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## A SERMON.

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*"Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."*—PSALM XXXIV. 19.

Now it will be for us to try and find out this righteous man, and may the Holy Spirit be our guide. The Scripture says there is none righteous, no, not one; that man is altogether gone out of the way, altogether become filthy. God says He looked down from heaven, and beheld every imagination of man's heart was only evil, and that continually. Such is the sad condition of all mankind as they stand in their federal head, Adam. Adam was created a righteous man, for God created him in His own image, and pronounced him and all things He made very good; but when he partook of the forbidden fruit he broke the command, lost his original righteousness, and became alienated from God, an enemy to God by wicked works; and it has pleased God to impute Adam's sin to his posterity. We were all in the loins of Adam, and consequently, when he fell we fell, when he sinned we sinned, when he transgressed we transgressed, when he disobeyed we disobeyed, so that man is born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and the Psalmist says, "In sin did my mother conceive me."

Oh what a sad condition we are in as we stand in Adam! I know the carnal mind of man cannot receive this truth, but it is truth nevertheless; it is the word of Him who cannot lie, and those who have had the eyes of their understanding enlightened know it, feel it, and confess that we are all as an unclean thing, and they can see it in man from observation and feel it in themselves by bitter and painful experience.

"That we're unholy needs no proof,  
We sorely feel the fall."

says one. Now I am quite aware that, although man is in this fallen, alienated condition naturally, he is ignorant of it, so that if any of us do know it so as to sorrow on account of it it is a mercy indeed, that it is, because the carnal mind kicks at this doctrine of imputed sin, and quarrels with the Almighty who has given them a being and made them responsible creatures to a law they cannot keep. I know it is so; it was so with me, oh yes! But we must remember, although we have lost all power to obey God has not lost power to command, but still says, "The soul that sinneth shall die." And if any of you can charge the great Creator with injustice I cannot, oh no! He cannot be unjust—no, He cannot, so that upon this ground you see man is, as the Scripture says, alienated from God both in will and deed, word and work, and has neither will, power, nor inclination to turn to God. Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots? then may we look for those to do well who are naturally accustomed to do evil.

Thus you see man is born in sin, lives in sin, and if grace prevent not will die in sin, and shall and must suffer throughout eternity for sin, for "the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God," "where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Now you mark that! But the text speaks of a righteous man, and says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Now this refers first to Jesus Christ, the second Adam, who as man—the God-man—is called "the righteous" (1 John ii. 12). He was righteous by nature in all His actions, all His thoughts, all His life; He knew no sin, but was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. He was afflicted by man, by Satan, and by God, for it pleased the Lord to bruise Him and put Him to grief. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. "I cannot begin to describe His afflictions, but they are spoken of in this book, which gives us the history of His life, and they began at His birth and finished at His death, when He said, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost. Now this Man Jesus Christ, the second Adam, called "the gift of God," came according to promise; He came as a representative of His Church and substitute of His people, who were chosen in Him and blessed in Him, the second Adam, before the first Adam was created. Many Scriptures could be given to prove this (see Ephesians i.). So that God, who foresaw all things, saw that the first Adam would fall, and therefore provided a remedy in the second Adam, who in the fulness of time came

made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them who were under the law. Man had broken the law, this man fulfilled the law; man had sinned, this man suffered for sin. He came for this purpose; He restored that which He took not away. He, we read, was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

Now this you will see is the righteous man in my text, and the verse that follows proves it, for it says, "He keepeth all his bones, not one of them is broken;" and we read when Christ was crucified they brake the legs of the two thieves who were crucified with Him, but when they came to Jesus they found He was dead already, and so they brake not His legs—and why? That the Scripture might be fulfilled where it says, "Not a bone of Him shall be broken." Now this is the righteous man—Jesus Christ.

