

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

A SONG, A SOLACE, A SERMON, AND A SUMMONS.

A Sermon

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 29TH, 1867, BY

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“For his mercy endureth for ever.”—Psalm cxxxvi.

THIS one hundred and thirty-sixth Psalm was constantly sung in the Temple by appointed singers, among whom the names of Heman and Jeduthun are mentioned. These we are told, in the Book of Chronicles, were chosen to give thanks unto Jehovah, whose “mercy endureth for ever.” This continued service of song, was most fitting, for, if Jehovah’s mercy endureth for ever, our praise should endure for ever: if his goodness never ceases, our thanksgiving should never be silent.

It seemed to me most appropriate to direct your attention to this text in the closing Sabbath of the year, because it is a fit accompaniment to that upon which I addressed you on the first Sabbath. You will remember that we then spake of the ever watchful mercy of the Lord our God, from the words. “The eyes of the Lord, thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” Having almost reached the close of the year, let us acknowledge that the mercy has been equal to the promise; that God has not failed to fulfil his gracious word, “for his mercy endureth for ever.” May all your hearts be full of gratitude, and the music of your spirits shall stand instead of trumpets and cymbals which of old proclaimed the joy of Israel when they made mention of Jehovah’s name.

I. At the outset we shall regard the text as A SONG. So it was originally intended to be used. It was *a song for all singers*, for it was the refrain of each verse, the chorus to be taken up by the whole assembled multitude. I suppose that the practised-singers commenced thus, “O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good,” and then the entire multitude, whether they were taught in psalmody or not, chanted the chorus, “For his mercy endureth for ever.” Then would the choir again sweetly sing, “O give thanks unto the God of gods:” and a fresh burst of many voices would reply, “For his mercy endureth for ever.” In imitation of that ancient mode of singing, I shall ask the whole assembly to make a chorus with their hearts, and mentally to bless the Lord whose “mercy endureth for ever.” Let the young and the old

join in the common praise; let the rich and the poor, the instructed and the ignorant, ay, let the saved and the unsaved, each take a part in the choral music; for the psalmist (so words the Psalm) that even the unconverted may claim a share in it, for he bids us praise God for *common mercies*, common as we frequently call them, and yet so priceless that when deprived of them we are ready to perish. He bids us sing concerning the great lights whose radiance is universally enjoyed. He bids us extol the Maker of the sun and the moon, for without the cheerful light of the celestial lamps we should live in perpetual darkness, if indeed we lived at all. Let us bless God for the eyes with which we behold the sun, for the health and strength to walk abroad in the sunlight; let us praise him for the mercies which are new every morning, for the bread we eat, for the raiment which clothes us, for houses which give us shelter; let us bless him that we are not deprived of our reason, or stretched upon the bed of languishing; let us praise him that we are not cast out among the hopeless, or confined amongst the guilty; let us thank him for liberty, for friends, for family associations and comforts; let us praise him, in fact, for everything which we receive from his bounteous hand, for we deserve little, and yet are most plenteously endowed. "His mercy endureth for ever:" every morning's light proclaims it, the beams of every moon declare it; every breath of air, every heaving of the lungs, every beating of the pulse, are fresh witnesses that "his mercy endureth for ever."

