

RIGHT DECISION.

A Sermon

PREACHED AT THE OPENING OF THE NEW BAPTIST CHAPEL,
QUEEN'S SQUARE, BRIGHTON,
ON TUESDAY EVENING, MARCH 10TH, 1857.

BY

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A SERMON.

“ We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” Micah iv. 5.

THE prophecies of this book seem to have a twofold object—one, to set forth, and that, too, in a very definite way, those solemn judgments which should come upon both the capitals of Canaan—viz., Jerusalem and Samaria—on the ground of their apostacy from God ; and, therefore, the prophet declared Mount Zion should be ploughed as a field, which is a truth, for the southern part is at this moment cultivated ; and Samaria should be heaps of ruin ; and every city now is in the very state described by this prophet ; so true is the Lord to his judgments, as well as to his mercies ; and it is a subject which has encouraged, under some circumstances, the faith of the people of God, in looking around even at the external evidences that we have of the truth of the Bible, when the Christian seems to have no evidence, in his experience, of an interest in the things of God, but they can only say, as did this prophet, “ Woe is

me." They are sometimes glad to refer to some external and tangible evidence to the truth of the blessed Book of God, so as to have, in any form, something like encouragement, and ground to be kept from being carried away by that torrent of infidelity which every Christian feels at times rising in his heart. But a more distinctive part of the prophet's mission was to set forth the glorious gospel of the blessed God, as in this chapter, in the next, and also in the last, and in some other parts.

Now, we do not intend occupying your time by many introductory remarks. Suffice it to say, that we have had, in the two former discourses of this day, that which constitutes the chief excellency of every minister of the gospel, and of every Christian in the world—and that is, *decision for truth*; and it was, perhaps, one of the best congratulations that the Saviour could bestow upon the disciples, when he said, "Ye are they which have *continued with me* in my temptations:" therefore, he said to them, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." And it will be the comfort of every dying Christian to be able to look back, and say with the Psalmist, "I have stuck unto thy testimonies." So you find, in connection with our text, a people that did not belong to the Lord. "All people will walk—every one in the name of his God:" that is perfectly natural: and "we will walk in the name of the Lord our God" when they will not be able to "walk in the name of their God." So that

we have before us, this evening, one of the most solemn subjects I could possibly meet you with—viz., that of Godliness: whether, in the gospel sense, God is *our* God, or not. I will, as the Lord shall enable me, enter into the matter, and just remind you of the threefold aspect of our text.

I. THE RELATION: “*Our God.*”

II. THE RESOLUTION: “*We will walk in the name of the Lord our God.*”

III., and Lastly, CONTINUATION: “*For ever and ever.*”

I. Now, the first thing for us to consider is, “THE RELATION—OUR GOD.”

Now, my hearers, let me say to you there are but two relations, strictly speaking, in which we can stand to God. In a word, all men, by nature, or in the first Adam, stand in the same relation to God. Let us look at that matter, for it is one of vital and everlasting importance. What is the relation in which we stand to our Maker in the first Adam? There are, in the word of God, two federal heads—the first Adam, and the second. In the first Adam we stand related to God by his holy law; and, by law, we are in the first Adam sinners, and nothing but sinners. If sin could have consisted in anything but apostacy from God, it would not have been so destructive as it is. The great secret of sin being so destructive is because the quint-essence of it lies in apostacy from God; therefore, when Adam exchanged the truth of God for the Serpent’s falsehood, and

adopted Satanic falsehood in the place of God's truth, there was actual apostacy from God. Then came the curse, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Thus "sin entered into the world, and death by sin." We can account for natural death better by the Bible than by any other means. There has been no scientific discovery yet, and I believe there never will be, that can really assign a reason why we should die at all, or grow old; there is nothing in the mechanism of the body to warrant the idea of death. Scientific men cannot say how it is, and why it is, men die. It was not originally designed that they should die. Therefore, we must not look for this death-cause in any fault in the mechanism of the body. And there is another thing which science has never yet discovered, and, I suppose, never will, that is, the vital principle of life. Now, the curse of the law entered into that vital principle, and the vital principle of our natural life being thus vitiated by sin, and then cursed by the law, it is that principle so vitiated which undermines the mechanism of the body that causes us, in a few years, to wear out, become old, subjects the body to a variety of accidents, diseases, and decay; and, by-and-bye, we die. That is the only way we can account really, and truly, for death. I am speaking now somewhat scientifically—still, to dwell here for a moment, this shews the absolute necessity of being born again; so that, if I have not another vital principle that cannot be vitiated; if this other new principle be

not implanted in me ; I possess nothing in my soul or body but that which is vitiated, sinful, and corrupt. Therefore, the Saviour says, "Ye must be born again:" and the apostle Peter beautifully expresses it, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed—(the principle of new life is incorruptible, 'Christ in me, the hope of glory')—but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."