Now we shall have to talk a little about His afflictions, but it can only be a little. It says, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous" Yes, friends, He was well acquainted with afflictions and temptations—yes, He was. "We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like unto His brethren." Oh yes, His was a life of sorrow, affliction, and temptation from the cradle to the cross, but He set His face like a flint; He delighted to do the will of Him that sent Him, and what was that?—to redeem His people from their sins and all the awful consequences—His people, His Church, His bride, who were chosen in Him, blessed in Him, graced in Him before all worlds, so that, though Adam the first fell, and they fell in Him, they were secure in Christ, the second Adam, and never fell out of Him nor ever can. (See John xvii.: "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me.") There never were but two covenants—one of works and one of grace, and we shall all be found under one or the other. We are all born under the law of works, but there comes a time when all who were thus chosen of the Father and redeemed by Jesus Christ are translated from under the law of works into the glorious liberty of the sons of God, brought from darkness to light, from serving sin and Satan to serve the living and true God, and this is by virtue of their union to Jesus Christ. He is the head, they the members; He is the head of the body, the Church, the election of grace. Don't be afraid of the word "election." It does no harm, but good, wherever it comes, and we have good reason to believe it came to our departed friend. What a mercy if it has come to us, and what

an unspeakable mercy if it should come unexpectedly to some soul in this house of God to-day! Now, mark you, Christ being the head and representative of His people, it has pleased Almighty God to impute His righteousness to His posterity; so that, as Adam was the head of all mankind under the law, so Jesus Christ is the head and representative of the Church; and as it has pleased God to impute Adam's sin to his posterity, so also it has pleased Him to impute the righteousness of Christ to His posterity; and if one is unjust the other is unjust, and who shall charge the Almighty with being unjust? Can anyone charge Him so? What! is there unrighteousness with God? He would have been equally just had He left all mankind to perish everlastingly. We nowhere read, "I will be just to whom I will be just," but we do read, "I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy." And the mercy of God is revealed to sinners in and through Jesus Christ, and God, having chosen them in Christ, will save them in Christ with an everlasting salvation; there will not be a hoof left behind. So that the law of God remains the same as when it was first given, and makes its demands upon all; but Christ having fulfilled all its demands on behalf of His people, the Apostle asks this question: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." Christ came not to destroy the law but to fulfil it, for do we not read, "In the fulness of time God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." Man had broken the law, and man thus fulfilled the law; man had sinned, and man suffered for sin. Here is a great mystery, received by faith. When Christ fulfilled the law His people fulfilled the law by virtue of their union to Him; when He obeyed they obeyed; His righteousness is their righteousness; when Christ obeyed they obeyed in Him; when He suffered they suffered; when He died they died; when He rose they rose; when He ascended they ascended, and are made to sit together with Him in the heavenly places. Let me give you an illustration. You people who vote to elect a person to represent you in Parliament—that man's voice is considered your voice. The Father elected Jesus Christ to represent His Church, and His voice is their voice. The fact is, Christ and they are one; they ever were and ever shall be, world without end. I think it is Mr. Kent sings—

Then in the glass of God's decrees  
Christ and His Bride appear as one;

Her sins by imputation His,  
While she in spotless splendour shone."

Oh, friends, what a blessed transfer! We read that He shall remove the iniquity of that land in one day—the day of atonement—and shall bear it away into the land of forgetfulness (witness the scapegoat), and also that their sins shall be cast into the depths of the sea, that when they are sought for they shall not be found. Friends, He came for this purpose. Do read the 17th chapter of John's Gospel, where He says, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do. And now, O Father, I come to Thee." Virtually they went with Him, and are one with Him—by eternal union one. And all of free and sovereign grace!

"Sovereign grace o'er sin abounding,  
Ransomed souls, the tidings swell;  
'Tis a deep that knows no sounding,  
Who its breadth or length can tell?"

Now the natural man cannot comprehend these things, because the carnal mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But the Holy Spirit is given or sent on purpose to reveal these things to the hearts of the election of grace, and they are all taught of God, from the least of them to the greatest of them. They are convinced of the truth of these things; they are led by the Spirit to see that sinner or substitute must die, sinner or substitute must suffer, and that Christ suffered, the just for the unjust, to bring them to God. Hence we read, "made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Now these, although very blessed things, are very solemn things. Don't you feel it so at times? Don't they occupy your thoughts at times and cause you some anxiety? Don't you have to go before God and ask Him to shine into your poor soul and show you that He can be a just God and yet save you, sinner as you are, vile as you are? You can see there is no other way, no other name but that of Jesus—you are led to see He has finished the work of redemption for His people, that He has lived for them, died for them, risen again for them, and ever liveth to make intercession for them; that as He has overcome, so they will also overcome sin, death, hell, and the grave, and live with Him for evermore. You are led to see that this High Priest of His people has entered into the holy place with His own blood, that blood that speaketh better things than that of Abel. The blood of sprinkling upon the doorposts and lintels

