

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

THE APPLE TREE

A Sermon

PREACHED ON SUNDAY MORNING, OCTOBER 1ST, 1865, BY

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AT THE NEW SURREY TABERNACLE, WANSEY STREET.

“As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.”—Song of Solomon ii. 3.

WHEN the forces of the calamities of life are felt, when adversities on all hands abound, and when, in connection with that, there is a sight and sense of the dreadful condition we are in as sinners, what, under such feelings and circumstances, can be so refreshing to those that are seeking the Lord, and that have any confidence in him, as to hear the dear Saviour speak in terms so soothing, and so attractive, and so pleasing as these, “I am the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys”! This is to represent his tranquil, fragrant, peaceful character, as the Mediator between God and man; and as he thus appears the Mediator in these calm, attractive, and fragrant features, so he is in this the representative of the great God, wherein God appears as a Father, with all the deep compassion and inflexible pity of the immutability of his love: “He remembereth our frame, he knoweth that we are dust;” “Like as a father pitieth his children, so doth the Lord pity them that fear him.” And what, while the dear Saviour thus speaketh of himself, what is his estimate of those that love him, of those that seek him, of those people that rejoice in this way of escape from all that is distressing, and this way of access to God into all that is peaceful, tranquil, and pleasing—what saith the Saviour of such people? Why, he saith, “As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters.” He recognizes the good that he himself by his Spirit implants in the soul; he passes by the bad, and looks at the good. Men, as you are aware, are generally in the habit of passing by the good and looking at the bad; but the Lord passeth by the bad, and looketh at the good, and will not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor see perverseness in Israel. This representation of the dear Saviour awakened the minds of the people of that day, and they, in their united capacity, speaking in the singular, give the beautiful answer contained in our text, that “as the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.” The Lord help me to work out the spirit and meaning of these words in a way, if it be his pleasure, that shall be solemnly and lastingly profitable unto us all.

Now first, then, I notice *the Saviour's distinction from the sons of men*. Secondly, *his association with the sons of men*; for here, in our text, he is said to be “among the sons.” Thirdly, *the illustration here given*: “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.”

First, then, I notice *the Saviour's distinction from the sons of men*. The first distinction of the Saviour from the sons of men is that of his sinlessness. And ever remember that this is the foundation of our religion; for as sin is the foundation of all our woe, holiness must form the foundation.

of all our bliss. So, then, the Lord Jesus Christ was "that holy thing." Hence, in the 45th Psalm, "Thou art fairer than the children of men." There was a holy law to meet, here is a holy Person to meet that holy law; there was a righteous law to meet, under which we are, and by the tremendous exactions and claims of which we stand responsible to the great Judge of all; here is a righteous Person that could meet the righteous demands of that righteous law. Here is a spiritual law, and while we are carnal, sold under sin, Jesus was spiritual, and met that spiritual law. Here is an infallible law, and the dear Saviour was infallibly holy, and therefore could and did meet the law in the infallibility thereof. This is one distinction, then, between Christ and the sons of men. The second distinction I notice is that he received with infinite pleasure what all of us (and you must not be offended when I say it, for I must be faithful)—he received with infinite pleasure what all of us by nature blindly hate and despise. You observe in the 45th Psalm it saith, "Grace is poured into thy lips;" by which grace we, of course, are to understand the covenant of grace; that is, that there was a covenant—that is, a testamentary will—by which the great God willed the everlasting salvation of sinners, and by which the great God willed the everlasting blessedness of a number that no man can number. But then, at the same time, they were in such a state by sin that grace and grace only could deliver them; therefore the dear Saviour received this covenant of grace; grace was poured into his lips, and he received it. And I wish to be very careful here, because this is such an essential matter, seeing that we, in order to be saved, must be partakers of his holiness, and in order to be saved we must also be partakers of the same grace. Now then, the grace that he received, or, if I can make the matter more clear, the doctrine—for that will amount to the same thing—that he received was this, that "He who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." Now, then, Jesus Christ did by his atonement, as we shall presently have more particularly to notice, sanctify the people by putting their sins away by the sacrifice of himself. "He who sanctifieth and they who are sanctified;" that is, the people set apart in the deep counsels of eternity, chosen in Christ before the world was, said by Jude to be sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus. Now mark, "He who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified;" that is, the people whom Christ died for, the people loved and chosen, "are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." So that he calls them brethren on the ground of God the Father having constituted them one with him. God the Father, in the deep counsels of eternity, constituted them one with Christ, and on the ground of God the Father's choice of them, on the ground of God the Father's having chosen them to eternal salvation; on this ground the Saviour owns them. You will readily perceive that this is a ground—one ground—upon which vast numbers despise the truth of God. They say, "We will receive anything except that dreadful doctrine of election;" and they call it dreadful simply because they do not understand it. Now, then, Jesus Christ received this will of God; and though, in the order of this covenant, all our responsibility fell upon him, yet he received that responsibility; and though all our sins fell upon him, yet he received those our sins; and though all the bitterness of death fell upon him, yet that death he never refused to die; and though a life of unexampled poverty, sorrow, slander, and reproach that he should undergo, should fall upon him, yet he never refused, but acquiesced in the good will of the blessed God, and was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. And the third distinction is that which I have partly anticipated—that Jesus Christ did not die for himself. He might have gone straight to glory without laying down his life, as far as he was personally concerned; but then he stood as the Mediator of this better covenant, and therefore laid