But, even this is not the point I wish to touch upon.

Let me say, first of all, that we all stand by nature under a law relation to God; all of you are under the law, independent of all you have done, whether it be good or bad; you were just as much a sinner the very day you were born into this world as you are now; and all the sins you have committed since your birth do not make you a sinner; they only merely prove that you are a sinner, just as the good works done by a believer do not make him a saint, but merely prove that he is a believer;—so, whatever sins men may commit, do not make them sinners, but merely prove that they are sinners. The characteristics of the law stand thus: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself."

Now, my hearers, let me say to you, that when a natural man is put to this test, it will be found that there is nothing that he so much hates. It is said of the law that it "worketh wrath." When the

Lord convinces a sinner of sin, almost the first thing that sinner feels is this,—“ I am a sinner, but I will be so no longer ; I will endeavour to make myself holy.” He goes to work to make himself holy, but he finds that the law of God reaches his inmost thoughts. He says, “ I say my prayers ; I keep myself serious, sober, dutiful, and moral, and do everything I can, and yet I don't seem right now.” No ; and you never will in that way—never ; no more than the leopard can change his spots, or the Ethiopian his skin. The law of God has an almighty grasp on you, in the first Adam ; and I will say to you, that unless you are brought to know and feel this you must be eternally lost ; for the Lord Jesus Christ says of the work of the Holy Ghost, “ He shall convince the world of *sin* ;” and by the law is the knowledge of sin. You may not at the first understand this, but you must be brought to feel that you deserve nothing in God's sight but wrath and condemnation, and that you cannot be saved, and God cannot be your God, in the sense spoken of in our text, unless that law relationship to God in which you stand by nature be dissolved.

The law of God has a twofold aspect—the preceptive and the penal. The Lord Jesus Christ met the law in the precept of it. “ Love is the fulfilling of the law ;” he being God as well as man, he loved God for us with all his heart, with all his mind, with all his strength, and his neighbour as himself ; and he has thus gone to the

end of the precept of the law ; so that thus he exonerates man, so that we, in the legal sense of the word, have nothing whatever to do with the law, and the Lord Jesus by the apostle says (if it was not the Lord's own word I should be looked upon as the most presumptuous man that ever lived), "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness;" so that you must be brought to see you are nothing before a holy and righteous God but an ungodly creature ; your nature ungodly, your heart ungodly, and the best life under heaven, when tested by the strictness of God's law, will come under the same category, ungodly. What is to be done? Why, Jesus Christ has met God's law; therefore the apostle says, with savour, power, and sweetness, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins ; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Now, my hearers; let me ask you one and all, what do you know of being brought down before God under a sight and sense of your own utter destitution, guilt and unrighteousness before him ?—what do you know of being brought so low as to see that if the Saviour does not save you entirely, you must be lost ?—what do you know of being brought to see that not one jot or tittle of God's law can you ever fulfil ?—what do you know, in the next place, of the

attractions of the righteousness of Jesus? You will say, "His obedient life!" What was it for? To justify the ungodly, to justify the condemned, to justify every poor sinner that is brought to see that way of acceptance with God, and to say of the righteousness of Jesus as David did of Goliath's sword,— "Give it me, for there is none like that." Nothing, save hell, had been our doom. Sin had entailed wrath. How is this relationship to be dissolved? Jesus Christ came into that wrath.

Now let me remind you of something here to the real Christian of vast importance. It has often been astonishing to my mind. It is this,—that the Lord Jesus Christ loved God and loved us as much in the very centre of his bitterest sufferings as he did before he came to that part, and as he does now. Here is a mighty distinction between the Mediator and the poor sinner. Devils, who are cursed, hate God; and if the wrath of God come into your conscience, you will hate God, curse your own existence, and wish that you had been a brute or anything that did not possess a soul; and you will be ready to say,—

"Ah, whither shall I flee,
To hide myself from wrath and thee?"

