translated "covenant," signifies "purification," and so brought into the bond of the everlasting covenant. Thus these people come down from heaven as to their election, and as to their preservation in Christ, and as to their regeneration; and this regeneration, giving us this divine holiness, unites us thus to Christ, prepares us for that pure clime. So that if you could enter heaven now, if you were to die to-day, when you got there, would you have to say, It is a beautiful place, but I cannot enjoy it, feel rather sad? No; "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." You will not be able to say, I am not very happy in my mind; that will be impossible; God will be your happiness, himself your heaven, himself your joy; God your exceeding joy. You will be as happy as Christ is happy; you will be able to enjoy that luxuriant clime, and all its produce and wonders. And will you have to grieve over circumstances? No, no, not a thing to regret; you will not even feel sorry for any sin you were ever the subject of. Therefore, saith Nehemiah, as a kind of type of this, "Neither be ye sorry." No sorrow can enter there. Here then is a personal state suited to the clime into which they are to come. Is it any wonder that the Saviour should say, "Ye must be born again"? It is sheer delusion to suppose anything human can fit you for an inheritance divine; it is sheer delusion to suppose anything of a creature kind can fit you for Christian inheritance; that anything done by man can fit you for the high association you are to have with the eternal God.

“Ye must be born again;”—there must be that change; and for this reason it is said that the holy city came down from heaven.” There was “a man sent from God;” John the Baptist, said to be sent from God because he derived his mission from God. So the Christian is said to come down from heaven because his election was there before the world was, all his blessedness there before the world was; his birth was there, and now his hope is there, his expectation is there, his anticipation is there, his affection is there, his soul is there, his soul’s desire there, his Saviour there, his God there? “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon the earth that I desire but thee.” Then it is said to be a new Jerusalem—“I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem.” It may be called new for many reasons, only one of which will I assign now—because it will never grow old. There is no such thing as an old man in heaven, nor an old woman either, admirable as they are on earth; no, always young there. The angel you read of, that had been in existence thousands and thousands of years, yet appeared as a young man at the sepulchre. For this reason, then, everything may be called new. Jerusalem’s foundations will never grow old, her walls will never be antique in one sense, yet they are ancient walls in another sense; they never can decay; the jasper walls will always be the same; the light will always be the same, and you as incorruptible as the place itself—always be the same; it is new. “Prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;” and no doubt proud enough, and thinks her dress so beautiful her husband will admire her very much indeed; very careful over it. And just so the soul:—Ah, Lord, clothe my soul with garments of salvation, cover me with the robe of righteousness, adorn my soul with the graces of the Holy Spirit; and then, when the Husband shall come, he will say of that soul, “Who is this?” Ah, Lord, who is it? A poor creature that was once in death and darkness, in the night of sin, the night of guilt, the night of death, the night of hell, the night of eternal ruin; dark as the night. Well, but “thou lookest forth as the morning.” Yes, Lord,—

“Twas midnight with my soul till he,
Bright Morning Star, bade darkness flee.”

I was in darkness, but thou hast brought me out of that death and darkness, and now I see thy glory. “Thou lookest forth as the morning, fair as the moon”—that means like Jesus Christ; “clear as the sun”—that means like Jesus Christ, for he is clear as the sun, and “ye are complete in him!” “Terrible as an army with banners”—that also means like Jesus Christ, for he hath gained the victory, and the soul stands at the Saviour’s right hand bearing the banner. “Jehovah our righteousness” there stands and defies all earth and hell, defies all sins, tribulations, and death itself; so shall the song break forth,—“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Here is pure clime, and here is a prepared people, regeneration bringing them into this sweet oneness with the Saviour; they are holy, they are new, they are prepared, they are adorned, they are comely; yea, the Saviour says, “O my love, thou art beautiful as Tirzah.” As we have sometimes said, the Saviour will not have to come and hang down his head as Zedekiah did when the Lord by his prophet said to Zedekiah, “Where is thy flock that was given thee, thy beautiful flock?” When this question shall come to the Great Shepherd, “Where is thy flock, thy beautiful flock that was given thee?” his answer, shall be, “Here am I, and all the flock that thou hast given me. It was thy will that I should lose none, and I delighted to do thy will, and that was one part of thy will, that

“None of the ransomed shall ever be lost,
The righteous shall hold on his way.”

“and here is the beautiful flock that thou hast given unto me.” Here then, by thus laying hold of the victory of Christ, we come into these pure climes; we are thus, by the Spirit of the living God, prepared for glory, prepared for everlasting bliss; so that the place and the persons shall thus sweetly accord.