down his life. And what did he do in laying down his life? Why, he did what I hope all this assembly is glad to hear—he swallowed up death in victory, and brought life and immortality to light. He hath taken away the sting of death: the sting of death is sin, and that sting he has taken away; and the strength of sin is the law: but thanks be to God, that giveth us the victory by our Lord Jesus Christ. The fourth distinction between the Saviour and the sons of men is this—that he hath acquired by his own worth eternal life. “He dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.” He hath acquired eternal freedom; he was once under our responsibilities; those responsibilities he has met, and he is now eternally free from them; he has acquired everlasting rest, he has acquired a fulness of joy in God’s presence, and pleasures for evermore at God’s right hand. Now, then, our text calls this person “the beloved;” “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.” Thus, then, see how he stands out in distinction.

Now let us see, in the next place, *his association with the sons of men.* He is among the sons of men; he tabernacled on earth, and he is still among the sons of men. Let us see, then, how he is with us. First, in his substitutional character; and secondly, in the plenitudes, the sure plenitudes of the gospel. First, he is with us in his substitutional character. Hence, mark the 53rd of Isaiah; “He was numbered with the transgressors.” Well, what of that? Why, “He bare the sin of many.” Believest thou this? Do you, my hearer, see that while without holiness no man can see the Lord, that the Lord Jesus Christ must, by what he has done, be your sanctification? The unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and do you see that if you appear righteous before God, it must be by this substitutional work of the Lord Jesus Christ? And do you also see that if death be swallowed up in victory, you, in order to be a victor, in order to be a conqueror, in order to pass triumphant through Jordan, in order to answer the question, “How canst thou do in the swelling of Jordan?” that you yourself must be a believer in and a receiver of the testimony of what the Lord Jesus Christ hath done? And thus he is among the sons of men to bear their sins; he is among the sons of men to make intercession for them. And if we go to the 2nd chapter of Paul’s Epistle to the Hebrews, we shall see how wonderfully he is there among the sons of men. He passed by in his sovereignty the nature of angels, and took upon him in his mercy the seed of Abraham; “that through death”—here is the love of God in sending such a Saviour, and here is the love of Christ in undergoing such a death, and here is the love of the Spirit in revealing to us such wonders as are revealed by this wondrous Person—“that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage;” and here it is that the children, being partakers of flesh and blood, he likewise partook of the same, “that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest;”—mark the language, “a merciful and faithful high priest”! Oh, if I were speaking this morning to an assembly of the greatest sinners upon the face of the globe, and the Lord were pleased to open their eyes to what the Saviour hath done, I would sound it out again and again that he hath made with God reconciliation for iniquity. There is no mischief that sin hath done that he hath not repaired; there is no debt that sin has incurred that he has not paid; there is no foe under which sin hath brought us that he hath not conquered; there is no fiery wrath which sin hath lighted up which he hath not quenched; there is no curse which sin hath entailed which he hath not borne; there is no sorrow which sin hath implanted which he hath not torn up by the roots; there is no mountain that sin hath rolled in upon us that he has not overturned; there is no distance between us and God which he has not filled up; and there is not anything left; all is tranquil, all is settled; he hath made reconciliation, he