But, beloved, the sweetest and the loudest note in the chorus must always be reserved for those who sing of *redeeming love*. A few verses further down the psalmist writes, "To him that smote Egypt in their first-born, and brought out Israel from among them, with a strong hand, and with a stretched out arm, for his mercy endureth for ever." Yes, God's redeeming acts towards his chosen are for ever the favourite themes of praise. Many of us know what redemption means. Let us not refuse our sonnets of thanksgiving. Glory be to God, we have been redeemed from the power of our corruptions, uplifted from the depth of sin in which we were naturally plunged. We have been led to the cross of Christ; our shackles of guilt have been broken off, we are no longer slaves, but children of the living God. We can look back to the source of that redemption in the council chambers of eternity where the plan was first ordained and settled: we can look forward to the results of that redemption, and antedate the period when we shall be presented before the throne without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Even now by faith we wave the palm branch and wrap ourselves about with the fair white linen which is to be our everlasting array, and shall we not this day give thanks to the name of the Lord whose redeeming "mercy endureth for ever"? Child of God, canst thou be silent? Shall there be one dumb soul here this morning? Awake, awake, ye heritors of glory, and lead your captivity captive, as ye cry with David, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Further on our poet invites *the experienced* believer to join in the Psalm. Just as some among us, whose voices are deep, can take the bass parts of the tune, so the educated saint, who has been for years in the ways of the Lord, can throw a force and a weight into the song which no other can contribute. We are reminded in the Psalm that the Lord led his people through the wilderness, and smote their enemies, “and gave their land for a heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever.” Ye who are men and fathers among us, bless ye the Lord who has safely led you until this hour. The pillar of cloud, the column of fire, you have not seen, and yet you have been conducted as pilgrims in the desert, safely and well. The heavenly manna has been your food, and the water from the living rock has been your drink. Your mightiest foes have been slain with the sword of the Lord. Temptations sharp and strong have not prevailed against you. Trials incessant you have been able to bear. “Hitherto the Lord hath helped you.” What is your experience worth if it does not kindle the flames of gratitude? To what end has God manifested all this goodness to you unless you delight yourself in God in the remembrance of it? Remember all the way by which the Lord thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness! Remember how he has hedged thee about, and kept off thine enemies and given thee peace within thy soul, and fed thee with the finest of the wheat! If thou be silent, thou wilt be most guilty of all the ungrateful ones. Therefore, believer, take the cymbals, yea, the high-sounding cymbals, and with all thy might dance before the ark of the Lord thy God, and praise and magnify his holy name.

The peculiar point which is brought out in this chorus is, the *enduring* character of divine mercy—“His mercy endureth for ever.” By this I suppose is intended that God’s mercy, as an attribute and as a rule of his action, is *continual throughout all ages*. He was a merciful God to our first parents. At the fatal portal of Eden, when they were first driven forth into the world in judgment, the sweet promise came like the breath of heaven upon them, “The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” Abraham and Isaac and Jacob received mercy at his hands; Samuel and David and Solomon found him gracious, and the prophets and those who loved the Lord in their days, knew that he turned not his love from his people. The multitude understood the abounding mercy of the Most High when healing was given by our Lord on the right hand and on the left. In apostolic times the first champions of the faith drank deep at the fountain of God’s love, and afterwards our sires, who upheld the banner of the cross in ages of persecution, trusted in God and bore witness that his mercy endured unto them. It is the same today: God has not quenched the lamp of his goodness: the river of his mercy flows deep and broad as aforetime.

I was musing upon this—God’s mercy through the ages, and I saw as before my eyes the goodness of God conquering the sin of many all along the ages. Did you ever stand upon the field of Waterloo, and see the golden

harvest waving there? If so, you have seen how the mercy of God has blotted out the cruelty of man. There where man struggled with his fellow, and dyed the ground crimson with human gore, mercy came and covered all with a robe of emerald, begemmed with fairest flowers, turning Aceldama into Eden. Moreover, mercy so triumphs over judgment, that ere long men look upon the judgments as a noble form of mercy. When our ancient city was consumed by fire, and the distressed inhabitants walked among the ashes of all their precious things, the pulpits rang with the cry of the judgment of God. But what say we now? Why, that it was a most gracious visitation, destroying pestilence in its lair, and banishing the plague from the land. Thus it is seen that “his mercy endureth for ever.” If Jehovah shall shake the earth with earthquake, or dash down the dwellings of men with tornado, or make the cruel sea to engulf a navy, the after results teem with blessing to mankind, while the judgment itself vanishes, and flowers bloom amid the rifts of earthquake, and children play where the hot lava ran from the red lips of the volcano. Mercy still abideth, and judgment is but for a little season.

Doubtless, also, the psalmist meant that *mercy continues in its fulness*. We make great draughts upon the mercy of God, but we do not diminish it. There are fears that we shall one day exhaust those great storehouses in which the earth’s best fuel is laid up. This may be probable, and is certainly possible—a few hundred years will make a heavy demand upon our mineral treasures; but quarry as you will in the mines of God’s blessing, neither you nor your children, nor your children’s children shall complain of a deficiency.

“Great God, the treasures of thy love
Are everlasting mines,
Deep as our helpless miseries are,
And boundless as our sins.”

May we not also understand by “his mercy endureth for ever,” that the patience of God aboundeth? Have you ever reflected upon the infinite, long-suffering of God? Consider for a moment. The sins of men are all before the Lord. You and I can readily put up with offences which do not touch us in the quick, or actually under our own eye, but the sinner’s sin is perpetrated before the countenance of Jehovah. No word is said behind his back, no blasphemy is uttered in secret to him: and sin affects God as it does not affect us. We have grown so case-hardened that the heinousness of iniquity is little discerned by us: we take it as a matter of course. But God who is infinitely pure, is, if I may use such an expression, infinitely sensitive with regard to sin. He knows sin to be sin, and the heinousness of it, which we do not perceive, is all before his mind continually, and yet his mighty patience reigns over all, and bears with men’s iniquities.