Therefore, the soul that comes under God's wrath, and is lost, can do nothing in return but blaspheme God. But the Lord Jesus Christ endured the flaming sword of justice wielded by Almighty power,

and he took that bitter cup of wrath, and went into those deep waters where there is no standing; and yet he loved God in the midst of all; he returned not a particle of wrath to God; and to shew this, he did, before he died, exemplify the greatness of his love, in answering the prayer of just such a poor sinner as you and I are; when the Holy Ghost opened the eyes of that poor sinner to see that the only way of deliverance from wrath eternal was by that very Person who was suffering by his side, he commenced by rebuking his fellow-thief and saying to him, "Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? and we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this man hath done nothing amiss." Then he rises from the lowliness of Christ, to his dignity, and he said to him, "Lord (and the word translated 'Lord' might have been rendered 'Jehovah,' for I think there is a reference here to the divinity of Christ), Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Who, but an Almighty Person, in a scene like that, could so calmly and mercifully have answered, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise?" And we all know from history that sometimes they hanged on the cross three, four, and sometimes five days before they died; but the Saviour knew that that poor thief would soon follow him; because he knew they would come and break the legs of the thieves, therefore he was, according to the Saviour's promise, in Paradise that day.

What an illustration we have here of that truth recorded in Solomon's Songs, "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it!"

My hearers, before entering any further into the details of our text, let me solemnly ask you in the fear of the Lord, what do you know of this feeling your need of the Lord Jesus Christ?—that he is the only way by which you can come to the end of sin; that he is the only way by which you can escape the wrath of God, the only way by which you can be accepted of God. Let me give you one illustration of this. It is this. It is said that Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice to God than Cain. Cain thought to settle the matter without an atonement. I wish those to follow me here, who know the Lord, and those who do not indeed, for we know not what the Lord may do to bring you to know these things, who do not as yet know them. Abel was identified with that sacrifice. Abel said, "There is a spotless Lamb a type of the spotless character of Christ; I am one with this sacrifice." Here it is. If it be accepted, I am accepted; if it be rejected, I am rejected. That sacrifice was accepted, and that was a proof to Abel that he was accepted. So you may tell a poor sinner, if their soul be identified with that sacrifice which cleanseth from all sin, if you can trust in that, and that alone, and can indeed say, "I have no hope but in the perfect work of Jesus, and if that be accepted, I think I am, for that is the way I expect to be accepted; I seem identified with it; my soul clings to it; I can

see no other way of access to God ;” and if the soul becomes identified with this more excellent sacrifice, just as sure as Christ was accepted so you are:— to be among the accepted; you must be identified with him ; first knowing your need of him. And then, secondly, in the order of that sacrifice. There men fail ; they destroy the order of it. What is the order of it? It stands thus. “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified :” yea, that very perfection is the very basis of our text, especially the latter part, “We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” Now if thou knowest enough of sin, and thyself as a sinner, enough of God’s law and his truth to shew to thee Jesus Christ as the only way, that he is a perfect way, that his blood cleanseth from all sin, and thou art thus brought out of the law relationship to God ; then comes another relationship. It is one thing for God to be our Father in creation, and another thing to be our Father in salvation. The two things are distinct altogether.

I will now describe some of the experiences connected with it which we have laid before us in the verses connected with our text

Here is “the mountain of the house of the Lord.”

1. A lofty mountain.

2. A nominating kind of description.

3. A comfortable expectation.

4. A living way.

5. A living word.

6. Conspicuous transition.

7. Great repose.

I shall make a few remarks upon each as I go along.

1. *A lofty mountain.* "In the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it." The first idea is that of a lofty mountain. There were two mountains in Canaan called mount Ebal, and mount Gerizim. Those mountains stood north and south of each other: Ebal, the mount of cursing; Gerizim, travellers say, is literally higher than mount Ebal, intimating that the blessing shall out-top the curse. One evidence of your belonging to God is this, if you receive a gospel which out-tops the curse, then you receive the gospel of God; but if you receive a gospel which makes this admission, that a man may be partaker of grace one day, but sin may overcome that grace, and he may cease to be a child of God, you are certainly come to the wrong mountain. When the Saviour and sin came in close contact, which was the stronger of the two? Jesus Christ. Come, come, I should think the matter settled: it is too late to dispute it now. When Jesus Christ and the curse came in contact, which was the stronger of the two? Say you, Jesus Christ. There is no use disputing it now. When Jesus Christ and Satan came in close contact, which was the stronger of the two? When Jesus Christ and whole torrents of er-