hath done the work. Thus, then, he is among men as the substitute,—holy, and righteous, and victorious, and settled down in an everlasting, an immoveable kingdom; and he is thus among the sons of men in order to gather them up into the knowledge of him as their sanctification, their justification, their victory, their representative in that eternal world; into the knowledge of him as having thus made reconciliation for the sins of the people. It is done; justice asks no more, the law asks no more, God asks no more, the conscience can ask no more; and so it may well be written of those that overcame, that “they overcame by the blood of the Lamb.” Thus, then, we have by Jesus Christ this freedom, and everything thus made right with God, by which we have peace with God. And if it be your happy lot to understand this matter, it will make the blessed God to you supremely attractive; it will make the Lord Jesus Christ to you supremely precious; it will make the house of God to you, where these tidings are proclaimed, ever desirable, and it will make you say, “I love the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.” And it will be some comfort to you to think, “Well, I am going again to the house of God, and I am sure to hear the gospel, for our minister preaches nothing else; he wishes to live nothing else, to know not anything else, but to be devoted from time to time to the wondrous mysteries of the gospel.” Oh, how many human woes there are under which the glorious gospel comes in its remedial form, and saith that unto us that enables us to endure the same, that reconciles us to our lot by the way, and brings us to say with the poet,—

“How harsh soe'er the way,
Dear Saviour, still lead on;
Nor leave us till we say,
'Father, thy will be done.'”

But not only is Jesus Christ among the sons of men in his substitutional character, and to bring us thus to God, that we may walk with God, and talk with God; but he is among them also in all the plenitudes of the gospel; and indeed, this is indicated by the illustration of the apple tree, which we shall presently notice; but I must just say a word here upon the plenitudes of the gospel. Now every poor sinner is more welcome to the promises of the gospel than the strongest believer can believe that he is. There is that sort of legality, and unbelief, and fearfulness about us, that we sometimes think we are not welcome to the mercies of the Lord; and then we are afraid, on the other hand,—and that is a right feeling too,—lest we should be presumptuous; for really we can hardly speak or move but we are liable to err in some way or another. It is one of the most wonderful things possible to be kept in a right spirit. That was a very needful prayer of the Psalmist, which I am sure every Christian would wish to pray, and to realize the answer, namely, “Renew within me a right spirit.” Oh, to be kept in a spirit of faith, in a spirit of humility, in a spirit of decision, in a spirit of conformity to God's blessed truth, and in a spirit of gratitude to his name for the unspeakable gift of his dear Son! And as to the plenitudes of the gospel, will the gospel ever be exhausted? I had intended, but I hardly dare venture to do so, to have illustrated this next point of the Lord Jesus Christ being among us in the plenitudes of the gospel by the blessings in the 33rd of Deuteronomy, declared of Joseph. But before I just glance at that, I may just say—what you will not like to hear in one sense,—none of us do like it, but it is a truth,—namely, that the time will come when there is not anything under the sun will afford you the least comfort whatever; your health gone, and your life almost ebbing, your friends useless, and all those things that have been your comfort, and your comforters too, are now of no use whatever. Shall I just linger here?—I am speaking to many young people, and perhaps to some advanced in years, that have never yet been concerned about this matter. One can hardly forbear saying here, what a mercy