of the doors in Egypt was typical of this blood, which must be applied and is applied by the Spirit of God to the hearts of the people of God, and where this is the destroying angel will not come. And does it not show the awful condition man is in through the Fall that God Himself had to resort to such means as to deliver up His only-begotten Son—nothing less would do—to save our souls from hell? But does it not also manifest His love? In this the love of God was manifest, in giving His only Son. Well, this was love indeed! I must refer you to that blessed chapter again (John xvii.), where He says, “Thou hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me.” Look at it, poor sinner. God manifest in the flesh, and thou who art one with Him by a vital, living faith—art bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. What a mystery! I cannot begin to enter into it. I hope the Holy Spirit will lead you into it, and if He does I know it will have a very humbling effect upon your minds.

“The more His glories strike our minds,  
The humbler we shall lie.”

May He lead us more and more into these blessed truths! I am such a man to contend for the work of God the Holy Ghost, and let me tell you, as I often have done, that we as much need the work of the Holy Spirit in us as we do the work of Jesus Christ for us; but here is the mistake so many make in our day—not being taught of the Spirit, they do not believe in the doctrine of the Fall, or only partly—that is, do not believe he is past all recovery, *without God*. They believe, or profess to believe, that Christ has died for sinners to give them an opportunity or chance, as they say, of being saved if they will but do their part in accepting Christ's offers, and so, by attending to certain things imposed upon them by men as ignorant as themselves, and doing the best they can—that is, in substance, a part—that Jesus Christ is only too pleased to make up any little deficiency. Oh what a delusion of the devil, to drown men in perdition! Friends, Christ is a perfect Saviour, His is a free and full salvation, and as you sang just now—

“Not the labours of my hands,  
Can fulfil Thy laws demands:  
Could my zeal no respite know,  
Could my tears for ever flow,  
All for sin could not atone:  
Thou must save, and Thou alone.”

That's it. It is no use thinking, because they attend to certain ordinances, or do their best, that by so doing they are meriting

salvation. How many thousands believe that when a child is sprinkled by a so-called priest it is made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. There is not a greater delusion among men. That is not the doctrine preached by Jesus Christ. He said, “Ye must be born again,” and the learned Nicodemus displayed his ignorance by asking if a man could enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born. Plenty of people, it is to be feared, are as much in the dark upon this all-important subject as he was, who call themselves teachers and pastors. Young man! young woman! you must either be born a second time, be a partaker of eternal life, which is the gift of God, or you must individually suffer the second death, for “the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Oh! it is a solemn thing. Think of it, sinner! There is no getting by it; one or the other must come. “It is appointed”—mark that—“unto man once to die, and after that the judgment.” What an awful thing to have a soul which must live for ever and ever, either in the realms of bliss or in the confines of the damned, and yet go on careless about it, as if there was no such thing! One great proof of the Fall is man's ignorance. Man will believe anything and everything but the truth; even learned men will believe in baptismal regeneration, that placing the bishop's hands upon people's heads imparts the Holy Spirit to their hearts, and that by taking a piece of bread and a little wine they receive the body, blood, soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ. Given up to believe a lie! I knew a rich lady in a parish where I once lived who went to one of the most ungodly men in the agonies of death, and palmed upon him a piece of bread and a little wine, and told him he had now received Christ and could die in peace. Oh what an awful thing! I want to receive Him in a different way from that. I want Him formed in my heart the hope of glory. I want the benefit of His death brought home to my heart and applied there by the Holy Spirit. Do you? You know if you do or not.

Now I want to speak a little more particularly of the work of the Holy Spirit, and, mark you, no man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost.

There are three distinct persons in the Godhead, who are one in essence, one in power, one in glory, but only the second in the Godhead became man; He was God and man in one complex Person, and no less God before He became man than afterwards, or no less God when He became man than before. And

if He is not God then it is rank idolatry to worship Him, and (I say it with all reverence) the Pharisees were right in saying, "Thou blasphemest, for thou, being a man, makest thyself God." But He was God. He is also called the Word of God—"And in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

"That Christ is God I can avouch,  
And for His people cares;  
For I have prayed to Him as such,  
And He has heard my prayers."

