

THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY

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“Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off.”
Isaiah 33:17.

WHEN the Assyrians had invaded Judea with an immense army, and were about to attack Jerusalem, Rabshakeh was sent with a railing message to the king and his people. When Hezekiah heard of the blasphemies of the proud Assyrian, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the Lord, and sent the elders of the priests covered with sackcloth, to consult with Isaiah the Prophet. The people of Jerusalem, therefore, had seen their king in most mournful array, wearing the garments of sorrow, and the clothes of mourning; they were, however, cheered by the promise that there would be so complete a defeat of Sennacherib that the king should again adorn himself with the robes of state, and appear with a smiling countenance in all the beauty of joy. Moreover, through the invasion of Sennacherib, the people had not been able to travel; they had been cooped up within the walls of Jerusalem like prisoners. No journeys had been made, either in the direction of Dan or Beersheba, even the nearest villages could not be reached; but the promise is given that so completely should the country be rid of the enemy, that wayfarers should be able to see the whole of their territory, even that part of the land which was very far off; it would be safe for them to make long voyages; they would no longer be afraid of the oppressor, but should find the highways, which once lay waste, to be again open and safe for traffic.

In these days of Gospel Truth, dear Friends, we see in this text a meaning far surpassing that which gladdened the citizens of Zion. We have a nobler King than Hezekiah; He is the King of kings and Lord of lords. We have seen our well-beloved Monarch, in the days of His flesh, humiliated and sorely vexed; for He was “despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with grief.” He whose brightness is as the morning, wore the sackcloth of sorrow as His daily dress; shame was His mantle, and reproach was His vesture. None was more afflicted and sorrowful than He. Yet now, inasmuch as He has triumphed over all the powers of darkness upon the bloody tree, our faith beholds our King in His beauty, returning with dyed garments from Edom, robed in the splendor of victory. No longer does He wear the purple robe of mockery; but He is clothed with a garment down to the feet, and gird with a golden belt. We also, His joyful subjects who were once shut up and could not come forth, are now possessed of boundless Gospel liberty. Now that we see Jesus crowned with glory and honor, we freely possess to its utmost bounds the Covenant blessings which He has given to us; and we rejoice that if the land of happiness should sometimes seem very far off, it is nevertheless our own, and we shall stand in our lot in the end of the days. The Savior highly exalted, and ourselves at a happy liberty—these are two rich themes for thought; may God the Holy Spirit grant that we may find wines on the lees well refined stored in the text.

I. Proceeding, without further preface, to the text itself, we remark that WE HAIL THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS OUR KING.

We—I must not speak for you all—I wish I could; but there are some here, at any rate, who have bowed the knee to that great Son of David, who is the Son of God; who delight to feel that Jesus is their heart's Lord, the unrivalled Master of their affections. I speak of such—we hail Immanuel as King. *His right* to royalty lies first in *His exalted Nature as the Son of God*. Who should be king but Jehovah? And, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is very God of very God, let Him reign, let His Kingdom come, let Him in all things have the pre-eminence. Bow down, you creatures of His hand, and do Him homage, for the Lord is King forever and ever. Hallelujah! Let His opposers tremble at the unchangeable decree, for the Son of God must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet; for it is not to be endured that God should not be King in His own world; neither will it forever be allowed that God in the earth which He has fashioned, should be forgotten or blasphemed. He who is God over all, blessed forever, shall yet be worshipped by every knee, and every tongue shall confess that He is Lord. Jesus has a right to reign because *He is the Creator*. “Without Him was not anything made that was made.” Shall not the Potter exercise lordship over His own clay? If the Son of God has made and formed us, shall He not command us? Who are the potsherd that shall set themselves in array against Him? Surely He shall break them as with a rod of iron, and dash them into shivers!