if this is made to rest upon your mind, the thought that the time will come when every human consolation will be dried up, when every human friend must be helpless as regards myself, when every human hope must perish; and if I am then found without any knowledge of the gospel of God, without any knowledge of Christ, without any faith in him, and without any acquaintance with him, what a miserable wreck shall I be! And if I hear at that solemn moment the words, "He that is unjust let him be unjust still; he that is filthy let him be filthy still"! Ah, if thou shouldst be found in a thoughtless state, unconcerned, this will be thine awful end. But if, on the other hand, thou seest that in Jesus there are springs that will never run dry, there is a river the streams whereof shall make glad poor, dying, thirsty men and women,—when every other comfort is gone, God will make them drink of the river of his pleasures, and they shall join with the apostle and say, "Though the outward man perish thus and die, the inward man is renewed day by day:"—if thou seest this, what an unspeakable mercy! Now view the blessing of Joseph. There is a fourfold representation of the blessedness, to show how God dwells with us, and to show how we dwell with God, in the plenitudes of the gospel. "And of Joseph he said, Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath, and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon, and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills." Now the precious fruits brought forth by the sun spiritually mean the promises of the gospel, that are ripened into perfection by the work of Jesus Christ; and does not the apostle Peter say of these fruits, these promises, that they are "exceeding great and precious promises"? They are the fruits, then, brought forth by the sun, and put forth by the moon; let the moon be a figure of the gospel, that, while Christ has ripened the promises into perfection, the gospel puts them forth. And these are said to be the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills. Now get the meaning of that into your mind as clearly as possible. If any one were to ask you what is meant by the ancient mountains, would you be able to answer? If any one were to ask you what is meant by the lasting hills, would you say, the mountains of eternity? But that gives no explanation. Would you say, the lasting hills of eternity? That is not an explanation. Let us, therefore, have a clear explanation of this matter; truth can never do you good unless you get it into the understanding; the wayside, stony-ground, or thorny-ground hearer got the word into the memory, but not understanding the value of it they parted with it; but he on the good ground is he that understandeth it; and when you get a clear understanding of it your understanding is a kind of holy of holies, into which Satan cannot enter; he may plunder your memory, but confound your understanding never, when the Holy Ghost gives that understanding. Now, mountains and hills stand in contrast to valleys; that is a self-evident proposition. Sin hath brought us down into the valley of guilt, into the valley of death, and if grace prevent not will drag us ultimately into the lowest hell. Now, then, what are the mountains that stand in contrast to these valleys? First, the love of God—that is the ancient mountain—takes hold of you, lifts you up above what you are as a sinner. Second, eternal election chose you, and registered your name in the same book that Christ's name is in; his name stands there above yours, and until his name is blotted out yours cannot be blotted out, because his name stands there to give validity to the book and to all the names that are there. Your name will be blotted out of the book of this life, and many names will be blotted out of the book of profession, but no name ever was or ever will be blotted out of the Lamb's book of life, because his blood has blotted out all their sins, and therefore their names shall for ever remain. Again, the righteousness of Christ comes, and lifts you up into