ror come in contact which is the stronger of the two? Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ and death came into close contact, which was the stronger of the two? Jesus Christ; because he rose again from the dead. Death then lost its sting, and I have never read in the Bible that it has regained it—therefore it is taken away. So then, if thou art a child of God, nothing but that gospel which out-tops the heights of every sin, and every curse, and every foe which may beset your soul will do for you. “Ah!” say some, “I do not like this doctrine.” Whether you like it or not, it is a truth, and the longer you live, the more you will prize the truth, that the law hath no glory by reason of the glory of the gospel which excelleth it. This is one evidence of relationship to God—being brought to receive that gospel that answers for everything for you. This is the idea I want to convey to you, *that the Lord Jesus Christ answered for us, and we have not, therefore, to answer for ourselves.* The matter is done. In the last judgement, the saints will have nothing whatever to do with the matter of sin. In the Old Testament age the sins of all the people were done away with in the front of the temple, out of doors; after the sacrifice had been offered, and sin atoned for, the priest went into the holy of holies, but took no sin with him, because that was atoned for out of doors: you see that he went in with the sacrifice, and without sin the priest went into the temple, and he could not bring any sin away with him, because he did not take any

in. So Jesus Christ cannot bring any sin at the last day from heaven, because he did not take any with him; he atoned for sin before he went to heaven, consequently he went to heaven without any sin—and when he comes back again he will come without sin unto salvation. As a believer in Christ, then, I shall have nothing to answer for: I shall have nothing to do, but to believe in Christ, to die and be happy in my soul, and let my body lay quiet in the dust till the Lord comes for it: and when raised from the dead, I shall have nothing to answer for: then my very appearance will answer for me: for I shall be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Aye, brethren, and if I see you with him, I may ask you where is your mortality? Gone. Where is sin? Gone. Where is your earthly image? Gone. Where is corruption? Gone. Where is your weakness? All gone. This is the grand fact, “He hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” “This God is our God for ever and ever, and he will be our guide) on the ground of what Jesus Christ has done) even until death:” that is our idea. What know you of this? Bless his dear and precious name, he atoned for sin first, therefore comes again a second time without sin unto salvation.

2. Now, the proposition recorded is, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob.” Here is *nominative distinction*—“the house of Jacob.” I think we have a few, just a few, who preach the same gospel as God

preached to him. "I will be with thee, to keep thee in all places whithersoever thou goest." He preached the same gospel to him as to Abraham and Isaac, and revealed to him the same sworn promises of the new covenant; and whatever does not accord with that, the Lord will have nothing to do with. Therefore, I pray that this may be the house of Jacob. "Jacob have I loved, Esau have I hated." If rightly directed, you will seek the God of Jacob—the God of sovereign love—"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated!" "Ah!" say you, "that brings us to that terrible doctrine of election." Well, and what of that? Election never shut any man out of the kingdom of heaven, and it never will. *Sin* shut all men out, and if any are taken in, God's love has done it. If the whole human race are taken in, by God's sovereignty, even then they must all have been saved on the same principle as some have been saved—viz., by grace. So, then, let us not bring election in as causing that which sin alone has caused. Sin shut us all out from God—but not election; election has taken many to heaven, but shut none out. "Ah!" says another, "but all may be saved, *if they like*." But the question is, have all got *the like*?—have you? "I don't *much like* election," says one. That is no proof at all that that likes you. Do you love the doctrines of the gospel? for I am sure if you do, that the truths and doctrines of the gospel love you. And "all things shall work together for good to them that love God, to those who are the called according to his purpose." "Oh!"

say some, "I love God, but I don't like election." Another says, "I love God, yet I don't love election." Now, people will deceive themselves in this way—yet, remember, the promise of "all things working for good" is to them only who "love God," and are "*the called* according to his purpose." It is a solemn truth that I name in this part, illustrative of what is meant by the "house of Jacob." The apostle further says, that those whom God has loved he did "foreknow."