That's the way to know the Divinity of Jesus Christ, and to be brought to a knowledge of Jesus Christ by experience. We may believe it in theory, but theory won't save us—oh no! Friends, I only touched upon the work of Christ, neither can I only just touch upon the work of the Holy Ghost. But I must just say that Christ might have been made man, suffered, died, rose, and ascended, and all for sinners, and yet they receive no benefit therefrom but for the work, office, and power of the Holy Ghost—mark that! It was expedient that He should go away, for "if I go not away," He said, "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, will not come unto you; but if I go away I will send Him"—mark that *Him*—"unto you. And He shall teach you all things, for He shall take of mine and show it unto you." And if you read your Bibles—which I hope you do—you will see that soon after He ascended up into heaven, when His disciples, according to His command, were assembled in one place, the Holy Ghost came down in a wonderful way like fire, and they all spake with tongues (see Acts ii.), proving the prophetic office of Christ, and it is our mercy if we can say He is our Prophet, our Priest, and our King. And we by the Spirit are made His willing subjects. If we are born of God we shall want Him in all His offices—as a Prophet to enlighten, as a King to govern you and yours, and as a Priest to make intercession. There may not be another person in the parish knows what temptation you are the subject of, but your High Priest does, and was tempted in all points like unto you, and it is in His name you approach God, and in His merit you find acceptance with God, and only in His face can you see God—"Have I been so long with you, and yet sayest thou, Show us the Father? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father. I and My Father are one."

All these things are revealed and made known by the Spirit. The Father's choice is made known by the Spirit; the Son's

merit and blood are made known by the Spirit, and it is His part to quicken the dead, convince of sin, to guide into all truth, and to preserve the election of grace down to the end of their pilgrimage. There comes a time then when this people are quickened or made spiritually alive, when they pass from death unto life. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit."

Now I cannot tell you when this change took place in our departed friend, because I never heard her say. I have often heard her say she was afraid it never had, but if it never had she would never have felt her need of Jesus, which many of you who knew her know she did. In the providence of God she came to live opposite this chapel when only about fourteen years old as company to her aged grandmother, where she continued till she died, and was in the habit of attending the services here. I often think how much better it would be if we were closer observers of God's providence. I must just tell you one remarkable providence in my own experience, when I hope God began a work of grace in my soul. I took to attending the Wesleyan chapel in Tunbridge Wells, where I then lived, and thought if God had a people on this earth they were the people, but for the life of me I could not do as they did, nor believe as they believed, nor be happy as they appeared to be happy. How I used to beg of God to make me right, and, if they were right, make me like them, if they were wrong to show me, "but do make me right, Lord." How long this went on I cannot now tell, but I know my case got worse and worse. I could get no help from them, nor instruction, for they kept telling me to do this and that, but gave me no tools to work with. However, one Sunday evening I was going again, for I kept sticking to them, when my wife's mother, who lived with us at that time, said, "I feel I should like to go with you, but it is a long way down where you go." "Well," I said, "I don't mind going somewhere else for once, if you like." "Well," she said, "there used to be a chapel up Hanover Road one time. Let's go there—that's handy." I said, "Yes, if you like; it's a Baptist chapel." So more to please her than myself we went together. Now I had always a prejudice against that kind of people who professed to believe in election, but that man—dear old Mr. Whittaker—told me all things that ever I did. He was the means in God's hand of describing the work of grace in my poor soul. I came out of that place sweetly persuaded in my mind I was a partaker of

grace and a subject of the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, and I have never been a Wesleyan since. My ear was bored to the post; I said, "This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God." And I say so now. This was the providence, and I believe the purpose of God.

So our departed friend in the providence of God came in and out this place of worship, where she heard from time to time the necessity of the new birth, the blessedness of a felt union to Jesus Christ, and of there being a covenant of grace, and by the effects following we have no doubt a saving change had been wrought in her. God's Word deposited in the heart is like seed sown in the earth; it sometimes lies hid a long time before it springs up—"first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear."