Besides this, the Lord Jesus is *the Preserver of all men*; for by Him all things consist. It is by virtue of His intercession that the barren trees are not cut down; by the force of His tender Love sinners are spared upon the earth. Should He not reign? If the breath of our nostrils is in His keeping, and we are ourselves the sheep of His pasture, should we not cheerfully yield to His generous rule? Besides this, and over and above the natural rights of Christ to reign, He governs by virtue of His Headship of *the Mediatorial Kingdom*. He is not merely King because He is God, but He is King in His complex Nature as God and Man. Here He has the rights of *Divine Delegation*, for God has made Him King. Some of the worst of tyrants have delighted to call themselves kings by divine right; emperors by the will of God; monarchs by the Grace of God, and the like. It may be so; I doubt not many of earth's tyrants require much Grace, lest their crimes should bring them to speedy ruin; and doubtless it is sometimes the will of God to inflict great scourges upon guilty nations; but, my Brothers and Sisters, Jesus Christ is no despotic claimant of Divine Right, but He is really and truly the Lord's Anointed! "It has pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." God has given to Him all power and all authority. As the Son of Man, He is now Head over all things to His Church, and He reigns over Heaven, and earth, and Hell, with the keys of life and death at His side. "The government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." We recognize Him as King by Divine Right. We see in Him most clearly that true Deity which "does hedge a king," and we meekly bow before Him whom God has "appointed to be a Prince and a Savior, to give repentance and remission of sins."

Certain princes have delighted to call themselves kings by *the popular will*, and certainly our Lord Jesus Christ is such in His Church. If it could be put to the vote whether He should be King in the Church, every believing heart would crown Him. O that we could crown Him more gloriously than we do! We should count no expense to be wasted that could glorify Christ. Suffering would be pleasure, and loss would be gain, if thereby we could surround His brow with brighter crowns, and make Him more glorious in the eyes of men and angels. Yes, He shall reign. Long live the King. All hail to You, King Jesus! Go forth, you virgin souls who love your Lord, bow at His feet, strew His way with lilies of your love, and the roses of your gratitude; "Bring forth the royal diadem, and crown Him Lord of all."

Moreover, our Lord Jesus is King in Zion by right of conquest. He has taken and carried by storm the hearts of His people, and has slain their enemies who held them in cruel bondage. In the Red Sea of His own blood, our Redeemer has drowned the Pharaoh of our sins; shall He not be King in Jeshurun? He has delivered us from the iron yoke and heavy curse of the Law, shall not the Liberator be crowned? We are His portion, whom He has taken out of the hand of the Amorite with His sword and with His bow, who shall snatch His conquest from His hand? All the rights of conquest support the Throne of the Lord's Anointed, for God has declared that He will give Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong: we are that spoil; we are trophies of His victory, the treasure for which He laid down His life, that He might redeem us unto Himself. We, therefore, who have believed in Him, accept Him to be King, and do not for a moment question His right. We see Him to be established upon the Throne of His Father, and rejoice that though the people rage, and the kings of the earth take counsel together, yet has the Lord set His King upon His holy hill of Zion, and said: "You are My Son, this day have I begotten You." All hail, Jesus, King of our souls!

Now, my Brothers and Sisters, in this great Kingdom of our Lord Jesus, *it behooves us, since we thus verbally acknowledge Him to be King, to distinctly understand what this involves*. We look upon the Lord Jesus as being to us *the Fountain of all spiritual legislation*. He is a King in His own right—no limited monarch—but an autocrat in the midst of His Church, and in the Church all laws proceed from Christ and Christ only. As for us, His people, we reject with scorn and disdain all the spiritual legislation of kings and parliaments, of bishops and councils. We are loyal subjects of political rulers in political things, and none honor the king more than we do. In whatever State the Christian is cast, he counts it to be his Christian duty to submit himself to the powers that be; but, within the Church of God, we know no royal sway of Caesar; we have another King, one Jesus: let Caesar mind his own, and never venture to touch the crown-right of Jesus. Away with that base thinking which has laid the Church of God at the foot of kings and princes, so that they, indeed, can put their feet upon the neck of the free bride of our Lord Jesus Christ! We deny that either king or Parliament can legislate for Christ's Church; for Thomas Cranmer's church they may if they please, but for Christ's Church, never!