Now, my hearers, do you love him there? Are you brought to see that, if the Lord had not, by an act of eternal grace and choice, given you to Christ before time was, nothing else could? If you are brought to see that, you will love him there. "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did "*predestinate*." You will love him there; this is "to be conformed to the image of his Son." You will love him there in his eternal love, foreknowledge, appointing and predestinating you to eternal life and salvation. "Whom he called, he justified;" you will love him in justification. "Whom he justified, them he also glorified." All this, as it were, passes before the apostle's mind; in vision; and what he speaks of in the past tense will come to pass in eternal certainty. Some people love God the same as some people like Christians. We often hear such expressions as these, "I know Mr. So-and-so, he is a high doctrine man; I like him, though." *Why?* "Oh! because he is a benevolent man; he is an upright man; he is a good man; an

industrious man ; and he is a man, notwithstanding his religion, useful to society." Then you don't love him on account of his religion ? " No ; I hate his doctrine, but I like the man." In just such a way many love God : they love him, but, they hate his truth. God will not accept your love : for the Lord says, " In vain do they worship me, teaching, for doctrines, the commandments of men." Ah ! they love the Lord, but they hate the marriage contract, because it is for life. Men speak and act as though the Lord was not of one mind, and none could turn him. Oh ! were it not for the certainty of the everlasting gospel, what should such poor creatures as you and I do ? Oh ! what a mercy it is that we have certainty in the gospel. My hearer, what do you know of your need of Christ ? What do you know of the superiority of the gospel ? What do you know of the certainty of it ?

Now, the " Lord will teach us of his ways." He will teach when he chooses the great truth of election. He convinces you of the truth of it, and brings you into the sweetness of it. He will teach when he chooses the great doctrine of sins forgiven. He will, when he chooses, make you feel your sins are forgiven, and that his covenant is immutable :—and he makes you feel the truth of what he teaches, and you are brought to feel the force of it, and to love it. There is such a difference between human teaching and Divine teaching about the people of God ; there is an earnest seeking for Divine teaching. Those

who have come this evening, have come, it is true, to hear the minister speak, but only as the Lord may enable him, lead him in the way, so as to bring them nearer to God, and encourage their hope in God, to enable them to cast their care upon him, and, with confidence and certainty, to say, "Our God."

Then "the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." What "law" is this? A law of life. What law is that? A law to keep people from dying. And the Saviour looked at Martha, as much as to say, "Too good news to be true"—"He that believeth on me shall never die." "Never die?" No, never: you shall have eternal life, and this life is in me. I am your life; and when "our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." Here is the law of life. "The Lord shall command his blessing, even life for evermore:" "The law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." Then "the word" will be like that from whence it comes. It is a very beautiful idea, the two succeeding each other: "the law of Zion," and "the word" by which we live; and the law of God against our being put to death. Sin says, "I will kill you;" this law says, "but you must not." Satan says, "I should like to kill you;" but the law says, "you must not." Death says, "I should like to kill you;" tribulation says, "I should like to kill you;" "but you must not," says the law. Therefore, for any one to attempt our life, it is of no use. "Our life is hid with Christ in

God" — and the wicked one toucheth us not. What is the law of life followed up by? "The word of the Lord from Jerusalem" — "Lazarus, come forth into life;" and Lazarus came forth. There is the law of life. Now, "the word from Jerusalem" — what is that? Freedom—"Loose him, and let him go." It is a good sign for thee, if thou art bound with grave clothes, and in bondage, and want to know what it is to be at liberty, and longest to cry to God, and call him thy Father, and "read thy title clear, to mansions in the skies." If these be the struggles of thy soul, there is an appointed time for thee, when the word of the Lord shall come forth—"Loose him, and let him go."

Just look at *the transition* of these people; they come to the highest mountain—Mount Zion: the Lord is their Teacher. Here is a law of life, a word of freedom; then there is the transition: "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." I did not quite see with our brother this afternoon on this point; or, perhaps, I did not quite understand him. I know it is the opinion of many people that there is a glorious time coming—in fact, I don't know what the world is not coming to, according to these people. They say there is to be universal conversion, by-and-bye,