the light of God's countenance ; again, the atonement of Christ comes, and lifts you up out of the pit wherein there is no water ; again, the Holy Spirit comes by his testimony, and by the promises of the word, and lifts you up above the things of time and sense. It is a great thing for ministers and people to live on these mountains, and to be raised up by them. Why, if ministers and people were to take notice of all around them, and dwell upon the everlasting disputes of men, you may make yourselves wretched. I say, the Lord make our feet like hinds' feet, that we may walk in his elevating love, walk in his elevating choice, walk in his elevating righteousness, walk by faith in his elevating atonement, walk in his elevating promise, in his elevating power. These great truths, then, are the ancient mountains, and these are the lasting hills. The love of God will ever last, the choice of God will ever last, the righteousness of God will ever last, the salvation of God will ever last, the promise of God will ever last, the power of God will ever last, the kingdom of God will ever last. Here are the blessings, then, the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills. He is thus among the sons of men not only as a substitute, but in all the plenitude of the everlasting gospel. Again, he is among the sons of men with a heart full of good will towards them. Hence, in the blessing of Joseph, "The good will of him that dwelt in the bush." That burning bush I take to be a type of Christ in his humiliation, where he appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh, but could not be consumed ; the good will of God was in him. Secondly, I take the burning bush to be a figure of the Christian in his afflictions and trials ; and everybody thinks the man must be consumed ; but the good will of God is in the man, the man is a believer in God's good will, and God has a good will towards the man, and all the ill will of fiery trials shall never consume that man—he is unconsumable—he hath in him an indestructible principle, and the great Redeemer hath said, "Because I live, ye shall live also." "The good will." You all know, friends, that you cannot enjoy fellowship without good will. If you are blessed with great plenty in your houses, but if you have not good will towards one another, why, you spoil it, and for want of mutual good will you do not enjoy what you have. Not so here in the truths of God : God hath a good will to us ; Christ has a good will to us ; the Holy Spirit has a good will to us, and we have a good will to him ; he loves us, and we love him ; he hath chosen us, and we chose him ; he seeks us, and we seek him ; he is pleased with us, and we are pleased with him ; he is satisfied with us, and we are satisfied with him ; he never means to part with us, and we never mean to part with him ; he never means to give us up, and we never mean to give him up ; and so the matter is settled to eternity, nor can eternity itself diminish at all the tranquillity and satisfying blessedness of the mutual good will between the Lamb and his bride, between the heavenly Father and these heaven-born children, between the King of Zion and his subjects, that shall occupy immeasurable realms, and dwell for ever in this good will. He is among the sons of men, then, in the plenitudes of the gospel, and in this good will. Also he is among them in all the sacrificial perfection of his work. "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock," pointing to the sacrificial death of Christ,—and there he dwells among us, and we with him. And he dwells among us also in the greatness of his power ; he can always defend us ; "his horns are like the horns of unicorns ; with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth ; and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim ;" and Ephraim signifies *fruitfulness* or *fulness*, to denote the blessedness of the gospel ; "and they are the thousands of Manasseh ;" and Manasseh signifies *forgetfulness*, to denote that the Lord's people shall by-and-bye forget all their trials, all their troubles, and all their father's house. "Forget thine own people," after the flesh, "and thy father's house ;" "so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty, for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him." And I make no hesitation in saying, I will not,

even at this early stage of our pilgrimage here, be ashamed to make publicly this confession, that one end I have in view is this—to make you that shall assemble here from time to time forget your troubles, to make you forget your doubts and fears, and to forget all that makes you uncomfortable, and to fill your understanding, and fill your memory, and fill your minds, and fill your hearts with such recollections of God's everlasting love, that in spite of yourselves you shall forget all your troubles, and rejoice in the freedom you have in Christ. It will be my aim thus to rob you, and I hope it will be with your own consent; I hope you won't mind my robbing you thus.

And the Lord is very kind in dealing thus with me; he makes me sometimes forget all my toils, and all my troubles, and all my infirmities, and all my sins, and rejoice only in that freedom and blessedness I have in Christ Jesus; then I am happy, and only then. Thus, then, the Saviour stands out in distinction from the sons of men; second, that he is among them, as we have said, as the great Surety for their sins. Those are beautiful words upon the suretyship character of Christ. I think we have them in one of our hymns now:—

“The sins of one most righteous day
May plunge us in despair,
But the crimes of numerous years
Shall our great Surety clear.”

That is the relation in which he dwells among us. And third, as we have said, he dwells among us in all the plenitudes of the gospel; fulness of good will, fulness of sacrificial perfection, and of almighty power to make us forget our sorrows and griefs.