In the midst of those Churches which are true to Christ's Authority, the Bible is the only statute book, and the living Jesus the only Lawgiver. As Christ alone is the Fountain of all spiritual legislation, so He alone *gives authority* to that legislation. If we are commanded to baptize, we baptize not because we have been authorized by a consistory, or have been licensed by a bishop or a Presbytery, but we baptize because Christ has said, "Go you therefore, and teach all na-

tions, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” If we come together to break bread, it is not in the name of a denomination or a court, but in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you rest any church practice upon the authority of Augustine, Chrysostom, or Calvin, or Luther, or base your faith upon some living preacher, and depend upon the force of his oratory, or upon the force of his argument, you put Christ out of His proper place. The reason why we should believe revealed Truth of God is because Jesus has borne witness to it. His *ipse dixit* is the great ground of all our theology, for He is “the Word of God,” and His regal supremacy is the argument for obedience to His commands. Where you have no command from Christ, your teaching is nothing. Stand away, Sir, you have no place here! Where you have no teaching of Christ at your back, your word is the word of man, and nothing more; it is not a word before which the subjects of King Jesus can bow themselves. If Christ is King, we receive both laws from Him, and the force which makes the law, its dominion over our consciences. If He is King, my Beloved, it should be our joy to obey Him. We have nothing to do with setting up our opinions and views, and thoughts and tastes where He alone is supreme. When we turn to this good and blessed old statute Book, we must do what He bids us do in it. We are not to cut, and pick, and choose, and take this and leave the other, for the royal imprimatur is put upon every page of the Bible, and it is our part, like little children, obedient to a gentle parent, to subject our wills at once. We should, like Mary, sit at Jesus’ feet to learn, and then rise and carry into practice what we have learned in so good a school.

Once more, if Jesus is King, then He is *the Captain in all our warfare*. When we fight, my Brothers and Sisters, if we contend after our own ways, with our own weapons, and not under the guidance of Christ, we may expect defeat; but if we follow Christ, believing the Truth of God, because He has revealed it, and contending for the Truth as His Truth, careless of man’s esteem, and only caring for the esteem of Christ, then we shall be honored of Him in the day when He shall put the laurel upon the head of the conquerors. May God grant us Divine Grace to be such!

I am afraid that many Christians do not understand the Mediatorial Royalty of Christ in the Church. I see so many of them acting as if they were not subjects of a King at all, but were mere bandits fighting on their own account, doing just according to their own judgment. I hear so many professors quoting this man’s authority, and that. I am of the same mind as the Apostle, who spoke of some of whom he said he feared lest their faith should stand in the wisdom of man, and not in the power of God. If it does so, you forget that your faith and everything else must stand in Christ, and that Christ must in all your Graces and in all your actions be acknowledged as Head over all things to His Church, which is His body, or else you err, not holding the Head. We are the spouse, He is the Husband: He loves and cares for us; but the wife’s business is to be obedient to her lord. Let us not prove unfaithful to the marriage bond and violate the conjugal vow by being unkind, unfaithful, and disobedient to our Husband, but by His Grace let us watch to know His will, make haste to do it when it is known, and always ask Him to teach us His way and guide us in His paths till He takes us to His rest. We sincerely and cheerfully acknowledge our Lord Jesus Christ to be a King—our King.

II. Secondly, WE DELIGHT TO KNOW THAT OUR KING POSSESSES SUPERLATIVE BEAUTY.

There is a natural beauty which belongs to our Beloved. Who can be more beautiful than God, who is “glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders”? There is a natural beauty in the Character of Christ. Indeed, so beautiful is that Character, that those who have railed most against Christianity have scarcely had the heart to say a word against Christ, and they have first been compelled to belie the narrative of His life before they could raise objections against Him. Perfect in Love, Goodness, and Truth, never spoke man like this Man. Never was there a character which could rival His matchless Excellence. But the beauty intended in the text is not that of His Nature and His Character, but the beauty of position. As I told you in regard to Hezekiah, the people could see his beauty and character as well when in sackcloth as in cloth of gold, but the beauty they were to see was the public state of royalty and happiness; and such is the beauty which we believe our Lord Jesus now has.