I believe in some cases it is sown when young, and if sown in good ground, prepared by God, it will be sure to prove fruitful in the end. How long it lay in this case we cannot say, but feel persuaded she had been a partaker of grace for some time, as several noticed a change in her outward deportment. No one who visited her during the first part of her illness but would believe she was a convinced sinner. Oh, friends, look well to the beginning! Remember "ye must be born again." Reformation won't do; reformation is not regeneration. Morality is good in its place, but morality is not Christianity. People may make a profession, and make a great show in the flesh, but remain strangers to the new birth. Jesus Christ says, when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man—mark that! gone out, not turned out—he walketh through dry places, seeking rest and finding none. Read it, friends, and God grant you may read to profit. When religion is only in name they often are like the dog returning to its vomit, and the sow to its wallowing in the mire. But when the Holy Spirit quickens the soul they become miserable on account of sin, very unhappy in their feelings, and seek some secret place to pour out their souls to God, and their language in substance is that of the publican—"God be merciful to me a sinner!" What do we know about this? Our friend was no stranger to this. Perhaps before you were satisfied to hear the minister or other people pray, and put your formal Amen, and were glad when they had done, but now it is "Lord, help me! Lord, have mercy upon me!" Are there times when you pray from real necessity—when guilt lies heavy upon you, when your sins stare you in the face and you feel God would be just in condemning you, and yet you cannot help but pray?

Poor soul! this is the Spirit's work to make intercession in thy poor heart. How various diseases forced people to Jesus Christ in the days of His flesh; so now the plague of sin and the burden of guilt constrain them to call upon God, and you might as well try to prevent the steam coming from an engine with a hot fire underneath as to stop the breath of prayer when kindled by the Spirit of God. The steam would burst out, so prayer will burst out. Some poor soul may say, "Then I am out of the secret, for the Lord knows my grief is because I cannot pray." Stop a minute. Hannah prayed though not a word was uttered. It is not so many words to describe things so nicely—oh no! It is prayer at times when they can say nothing. Now then poor sinner—

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire,  
Uttered, or unexpressed;  
The motion of a hidden fire  
That trembles in the breast.

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,  
The falling of a tear,  
The upward glancing of an eye  
When none but God is near."

Oh! friends, to groan is prayer; to look towards God in distress is prayer. You have seen some of your children in distress, in pain. They could not describe it, but it did not shut up your sympathy, did it? Does He not say, "Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him"—that look to Him, that cry to Him, that confess their sin to Him, that feel the abomination of their heart through sin, guilt, and filth, which the Holy Spirit makes them feel when He opens up to them the mystery of iniquity within. Poor soul, these things prove there is life in thy soul, imparted at regeneration—not when they were sprinkled on the face with a little water, not when they were baptised, if they have been baptised since they have been made believers, but when they were baptised with the Holy Ghost, and these are the people, and the only people, who should be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, for He says, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments," and some of us know that His commands are not grievous. Now you notice this, Christ says, "He that is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will I be ashamed; while he that confesseth Me before men, him will I confess before my Father and His holy angels."

Now the Holy Spirit made Lavinia Curd, our departed friend,

a real praying soul. Has He made us so? Has He made us feel the guilt of sin as He did her? Has He made us afraid to die as He did her? Has He made us seek for pardon and peace as He did her? And oh! poor soul, has He imparted peace to us as He did to her? Has He blessed us with the knowledge of forgiveness of sin as He did to her? Has He taken away the sting and fear of death from us as He did from her? You know whether He has or not. Have you tried to be better, and found, according to your own feelings, you only got worse? In short, have you been lost and saved manifestly she was?

I remember some of the things she said to me, as I visited her on several occasions during her illness. Once she said, "Oh, Mr. Botten, I have no hope." I said I was rather glad to hear her say that, for the Lord destroys the hope of man that He may raise him to a good hope through grace. There is a people who hope to do something to merit the favour of God, and hope if they do their best, He will do His best, and so between them heaven will be obtained; but, poor girl! she was brought off from all such false hope, being stripped of all her strength, and was obliged to fall flat on the mercy of God, saved or lost. Then I tried to set before her the only way of peace, showing her how by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One many were made righteous; how God was pleased to accept and save poor sinners simply and alone on account of what Jesus Christ had done; that as judgment had passed on all men to condemnation through Adam's transgression, so righteousness was imputed to those who believe through the justifying righteousness and obedience of Jesus Christ. I told her I never heard or read of any person seeking mercy through Jesus Christ seeking in vain. When I quoted the promises to her I tried to ask God to enable her to lay hold of them. She was in real soul trouble, and wanted to be saved. Why, when the jailor came to Paul and Silas in the night, and saw there was a something in their religion, and they were men of God, he said, "What must I do to be saved?" They said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." The Law says, "Do or die;" the Gospel says, "Look and live," or "Believe and be saved," and the Holy Spirit works faith in the soul, and the sinner believes with his heart unto righteousness, and with his mouth makes open confession of salvation, and that of God. I believe many poor souls believe this a long time before they are brought to realise their own interest in it, but this is no satisfaction to the soul till they do. So it was with