Remember, too, that these insults against heaven are constantly repeated. The most patient man at last yields to anger: constant dropping will wear away a stone: but here is God insulted, as I have said, to his face thousands and thousands of times a day, and yet keeps his sword in its scabbard, and bids his thunder sleep! A wish would blast the rebels into everlasting torment, but he wills it not. As the Lord liveth, he saith, he hath no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, but would rather that he should turn unto him and live. To all this you must add the reflection that all the while rebellious sinners are partaking of God's mercy: the rebel wears God's livery upon his back, and sits at the table of God's providence; the breath that is in his nostrils is the gift of divine charity, and yet the wretch useth this breath against his Maker. Can you understand this? Could you bear to be insulted for a single day by one who was receiving all he had from you? Would you not by-and-by, ay, very speedily say to him, "Get you gone! If you are my enemy, wherefore should I treat you as I treat my friend"? Then be it remembered, that God is not only sparing the guilty, but is putting ways of mercy before them. Some of you are invited to repent as often as the Sabbath dawns; with some of you there are incessant movings upon your conscience; you seldom pass a day without hearing the voice say, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die?" God is always wooing you to come to him, inviting you by his mercy and threatening you by his judgments, and yet while his longsuffering should lead you to repentance, you add sin to sin, and ripen in your iniquity.

One thing more I would have you recollect, and I think you will admire the amazing patience of God, namely, that he is doing this with millions! Millions! perhaps a thousand millions at this moment, for I suppose—though no one can ascertain accurately—there are a thousand millions of unregenerate men upon the face of this earth at this very moment, all enemies of God; either worshipping gods of wood and stone, or else such spiritual idols as their imaginations have fashioned, and with all these God is compassed about as with bees; but he doth not destroy them: still hath he patience, and still he crieth, "Come unto me; repent; believe in my Son, and ye shall have eternal life." Truly "his mercy endureth for ever," if you think upon these things.

May not the endurance of divine grace be faintly pictured in the following scene? Out yonder, just beyond those grinding rocks, there is a vessel, rolling and tossing on the jagged granite, and evidently going to pieces. See you not the mariners clinging to the masts? It is not possible that they should escape, except by help from the shore. The rocket apparatus has been used, and a rope is fastened to the vessel, and now a cradle is drawn along the rope. What joy! One man is safely landed, but the rope is weak, and it is doubtful whether it will bear the strain. Two at one time are clinging to the rope, and the ship is nearly broken up—will the rope bear them?

The wind howls terribly, and the waves lash furiously—will the rope hold out? Another is venturing! Ah! see how the rope dips! The waves have gone over him. Will it be able to sustain his weight and save him? Now, we never have such anxiety concerning the salvation of souls by Christ Jesus, “for his mercy endureth for ever.” The salvation of God brings every soul to shore that hangs on it, and, when the world is gone to wreck, free grace will bring all who trust it to the eternal shore. Should the biggest sinner out of hell hang upon that rope of mercy, it will bear him up, and bring him safe to land.

I would liken God’s mercy to a great temple which strong men have sought to overturn with their utmost might. They have laboured to overturn the two great pillars whereon the house leans. The ancient temple of the Philistines stood firm enough till an unexpected hero entered it. Samson felt for the pillars, and finding them, bowed himself with all his might, and the pillars snapped, and down came the house upon the Philistine lords, and Samson himself perished. Many a Samson-like sinner has gone into the temple of God’s mercy, and bowed with all his might to overturn it, to see if he could not wear out the patience of God and blaspheme himself into swift damnation; and yet these bold and gigantic sinners have never been able to do this, but very frequently these very men have been subdued by grace, and have worshipped him in the temple which they once sought to destroy. Yes, Philistia’s house may bow, but the house of Jehovah standeth fast, and “his mercy endureth for ever.”

There is but one reflection to make the subject of the song complete, namely, that *the potency of God’s mercy* in delivering his saints is equally immutable. He is always able to deliver his children, so that we may say in the language of the three holy children, “Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us out of the enemies’ hands.” There is no possibility that a child of God should be cast into a difficulty out of which the stretched out arm of Jehovah cannot bring him. He who brought his people of old from the brick-kilns of Egypt, and led them through the Red Sea and the howling wilderness, will surely bring all his elect ones out of all their trials safe to their heavenly rest.