He had this Glory originally. He speaks of the Glory which He had with His Father before the world was. From of old He was inconceivably great; the cherubim and seraphim hastened to obey Him who sat upon a throne, high and lifted up, whose train filled the Temple. Who is like unto You, O Lord? Among the gods, who is like unto You? He was the express Image of His Father’s Person, and the brightness of His Father’s Glory. And you know how He came from Heaven, undressing all the way, taking off robe after robe, and jewel after jewel, till here He wrapped His Godhead in a veil of our inferior clay. He cast off even the beauty which naturally belonged to His Manhood; and though He was fairer than any of the children of men, yet His visage became more marred than that of any man. You know at last how, having given His back to the scourgers, and His cheek to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not His face from shame and spitting, He at last consented that the cold seal of death should be set upon His blessed Countenance; and though He saw no cor-

ruption, yet did He sleep in the somber depths of the tomb. Here was His humiliation; but, Beloved, our King is now in His beauty. He was in His beauty at the moment of the Resurrection, when the watchmen in terror fled far away, or, fainting, became as dead men. He somewhat hid His Resurrection splendor when He sojourned for 40 days below; yet it must have been a lovely sight to see Him at Emmaus when He was known of the disciples in breaking of bread; or, again, when He took a piece of a fish and a part of a honeycomb, and did eat before them. Oh, happy was Thomas, though to be chided for his unbelief, he was privileged to put his finger into the print of the nails, and to thrust his hand into the wound of that blessed Body! How that Body must have sparkled with Glory in the eyes of seraphs when a cloud received Him out of mortal sight, and He ascended up to Heaven!

Brothers and Sisters, it is yonder that the King is in His beauty; He is now crowned with the crown which God has given Him as a reward for His tremendous labors and His terrible sufferings. Now He wears the Glory which He had with God before the earth existed, and yet another Glory above all—that which He has well earned in the fight against sin, death, and Hell. Hark how the song swells high! It is a new and sweeter song—“Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, for He has redeemed us unto God by His blood!” Hark how the hallelujah, which went up before of old time, has a sweeter note to it, when they sing, “For You were slain.” More deep and more melodious are the harpings of the harpers, and the swells of that song which is comparable to great thunders, and to the mighty waves of the sea—

*“Worthy is He who once was slain,
The Prince of Peace that groaned and died;
Worthy to rise, and live, and reign
At His Almighty Father’s side.”*

The King this day wears the beauty of an Intercessor who can never fail, of a Prince who can never be defeated, of a Conqueror who has vanquished every foe, of a Lord who has the heart’s allegiance of every subject, of a well-beloved who is adored in the depths of all regenerate hearts. Jesus wears all the beauty which the pomp of Heaven can bestow upon Him, all the glory which 10,000 times 10,000 angels can minister to Him. The chariots of the Lord are 20,000, even thousands of angels; Jesus is in the midst of them as in the Holy Place. You cannot, with your utmost stretch of imagination conceive the beauty which now adorns our King; yet, Brothers and Sisters, there will be a further revelation of it when He shall appear on earth in His Glory, for He is yet to descend from Heaven in great power. “We believe that You shall shortly come to be our Judge.” We expect to see the King on earth again, it may be as a King to rule over all the nations; it may be, it must be, as a Judge to separate the people as the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

Oh, the splendor of that Glory! It will ravish His people’s hearts, but those who in derision crowned Him, mocking, thus His gracious claim, shall weep and wail because of Him, when they shall look on Him whom they have pierced but find no salvation, seeing they rejected Him in the day of Grace. Amid the splendors of that day, it shall be the joy of the Christian to see the King in His beauty. Nor is this the end, for *Eternity* shall sound His praise: “Your Throne, O God, is forever and ever!” Forever shall Christ be fair and lovely in the esteem of His Father, in the sight of all intelligent spirits, lovely to the ends of the universe, lovely while the cycles of ages shall roll, chief among ten thousand, and altogether lovely! Thus Beloved, the King is arrayed in rarest beauty.