We must now come, then, to the last part of our subject, *the illustration here given*. “As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.” The tree, I need not say, is the symbol of peace, paradisiacal pleasantness; it means everything that is pleasant. There is another contrast here, you see, which I need not notice, because I think I have said enough to make that matter clear. Now, have we sat down under his shadow, have we done this? I will describe how it is done, and leave you to judge whether you know anything of thus being brought under the shadow of Jesus with great delight, and whether you have found the fruit thereof sweet to your taste. There are four motives, or, in other words, there are four constraining powers that constrain the soul thus to yield itself to God, and sit down under the mediatorial shadow of this paradisiacal tree. First the constraining love of God. 36th Psalm: “How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” Thy loving-kindness is free, and therefore suited to a sinner like me; thy loving-kindness is great, thy loving-kindness is everlasting. When I look at the gift of thy dear Son, when I look at his love in laying down his life, when I look at thy love in opening my blind eyes, “how excellent is thy loving-kindness!” I do love thee, thy truth, thy name, and thy ways; and therefore, by thy constraining love, I put my trust under the shadow of thy wings. That is one power. And so here, in connection with our text, the church expresseth the same, “He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.” Ah, then, poor sinner, God give you such a sight and sense of the freeness, and greatness, and eternity of his love, that by that you may be constrained to give him your confidence, to give him your hope, and to say, Here I am, Lord; deal with me in thy loving-kindness. Thou knowest what I am, and what I need, and thou knowest, Lord, that my hope is in that love that covereth all sin; my hope is in that love, that charity divine, that hideth a multitude of sins. Ah, blessed God! how shall my soul sufficiently praise thy dear name for bringing me thus under such a defence as this, constrained by thy love? The second power that constraineth us to do so is that of necessity. 57th Psalm; “Be

merciful unto me, O God"—I like that approach, for that is approaching reverentially,—“be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.” Ah, have you domestic affliction? Have you losses? Have you bodily affliction? Have you slanderers or enemies? Are you grieved and distressed, and hardly know which way to move, or what to say, or how to act? God help you to act as there recorded; look to him and say, “Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me; for my soul trusteth in thee; yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast?” Lord, if I make my refuge somewhere else, the refuge may fail before the calamities are gone; but if I make thee my refuge, the calamities are sure to be gone before the refuge will fail; the eternal God is my refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. This, then, is another constraining power, the constraint of necessity. “I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.” The third constraining power is that of the Lord’s own word, his assurance that we shall not be turned away. 91st Psalm: “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High”—that is, that dwells in Christ; Christ is the secret place,—“shall abide,” that is God’s own word, “shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.” He will not turn you away, he will not cast you out; you shall abide, your hope shall be as an anchor of the soul; you shall find him to be your fortress, your high tower, your strong tower; yea, you will find him answer your prayers. “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the rock that is higher than I.” The fourth constraining power bringing us under his shadow is the state of things indicated by the apple tree, this fruit-bearing tree. It is the symbol of peace and blessedness; that is another constraining power. I would that I had grace and gifts by which I could open up this last part of my subject more clearly. Not only is here the love of God, not only a refuge in time of calamity, not only are we assured the Lord will not cast out those who thus fly to him for refuge: but look at the order of things. Go to the 22nd chapter of the Book of Revelation, and there you get our text amply and beautifully explained. John sees a river, in contrast to fiery wrath, proceeding—mark this—from the throne of God and the Lamb. Now in Ezekiel the river is said to come out of the threshold of the temple, on the south side of the altar, so that there is the altar before the temple; the altar stands before the temple, so that not one of the sins of the people could go into the temple, for the sacrifice was there to prevent the sins being heard or being seen inside of the temple. No sin of a believer can cry in heaven; it cannot get into heaven; Christ stands between sin and heaven; and your sins, in their attempts to condemn you before God, fall dead at the Saviour’s feet, swallowed up by his sacrificial character. And mark, the river proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. Ah, then, do your sins distress you and discourage you? Dost thou not hear John saying unto thee, “Behold the Lamb of God”? The river proceeds not from the throne of abstract Deity, but from the throne of God and the Lamb, therefore clear as crystal; the Lamb of God is there, the sacrifice is there, the atonement for all your sins is there. And now come to the tree of life; and that tree yields fruit every month. What witnesses some of you are of this! Very few of you—I speak now to our old hearers,—you little ones, I cannot say much of you yet, but I know, at the old Surrey Tabernacle, very few of you could say you went very many months without getting a little fruit, a little here, and a little there,—not many months. So that in the experience of those that love the truth this tree of life is found to yield her fruit every month. The Lord knows when and how to time his blessed word: “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”