II. I now use the text as A SOLACE. We have many troubles, and we need comfort. God is willing that we should be comforted for he says, “Comfort ye, comfort ye my people;” moreover, he has provided for it, for he has given us the Holy Spirit to be the Comforter.

I shall use the text as a solace as to *the past*. The year is all but gone. Have we not found, up till now, that his mercy has endured for ever? If the stories of all could be told who are sitting here, I suppose a great roll of lamentation would need to be written, and around every roll we could bind the silken cord of mercy. Beloved, whether *you* will say it or not, I must, as the minister of such a congregation as this, involved in so many cares, with

so many labours, and so much of anxiety pressing daily upon my soul, I must bless my God that up till now, to me, at any rate, his mercy has endured. It brought me to tears when you were singing just now—

“He his chosen race did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.”

Yes, it is a wasteful wilderness to us; but he has blessed us; he has made it to blossom like the rose where we expected nothing but weariness and barrenness. Blessed be God for the past. We will comfort ourselves with recollections of the past, because he will not change in his dealings. He that has helped us thus far will not forsake us. “Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.”

But the chief solace about the past lies in this: every right-minded Christian at the close of the year looks back upon his sins of omission and sins of commission. I shall not invite you to any lengthened confessions this morning, but which of us would not blush scarlet if his sins could be known? Beloved, acknowledge them now into the ear of your God, and then remember that mercy covers all. Whatever it may have been, mercy covers all, and, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.” I am no more a sinner than I was at the end of last year, and yet have I committed thousands of sins: there is no more in God’s book against me than there was then—there was nothing then, blessed be his name, for the blood had cancelled all, there is nothing now, for the same atoning sacrifice has taken all my sin away. Come to the cross, my brethren and sisters, come to the cross again, and as you look up to the wounds of Jesus which bled for you, believe that “his mercy endureth for ever.” Your sins, however innumerable, are cast behind his back, yea, thrown into the depths of the sea.

Our text is also a very sweet consolation as to *the present*. Have we at this moment a sense of present sin? Then, “his mercy endureth for ever.” Our Lord comes to us, in the language of this text, girt with the towel, and bearing the ewer, and the bason, and washes our feet yet again. From the accumulated dust of a year’s journey he cleanses us. May you have no consciousness of sin, but on the contrary, a consciousness of reconciliation in the Beloved. But perhaps you have on your mind some spiritual disability. Perhaps you have been so disquieted at home, that you cannot concentrate your thoughts, and however the preacher may try to bring you to the point, your mind is so disturbed that you cannot appreciate it: there is a fog in your soul as well as in the streets. Beloved, thank God our acceptance is not injured by our depressed state of mind: whether we are depressed or exalted, whether we are enjoying communion or not, we still stand in the Beloved all fair and glorious in the sight of him whose mercy endureth for ev-

er.

Possibly you have come here today, and brought with you too much of yesterday's troubles. These ought not to come into the Sabbath, for this is a day of rest. Still you cannot help it; you are beset with such daily anxiety, that while sitting here you have been mentally looking into your ledger, or nursing the sick child; your mind has been in the fields of vanity when it should have been on the mount with God. Drive out your cares by remembering that "his mercy endureth for ever."

"Come, make your wants, your burdens known;
He will present them at the throne;
And angel-bands are waiting there,
His messages of love to bear."

You cannot be in such a difficulty that he cannot sustain you in it, or bear you out of it. "His mercy endureth for ever."

As to *the future*. Ah! we are poor fools when we begin to deal with the future. It is a sea which we are not called upon to navigate. The present is the whole of life, for when we enter into the future, it is the present. Yet, standing here this morning, I can conceive some who feel infirmities creeping over them, trembling with the foreboding, "What shall I do when I come to extreme old age? My friends are gone: I have none who are likely to maintain me. When these fingers cannot perform their daily work, when my brow is wrinkled, and I can scarcely totter to my toil, what shall I do? "Ah! "his mercy endureth for ever." It does not stop at seventy, nor pause at eighty: it will bear you safely over ninety, if your pilgrimage be so far prolonged. When I looked the other day upon a number of poor old men and women in the wards of the workhouse, some of whom had not risen from their beds at all for years, I thought to myself it was better far to die than so to live; and yet, if they had a good hope, I was mistaken, for if Christ should make that bed to become soft as downy pillows with his presence, there might be a glory in the workhouse, and a heaven in the midst of poverty, and they would there learn as well as anywhere, that "his mercy endureth for ever." "Even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Therefore trust in the Lord, and be not afraid, ye whose days of weakness are coming, for he will not fail you nor forsake you.