III. Furthermore, THERE ARE SEASONS WHEN WE SEE THE KING IN HIS BEAUTY.

We see the King in His beauty at this moment, not with these eyes, but with the far clearer spiritual eye of faith. Eyes are impediments to spiritual sight, faith is the true eyeball of the soul; confidence in God substantiates the things that are not seen, gives solid form and shape to that which eye has not beheld. Let me tell you briefly when some of us have seen the King in His beauty: *we saw Him in that day when He pardoned us of all our sins*. You remember it; that day when Jesus met you, and you were able to cast all your sins on Him, and see them all forgiven; did you ever see such a lovely sight before? Well do I recollect that day; well will some of you remember the time when you laid your sins on Jesus, the appointed Lamb of God. You had had many friends, but never such a Friend as He. You had derived much comfort at different times, but never such comfort as He gave you. Oh, those dear wounds, that crown of thorns on His head, that blood-sprinkled Person! How you could have kissed those feet! With what eagerness would you have broken the alabaster box of precious ointment, to have poured it on His head, if you could have done so! He was precious to you; He is precious now at the bare recollection of that happy day. When the king writes the felon’s pardon, how fair is his handwriting! When the King says, “I have blotted out your sins like a cloud,” even the weak and bloodshot eyes of a penitent sinner can discern the inexpressible Loveliness of such a gracious Lord.

But, dear Brothers and Sisters, Jesus Christ was seen by us in His beauty more fully when, *after being pardoned, we found how much He had done for us*. You had no idea when you were first saved that there was so much in store for you;

you conceived that if your sins were forgiven, it would be all you needed; but lo, you found you were made a child of God, introduced into the family of the Most High, that you were covered with a Robe of Righteousness, that your feet were set upon the Rock of Ages, that a new song was put into your mouth, and that you had a portion in the skies! Do you remember, some of you, when first of all, you learned the Doctrine of Jesus Christ's Eternal Love to you? I know it came to my mind, when first I understood it, like a new discovery. Columbus, when he discovered America, could not have been so overjoyed as my heart was when I learned the lesson of those words, "Yea, I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn you." Oh, you saw the King in His beauty when you discovered that not only had He loved you with an Everlasting Love, but always would He do so; that from His bosom He never could or would divorce you; that you were His in time, and would be His in *Eternity*. Do you remember when you could grasp that glorious Truth of God—

*"Immutable His will,
Though dark may be my frame,
His loving heart is still
Eternally the same:
My soul through many changes goes,
His love no variation knows."*

Let me say to you, Beloved, the more you know about Christ, the less you are satisfied with superficial views of Him, and the more deeply you study His transactions in the Everlasting Covenant, His engagements on your behalf as the Eternal Surety, and the fullness of His Grace which shines in all His offices, the more will you be seeing the King in His beauty. Be much in such outlooks! Long more and more to see Jesus! There are times also, when, *in our contemplations*, we see His beauty. Meditation and contemplation are often like windows of agate, and gates of carbuncle, through which we see the Redeemer. Meditation puts the telescope to the eye, and enables us to see Jesus after a better sort than we could have seen Him if we had lived in the days of His flesh; for now we see not only Jesus in the flesh, but the spiritual Jesus; we see the Spirit of Jesus, the core and Essence of Jesus, the very soul of the Savior. O happy are you who spend much time in contemplations! I wish that we had less to do, that we might do more of this heavenly work. Would that our conversation were more in Heaven, and that we were more taken up with the Person, the work, the beauty of our Incarnate Lord. More meditation, and you would better see the King in His beauty.

Beloved, it is very probable that we shall have such a sight of our glorious King as we never had before, *when we come to die*. Many saints in dying have looked up from amid the stormy waters, and have seen Jesus walking on the waves of the sea, and heard Him say, "It is I, be not afraid." I have heard expressions from some dying men and women, that I never read in the best written book. They have seemed to me as if they knew more about my Master than I had ever learned, or than the old Divines, or the best of writers, had ever been able to communicate. Ah, yes! When the tenement begins to shake, and the clay falls away, we see Christ through the rifts, and between the rafters the sunlight of Heaven comes streaming through. But, Brothers and Sisters, if we want to see the King in His beauty, we must go to Heaven for it, or the King must come here in His Person. It may be He will spare us till He comes; but, just as likely is it that He will take us away to see Him where He is. Do you ever long for Him? Do you ever grow weary of this prison? Do you ever pant to see your Beloved? Those sweet words of our hymn, do they ever come across your mind?—

*"My heart is with Him on His Throne,
And ill can brook delay;
Each moment listening for the voice,
'Rise up, and come away.'"*

He is our Husband, and we are widowed by His absence; He is our Brother sweet and fair, and we are lonely without Him. Thick veils and clouds hang between our souls and their true life—when shall the day break and the shadows flee away? When shall the veil be torn again and the Glory of God be seen? When shall we leave these childish things, leave the glass in which we see our Beloved darkly, and see Him face to face? Oh, long-expected day begin!