her, so it was with me, so it was with some of you, and so sure as you are one who would believe and cannot, who would pray and cannot, who desires an interest in Christ, and cannot realise it, and nothing else will do, so sure shall you be brought in God's good time and made to say, "I am His, and He is mine." She did, so shall you. None appeared in their own feelings at times farther from it than she, than me, than some of you. Some here are witnesses in her case that He who began the work will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ. "My little children," says John, "for whom I travail in birth till Christ be formed in you." What do we know of this travail for our own souls, and for the souls of our fellow-creatures?

On another occasion when I saw her I said, "Well, my young friend, how are you now?" She said, "I cannot say what I should like to say, so feel I had better say nothing." She was afraid to say too much. I sincerely wish more were like her in this respect, for so many say too much, while some poor fearing souls are afraid to say what they really do know for fear of deceiving others as well as themselves. When one of our friends visited her and spoke to her of the solemnity of death, to which it was visible she was fast hastening, she said, "I cannot die, but I must when the time comes," and when asked how she was her reply was, "As miserable as sin can make me." She seemed restless and unhappy, and was often heard to groan, and when asked the cause said she must give vent to her feelings, she was so ill, and would like to die if she knew she was right. Oh that fearing to presume upon the mercy of God! How a sense of sin keeps poor souls from venturing upon God! But does not this display a tenderness of conscience, and also an earnest desire to receive and to enjoy the blessings of salvation for one's self? Are not such souls just inside the promises of God: "Seek and ye shall find;" "He that asketh receiveth, and he that knocketh to him shall the door be opened," and so sure as any of you are there, so sure shall you receive the pardon of sin, a revelation of Christ, and realise your interest in Him, as she did. It may not be your way, nor your time, but in His own time and way He will appear to you and for you to the joy and rejoicing of your heart, as He did to and for her. She did not seek or ask in vain, neither shall you. No poor soul ever did or ever will while Jesus lives. Have you got a closet religion, a secret religion between God and yourself? If so, that religion comes from God, leads the soul to God, stands in the power of God, and will land the soul with God, where we believe the soul of Lavinia Curd now is, for God

was faithful to His Word. He spoke peace to her soul, and blessed her with a manifestation of her interest in Him. How the scene was changed! She sent for a friend who had been with her from time to time during her illness and wished her to pray for her. When asked what she wanted her to pray for, she said, "That I may die and go home to heaven." After this she seemed tried again for a time, but on Sunday night she said, "Hark! Harps! Singing!" She longed to be gone, saying, "Come now, Lord Jesus, and take me to Thyself." Now she who had said she could not die, longed to die. She who was afraid of death, longed to pass through death, to see the face of God in Jesus Christ. She expressed a wish that I should bury her in the Chapel graveyard, who she wished to carry her body there, and made arrangements for her funeral as though she was going a very pleasant journey. You who have lost a sister, daughter, relative or friend, you are exhorted not to sorrow as those who have no hope: "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

Now these are blessed and yet solemn things. We are all fast dying creatures, and the place that knows us now will soon know us no more for ever. And is it not solemn to think that many of you who have listened to what has been said, and before to-morrow will forget all about it, death will soon overtake you, and you will not be asked if you are ready. Death will not ask us if we have experienced this change or not. When the time comes we must go. Have you thought of this, young man, young woman? Where did you spend the most time this morning—on your knees or before the glass—reading your Bible or admiring your person? Which do you think most of—yourself or Jesus Christ—this world or the next, to which you are fast hastening? How it takes the keen edge off your sorrow to know that she is beyond the reach of pain, sin, and Satan. To those of you who sorrow for her, I pray God some good may come out of this circumstance. I believe her soul is now in the presence of God, basking in the sunshine of heaven. May we, like her, have all our sufferings here, and may we die the death of the righteous, and may our last end be like hers!

So we have seen who this righteous man is, spoken a little of his afflictions, and seen how God delivered him out of them all, and also how He delivers all who are united to Him, and it is an encouragement to us to believe that He who hath delivered doth deliver, and will yet deliver. Amen.