We are sometimes alarmed at the prospect of the storms of life. They are not few. In the past they have been many—we may expect more. He who reckons upon smooth weather between this and the fair haven, reckons without his host; but, beloved, come what tempest there may, "his mercy endureth for ever." There must have been some trepidation on board that mail steamer a few weeks ago, when the tornado was thundering over the

West Indies. The captain very wisely put on all steam and faced the wind; but with what anxiety must they have asked the question, "Will she have force enough to face such a mighty whirlwind? Can the engines keep up speed enough to battle with the hurricane?" The engines groaned, and every timber creaked as the good ship steamed right into the teeth of the tempest, sailing as it were between the very jaws of death and into the throat of the grave. Surely they whispered to one another, "Will she brave it out? She seems but a mere cockle-shell in the midst of these huge Atlantic waves; will she be carried on the reef and dashed to pieces as hundreds of others have been, or will she conquer the furious blast?" When the good vessel kept her head to the wind, and pierced the waves, holding her own against such odds, there must have been great joy on board. You and I are in a nobler vessel, with her head to the tempest, Jehovah steers her, and we shall not only outlive the storm, but sail into port with all our colours flying, to the praise and glory of his name whose "mercy endureth for ever."

Looking forward to the future, there are some who say, "We are most of all alarmed because of far removes which we are expecting." Out of this congregation, a considerable number emigrate from year to year, called to a distance from friends and kinsfolk. Should that be your case, dear friend, is it not a comfort to think that God's mercy endureth for ever? Two friends agree never to go farther apart than they can communicate with one another by telegraph. One of them has crossed the Atlantic, and resides in the United States, or in the far west, but still he has only to go to the office, where a wire can be touched and a message will flash to his friend in England, and tell him his needs. This is just the compact God has made with his people: they shall never go where there is not a telegraphic communication between them and himself. You may be out at sea, or in Australia, but the communication of prayer is always open between your soul and God, and if you were commanded to ride on the wings of the morning to the uttermost parts of the sea, or if for awhile you had to make your bed in the abyss, if you were his child, still would you be able to reach his heart. Neither distance, nor time, nor eternity itself, should divide an heir of heaven from the mercy of God, which endureth for ever.

I think I hear one say, "I am not looking forward to that, for I have no doubt I shall lay my bones among my brethren, but I have lost many friends, and others are pining with consumption, and are likely to be taken from me." This is a grief which occurs oftener to us as we grow older. The young man may look upon his wife and children, and see his father, and mother, and friends about him, but as sure as we are men, either we must go from them, or they from us, for no unbroken families can long remain on earth; and the less of death we have had, the more is yet to come. We are those who have not drunk the cup; but we must drink it even to the dregs. What a comfort to know that we sorrow not as they that are without hope.

If we lose our friends and dear ones in the Lord, we part to meet, and we meet to part no more. If they die, if our best beloved ones depart, yet “the Lord’s mercy endureth for ever.”

And this year some of us will die. As I look around here, I feel that truth most solemnly. The young *may* die: the old *must*. Some of us must tread the dark valley this year. It may be the preacher: there are many more unlikely things. It may be you—you young people. It may be any of us. Do we know the mercy of God? Then God forbid we should lift our little finger to have it otherwise, for his mercy will endure when the death dews lie cold on our brow; we shall find that last day to be no more dreadful than the ordinary days of life, yea, we shall perhaps be favoured with such visions of angels, and such sights of the better land, that we shall be glad for evening, to undress that we may rest with God.

III. I wish we had time to use the text more fully in that light, but we have not; therefore, I shall come now, in the third place, and with much brevity, to use the text as A SERMON—a sermon with three heads.