for a thousand years : but it is a question whether each of those years do not signify 365 days—if so, taking the usual law of a day for a year it may mean 365,000 years. But, my hearers, that is not to be a period of universal conversion, but of universal calm. But at the end of that time Satan shall “go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth—Gog and Magog—to gather them together to battle.” If it be true that *universal conversion* shall take place previously, then, where are these enemies to come from? I do not think there will ever be a more glorious time on this side Jordan than we have now. There may be a greater number of Christians than there is now : but the present is a glorious time, and we cannot have a more glorious time than we have now. Perhaps I had better explain this to you. Are you brought to know the Lord?—I speak to you who profess to be his followers. “Yes,” say you, “Jesus, my God, I know his name.” Very well ; suppose all the world, beside yourself, knew him, you would not, on that account, be in a more glorious state. Say you, “I should be glad on account of it.” So should I, if it is the Lord’s will. But, suppose all the world knew him, and you did not? Ah! depend upon it, the idea of universal conversion is a delusion. And hence those glowing descriptions, which seem to refer to the return of the Jews, will not bear that signification. But I could shew you, if I had time, that the great majority of Scriptures have a more spiritual meaning ; and

you may depend upon this, that no Scripture can ever be fulfilled to the everlasting benefit of any man apart from Christ. Some tell us that, by-and-bye, the Saviour is to be put on a temporal throne. You might just as well tell me that he will give up his eternal priesthood, and come back to the Levitical; that he will give up his heavenly kingdom, and come back to an earthly one. It will be coming back to shadows with a witness—those shadows are gone for ever; and when the Lord Jesus Christ comes, he will come to receive his people to himself; and in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—he will raise his people. Those ideas of the millenium have a tendency to make us look for that which will never come. If I have Jesus Christ as my life, my strength, my hope — as he who shall meet me in the air; if I have a hope that I shall be for ever with him, you may keep away with your earthly millenium you may have them as long as you like; but let me have Jesus Christ as my all and in all, and fulness of pleasures for evermore.

“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares.”
 ‘When shall the time come for the fulfilment of this prediction? We often get a wrong view of the Scriptures; and because they are not fulfilled in the way that we expect, then we become infidels. Our notions are not true; the fault does not lie in the Bible, but in our notions. Where shall we look for the fulfilment of this prophecy? “Nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn

war any more." For my part, I want no other explanation of this so-much-disputed passage than is given to us in Ephesians ii. The apostle there seems to explain the whole of it. How? Why, he shews that the Lord Jesus Christ has "broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile, having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments, contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so making peace*; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; *and came and preached peace* to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh: for through him we both have access by one spirit unto the Father. Now, therefore, Jews and Gentiles are *no more strangers and foreigners*, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." And how can they rise one against another? Can the converted Jew rise against the city of God, and say, "I do not like her towers; I do not like her bulwarks?" or can the converted Gentile say, "I do not like this or the other?" Here all nations are made one—reconciled to God by Jesus Christ—they do not wish to fight one against another. You have your quibbles and your individual duties; but, if the Lord were to send a good man to Brighton, and gather all the people who know the truth together, and preach the gospel to them, every child of God would enjoy it, and all those little quibbles would float off like so many straws upon the surface of the water, and none

of the people of God would be able to fight against one another. If things, then, go on like this, we should "learn war no more"—certainly not: "the sword would be turned into a ploughshare, and the spear into a pruning hook." As the Lord liveth, I say to those ministers who are present, you who know the truth—the next time you go into your pulpits, you cannot fight against it. You say, "I cannot fight against one portion of the truth." Well, in seven years time, can you draw your sword against the truth? No! "I cannot learn the art of war any more; I can do nothing against the truth." Bless the name of the Lord, we are reconciled to him for ever. The breach is made up; the matter is finished, reconciling us to himself in the best possible manner by not imputing our trespasses unto us. Let me shew you a beautiful Scripture; don't be angry with me, and say, "You have taken my play-things away;" never mind, as long as I have not taken your Jesus Christ away: "Blessed is he whose transgressions is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity." Just follow me carefully. First, here is forgiveness—that is a very comfortable thing. But some persons forgive one another, and talk much about it. "Have you heard of So-and-so?" "No, I have not heard of him." "Ah! I forgive him, although he did so-and-so." But the Lord forgives, and "covers" the sin; some people forgive you,