We easily see what a solemn contrast presents itself, only under these two views. What is the clime to be inhabited by the lost? Who shall describe its tempests, its thunders, its lightnings, its sultriness, its barrenness, its darkness, its destitution, its shrieks, its howlings, its horrors,—who can describe the damnation of hell? My hearer, believe me when I say, religion is everything. Other things are but shadows; whether they are sorrows or joys, they soon pass away; what are they all but fleeting shadows? To live and die without religion, without vital godliness, is indeed to be miserable, is indeed to be cursed, is indeed to be wretched beyond description of language, or the conception even of an angelic mind. And as to the state of the person that is lost—when you rise at the last day, a vivid sense of all your sins about you, and all your sins within you, and your horrible appearance. The just are to be raised in the likeness of Christ, the others will be raised in the likeness of the devil. The devil hath a personal form; whether he has a body I cannot say, because it is nowhere shown; but he is a person, and he goes about from place to place; he is a person, an individual; and the lost will be raised in his likeness, and that likeness will be blacker than night, that likeness will betray on the countenance a terror in the soul that would distress one to look upon; so that the region and the person shall be alike—awful to the last degree. See the infinite gulf, then, fixed between the saved and the lost. Well may the apostle, in the fulness of his desire for the people of God to be kept close to their own privileges, say, “We ought to take the more earnest heed.” God bring us more and more to look into these attractive things, and to see how great a death that is from which we are delivered, and how great a glory that is that we have everlastingly to possess and to enjoy.

Thirdly, not only, then, as to heaven and its inhabitants shall the place and the people accord, but the next thing that we are to inherit is the presence of God. “I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.” What is this great voice? Answer, 27th of Isaiah, “In that day the great trumpet,” that is the voice, the voice of the gospel—“In that day the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish.” Again, “He shall send his angels”—his messengers, his ministers, with “the sound of a great trumpet, and shall gather together his elect.” That is a very remarkable collocation of words there, “He shall send his angels with the sound of a *great* trumpet, and shall gather together his *elect*?” Little trumpets will gather others together, and the great trumpet will drive others away, but it will gather together God’s elect. Little trumpets are false gospels. But the great trumpet, called great because it proclaims the greatness of Christ’s salvation, the greatness of God’s graces, the greatness of the victory the Saviour hath wrought, the greatness of his interposition, and the great, the infallible certainty that is found in every iota of the gospel—this is the great voice to declare that the tabernacle of God is with men. What is the charge? Oh, these men are so extravagant, they go so far. As though sin was not extravagant, and as though Satan was not extravagant, and as though the grave was not extravagant, and as though the fire of hell was not extravagant. And so they cry out for a little gospel. But this great trumpet, this great gospel of “I will and they shall,” as though the Lord should say, I care not whether it is a Manassch, a Saul of Tarsus, a thief on the cross—let him be what he may, if he is included in the vessel as shown in Peter’s vision, God has sovereignly given this everlasting covenant, “I will and they shall:” I will dwell with that man,

and that man shall dwell with me. "I heard a great voice," it is the great trumpet. It drives the others away. The Saviour blew the great trumpet in the 6th of John,—see the fulness and certainty all through that chapter,—and it drove the main body away, and the things were so great that even his disciples almost staggered. "Will ye also go away?" "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life." "I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." Now go to the 68th Psalm, and you get a further explanation; see that God dwells with men by the incarnation and achievement of the Saviour. "Thou," blessed Redeemer, "hast ascended on high; thou hast led"—honours to his dear name! I can hardly ever read these words without being delighted with them more or less: "thou hast led captivity captive:" that is, he has led sin captive; sin hath led us, he led that; death led us, and he has led that; the world has led us, but he led that; error has led us, but he led that nothing could lead him, nothing could take him captive. He was not taken captive when he was crucified, no; he sovereignly condescended to submit to what they did; they had no dominion over him, but his dominion over them at the same time was entire. "Thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men—exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins;"—"yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." So that the Lord God dwells with us, and we are to dwell with him by the triumphant ascension of the Saviour, and by the gifts of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of faith, and repentance, and forgiveness of sins. "I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men"—the great voice of the gospel; "and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people; so they are his willing people." It is true we have an old man within us, that tries to hinder the willingness of the new man; but God is our witness that we are willing to be nothing, and willing that he should be our God, and we feel it our highest honour to hold communion with him, and to be devoted to his blessed name and service. "And God himself shall be with them"—God himself; he would not trust them in the hands of another, he loves them too well for that, "Thy saints are in thine hands,"—"God himself shall be with them, and be their God." Now he that hath this victory, then, of Christ, and keepeth the Saviour's works unto the end, he shall inherit the new heavens and new earth, inherit personal fitness, and inherit the presence of the Lord:—"the tabernacle of God is with men." Ah, some tell us, that is to be by-and-bye on this earth. Well, but did not the Saviour dwell on this earth when he came to suffer? and doth he not dwell among his people now? I am sure, if he does not dwell with us I shall have nothing more to say. He has dwelt with us; he dwelt in the Old Surrey Tabernacle many years, and so he does in the New, I am as sure of it as I am of my existence. And so his people, they will dwell with him.

Well, then, the fourth thing would be the glorious liberty of the people of God; and the fifth thing and last I should have touched upon was the perfect welcome we now have to all the blessings of the gospel—"To him that is athirst I will give of the water of life freely:" but as your time is gone I must say no more.