1. “His mercy endureth for ever.” Then, in the first place, *let our mercy endure*. Have you, during this year, or at any time previously, offended another or been offended, so that there is any ill-will in your mind between you and any one? Then may I ask you, as this is a most fitting day, at the close of the year, to end it at once! Even if we feel we have been grossly ill-treated, grossly insulted, yet now let the token of reconciliation be given by every one of us. Recollect, you Christians *must* do it, or you are not Christians. You are nothing better than deceitful hypocrites if you harbour in your minds a single unforgiving thought. There are some sins which may be in the heart, and yet you may be saved, but you cannot be saved unless you are forgiving. “If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Those are Christ’s own words. If we do not choose to forgive, we choose to be damned. Now, there is a good deal of lying about this. People will say, “Yes, I will forgive it, but I cannot forget it.” You mean you do not forgive it. Everything like enmity must be renounced if you would be saved. When Mr. Wesley was going out to America with General Ogilvie, he heard a great storming and raging going on in the cabin: it was the general scolding his servant. He said, “I had so many bottles of Cypress wine put on board for me—the only wine I am allowed to drink—and that villain has drunk it all himself. I have put him in irons, and I am going to send him on board a man-of-war to be flogged, for I never forgive.” “Well,” said Mr. Wesley, “I hope you never sin.” The inference was so irresistible that the general said, “Here, you sir, take my keys. I forgive you this time.” If we would be forgiven, let us forgive.

2. The second head of the sermon is this—if God’s mercy endures for ever, then let us learn *the duty of hoping for everybody*. You have no right to say of the poor fallen girl in the street, “Oh, it is no use looking after

those outcasts, they always turn out badly before long.” God’s mercy endureth for ever: if you had any of it, you would not talk so. You have no right to say of the drunken man, who has been reclaimed three or four times, but has gone back, “It is no use trying any more with him.” Brethren, “his mercy endureth for ever.” Would ye be more severe than your Maker! He bears with sinners: surely we may. Especially this ought to be so with our relatives and children. A mother’s love must never burn out, and a father’s patience never expire. Hope for the most hopeless. Till they are in hell, pray for them. Till they are in their graves, hope for them. Till they die, labour to bring them to Christ. God’s mercy ever endures: let our tenderness endure.

3. And, in the third place, if God’s mercy endures for ever, then *see the duty of hoping for yourself*. If you have been ever so guilty, do not say, “There is no hope.” “His mercy endureth for ever.” Away with that whisper of Satan, “Too late.” It is not too late. So long as you desire Christ, it is not too late for him to receive you. It will one day be too late, when life is over. Then will you hear those words, “Too late; ye cannot enter now;” but it is not too late for repentance and faith to be accepted. Despair is sin: hope is the duty of man with regard to God. I pray you cast not yourself away. Till God has cast you into hell, have hope, and come to Christ.

IV. I cannot say more upon the sermon, time is gone; but the last head is A SUMMONS: “His mercy endureth for ever.”

Is not that a most loving and tender summons to the wandering child to return to his Father? to the backsliding professor to approach his God? to the chief of sinners to humble himself before the mercy seat? There is mercy—seek it. There is mercy in Jesus—believe in him. Bunyan tells us that the prince Emmanuel hung out the white flag upon Mount Gracious. It is there still. Surrender, man, surrender today, and fight no more against thyself, and thine eternal interests. Behold the white flag still. Thou hast but to trust thy Lord, and leave thy sin, and he will be merciful to thee. When that man of God, Mr. Andrew Fuller, was once preaching in Scotland, the place was very crowded, and numbers were outside. A woman, the worst woman in the town, seeing the crowd, thought she would push into the Kirk to listen to the English minister. He was preaching from the text, “Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” “Ah,” said she, “I have gone far, but I have not gone over the ends of the earth, at any rate, and if God says, ‘Look, and be saved, all the ends of the earth,’ he must mean me.” She did look, and became afterwards an honourable woman in that parish, converted by the grace of God.

On this last Sabbath morning in the year, I solemnly present those same words as fresh from God’s lips to every unconverted person here, “Look unto Christ, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall

be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." God bring you to obey that gentle summons to come to your heavenly Father and live.

Believers, the summons is also meant for you. It says this, "His mercy endureth for ever;" therefore let your love to souls continue; let your labour for conversions abide; let your generosity to God's cause abound; let your endeavours to extend the kingdom of Christ endure evermore. At this season, let me say, enlarge your exertions. If you have done much, do more. If you have done little, be ashamed and begin afresh. If God's mercy continue for ever, do not let us talk about resting and taking things easy. Nay, time is very precious, every hour has six wings, like a cherub, and flies like the lightning's flash. Let us live and work while we may, "for the night cometh when no man can work."

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON— Psalms cxxxv. and cxxxvi.

END OF VOLUME XIII.

"THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL." Edited by C. H. SPURGEON.

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