but do not forget: "So-and-so is a good man;" but you take care to shew the man's faults. The Lord forgives the transgressions, and covers the sin of his people. If you look east, west, north, and south, you cannot find one of their sins. The Lord forgives our transgressions, and covers our sins. He does not plague us for what we have done. "That is really too bad," say you, "I do not hold this doctrine, for does not the Bible say, 'Your sins shall find you out?'" That is the language of the old covenant. Moses said that to the tribes as they were going over Jordan: but the new covenant says, "The sins of Judah shall be sought for, but they shall not be found;" and, as the Lord liveth, I make no hesitation in saying, that if our sins could again find us out penally we should again learn war; and for God to shew his wrath would fill us with our old enmity, and set us at our old distance from God, and we should have to go back again to Egypt, to Sinai, and the devil, from whom we came—back again to death. But, thanks—everlasting thanks—to his dear name, they shall not learn war any more. Bless the Lord for this—he is "*our God*." These are some of the ideas. He is "*our God*" in this Mount Zion; he is in "*our God*" in this sovereign love; he is "*our God*" this Divine dealing with us; he is "*our God*" in this of life; he is "*our God*" in this word from Jerusalem; he is "*our God*" in this peace:—and then comes the plenty: "they shall sit every man under

his vine, and under his fig-tree ; and none shall make him afraid." It is a blessed thing thus to be reconciled to God—thus to be brought to God.

Ah ! my hearers, what do you know in your own souls about being concerned, humbled, brought down before God? You have no idea of the of the readiness with which he would receive you. Oh ! the Father did not reproach the prodigal ; he saw him afar off ; he had compassion upon him, ran, fell on his neck, and kissed him : he admitted him to the perfection of enjoyment, and to hide his shame : he didn't put shoes on his feet first, for then all the time he would have been shivering in the cold, and all the people would have been staring at him : he threw the robe over him first to make him comfortable ; then the shoes he may have ; then the music he may have ; his heart dances, and they began to be merry. And, oh ! he does not say a word about leaving off. And bless the Lord, I have come to Brighton, to-day, with a desire to speak to you in his name, "and am determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." I do not wish to offend any one, but if the truth offend, it is able to take its own part ; and if I offend any by speaking the truth, the Lord will take my part ; therefore, all that his ministers have to do is to speak his truth, whether men will hear, or whether they will forbear.

II. But then THE RESOLUTION : "*We will walk in the name of the Lord our God.*"

There are many things here that we should be well occupied in looking at. What kind of a path will it be? But the first thing is to have "*the will*"—that is a very great thing. It is not always that the Christian can say with the apostle, "To will is present with me." "You are going too far now," you will say. No; I am not. I believe I am speaking to Christians, and I don't believe there is a town in England, in proportion to its population, where there are more Christians than there are in Brighton. I have said that for years, ; and we say, therefore, the real Christian cannot always say with the apostle, "to will is present with me." Are there not times when you feel that you have no will to read the Bible? Do you not sometimes feel that you have no will to hear the word? Do you not feel sometimes that you have not the will even to attend, and listen to it when you are really here? Do you not feel sometimes that you have no will to anything that is spiritual? Therefore, it is a great thing to have the will. "*We will walk.*" "Well," say you, "if you get so low as that, what Scripture will take us up?" This, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." When the Christian is so low that he seems to have no will, his very will seems so weak, he seems almost destitute of even a will, then comes in that Scripture, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." "What a poor thing I am; there is the Bible, but I have no will to read it; there is the house of God, but I seem to have no will to go there!" Ah! we are very poor, our strength is

perfect weakness—but “Blessed are *the poor* in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Look at the resolution—“We will walk in the name of the Lord our God.” Here is practical decision for God in this new covenant relation.

I will just describe to you here, in conclusion, some of the feelings and exercises you have. First, you will make sometimes a sort of dead stop. You will say, “I do not know, I am afraid I am wrong, I am afraid, and am deceiving myself altogether; I am afraid my name is not in the Book of Life: the enemy says, “If I am not elect, I shall never get to heaven.” That is a truth; and none but God’s elect will strive to inherit it. You feel you cannot give up pressing on to it: several things keep you still seeking. If you give it up, where shall you go? To the profane world? No! To the professing world? No; I cannot go there. What is to be done? The next thing is, you will be driven out from all hope—seem to have none. The next thing the world will say “Ah! you are one of the elect are you? that’s your religion is it? you are uncomfortable too? I wonder at that. But there is this difference between them and us. They have their religion at their command; but we have not ours at our own disposal. Their religion is on earth; but our God is in heaven, and he doeth whatsoever it pleaseth him; and, as he says, “I will assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted.”

If you have these exercises and trials, they are nothing new—they are only such as the people of God have experienced in all ages. The Lord's people are the most miserable people upon the face of the earth, apart from that hope of eternal life they have in Christ. Aye, often does a child of God wear a cheerful countenance, and under that a heavy heart; often does a child of God appear comfortable outwardly—while within the weighty and solemn matters of eternity, cause him to go groaning and mourning and miserable. But, bless the Lord they are things worth being miserable for. The Lord's Lazaruses must have their evil things in this life. You cannot walk with God as you please. You love his name, and have an appetite for his truth; aye, whatever you lose beside, you will never give up this appetite for his blessed truth.

III. But lastly, *continuation*—"We will walk in the name of the Lord our God *for ever and ever*. This is beautifully indicated in the first verse of this chapter, "But in the last days it shall come to pass." What are these "*last days*?" "Why," say the people, "the gospel dispensation." I don't think that is the meaning. Another says, "The millenium that is to come," Well, now, look at that: is there really sense in it—for those who say the millenium is meant by the last days say that heaven is to follow: they want two heavens. What are the last days? The days of Christ are the last

days. If Jesus Christ be my high priest to-day, that is the last day; I shall never want any other day. If he be my Surety to-day, he will be my Surety for ever. If he be my King to-day, he will be my King for ever. And since this supercedes all other days, therefore the days of the new covenant are the last days. If you have life now, you have eternal life; if you have the light of the Sun of Righteousness now you have the last light:—no light shall succeed that; and if you have the marks of a child of God, and God is our Father, then you have your last Father—you have had your old Adam father and your natural parents, and now you have your last Father in the last days. That is the way I understand it. Therefore, “we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.” We have begun already, and shall continue for ever: these last days shall never be succeeded. There has been some talk about Christ giving up his mediatorial kingdom by and bye—“He shall deliver up the kingdom to God even the Father, that God might be all in all.” But does that mean Jesus Christ will cease to be a priest, or will he cease to be the Son of God, or cease to be a king? Nay! he will deliver up the kingdom to the Father by presentation. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ—carried out in his humiliation, the will of God—that you will understand; and secondly, in his exhaltation, he will carry out, and does carry out, the will of God; thirdly, at the resur-

resurrection he will carry out the will of God—then when he has carried out the will of God, he shall present them to the Father, *i.e.*, presenting the kingdom to the Father. Then comes another department, *i.e.*, glorification—he is to carry out that department. Will Jesus Christ say, “I have in my humiliation, I have in my exaltation, I have in my resurrection carried out so far the will of my Father, therefore, I shall leave it. Nay, he will go on to carry out all his will concerning us in heaven—“in his presence is fulness of joy “and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.” So that Jesus Christ must and will carry out the will of God in glorification, having carried it out in his humiliation, exaltation and resurrection, he will also in his glorification. And thus in this way, “we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.”

There are a great many more things that I have not touched upon. One word more, it is this, this is the language of assurance, and it is the language of defiance. “We will.” We will not be hindered we cannot be hindered; there is nothing that can hinder us. See what has been inflicted upon the people of God, yet they are not overcome. It does not matter what is brought against them, they cannot be overcome. Henry the Fourth in the fifteenth century began to burn them; many kings to please the people have burnt and tortured them. Cramner and others were burnt to death;

they tried to extinguish the light of truth, but it was of no use, for you cannot stop a child of God—for you may grind his body to powder, his soul will survive the separation; you may thrust him into the lion's den, into the fiery furnace, he cares not for these things, but will walk on shouting, "We will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever? What a scene the apostles had to witness; and yet they were as lambs among wolves; the name of the Son was their strong tower, their rock, and, with the truth of God on your side, you may do anything. It is astonishing how the truth of God emboldens a man: and why should it not? for it unites us to him who will never leave nor forsake us. We have hope for life for death and for eternity, and when all other gods are dead, and when the heavens shall have vanished like smoke, when the earth shall have waxed old like a garment, and its inhabitants shall have died in like manner. Yea, when time shall be left myriads of ages back in past history, and all earthly works of men be forgotten, while the lost shall be lifting up their eyes in hell, we who know and love the truth as it is in Jesus, shall then, even then, be in full possession of what eye hath not yet fully seen, nor the ear fully heard, nor the soul but very partially realized, which God hath prepared for them that love him.

The truth, mercy, the names, the glory, of the Lord, shall endure for ever, and so shall we be ever with the Lord.

Our highest honour while on earth is to walk with him—we cannot walk rightly without him. May the Lord above all things so increase our faith (for we walk by faith,) that we may daily seek to walk with him; for with him we are in safeguard. Amen.