My eyes shall see the King in His beauty. As I pause over this verse, I would like to ask every hearer here whether he expects to see the King with joy? You never will unless you see Him here on earth as your Savior. You must see Him by faith in His sufferings, or else you will never see Him by sight in His beauty. Let the question go along these seats, "Shall my eyes see the King in His beauty, or, must I say with Balaam, 'I shall see Him, but not near; I shall behold Him, but not now; I shall see Him as a Judge, but His beauties shall increase my alarm; I shall flee from Him and say to the rocks and to the hills, hide me from the face of Him that sits on the Throne.'" Dear Hearer, I hope that will not be your dreadful lot,

but look to Him this morning by faith, for He is still able to save to the uttermost those who come unto God by Him. Cast your spirits upon His finished work this moment, and then joyfully sing—

*“There shall my disimprisoned soul
Behold Him and adore;
Be with His likeness satisfied,
And grieve and sin no more.
Shall see Him wear that very flesh
On which my guilt was lain;
His love intense, His merit fresh,
As though but newly slain.
These eyes shall see Him in that day,
The God that died for me;
And all my rising bones shall say,
Lord, who is like to Thee?”*

IV. THE EXCEEDING GLORY OF THIS SIGHT may well detain us for a minute or two.

I shall set out this exceeding Glory to you by way of contrast. What a sight that was which Abraham beheld one morning when he lifted up his eyes “and he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.” I think I see the Prophet all alone, gazing upon the dreadful sight. He had interceded and wrestled with God with arguments, and yet Sodom and the cities of the plain are all gone! A fire-shower has destroyed them, and their smoke darkens the sky. Can you put yourself in such a position, and on a far more terrible scale, look at the Judgments of the lost, of which we are told in the Book of the Revelation—“their smoke goes up forever and ever”? What a vision! And you would have been there, not as a spectator, but yourself dwelling with everlasting burnings unless Love had delivered you. Contrast what you deserve, with what Divine Grace has prepared for you! O believer in Christ, no smoke of furnace, no terrors of devouring flame, but for you the Promise—“Your eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” Glory be to super abounding Grace, that, “where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound.”

Contrast this again with another sight. The prophet Ezekiel was taken to the Temple, and after seeing the image of jealousy set up, he was shown yet greater abominations; for behold, there was a hole in the wall, and within were all forms of creeping things and abominable beasts, and a voice said to the Prophet, “I will show you greater abominations than these,” and he saw yet filthier and fouler forms of idolatry. You and I have been like that Prophet; we have had to gaze into our own hearts, and we have seen the idols there; and as we have looked longer, we have seen worse idols than we had seen before; and if your daily experience is like mine, you have often heard that mysterious voice, “Son of man, I will show you greater abominations than these.” Yet, although all this inbred sin was within us, and some of it is still there, yet our eyes shall see the King in His beauty. What a change from fighting with corruption to full communion with Christ! What an exchange from a sense of sin to the perfect Image of our best Beloved! Rejoice exceedingly, then, dear Brothers and Sisters, , when you look at the contrast.

Again, let me try to show you the great beauty of this sight by comparison. Our Lord had a very remarkable sight when He was taken up to an exceedingly high mountain, and He was shown all the kingdoms of the world and the glory thereof by the Evil Spirit. A fair sight—you and I might be glad of the vision, though not of the temptation which followed it; but among all that was to be seen from this mount of temptation, there is nothing to equal the sight of the King in His beauty. Verily I say unto you, that all the kings of the earth, in all their splendor, with all their hosts and armies in their glittering array, are not to be compared to Him who is altogether lovely.

Compare yourself, again, with the Queen of Sheba; she came from afar to see the wisdom of Solomon; but, behold, a greater than Solomon is to be seen by you. When she saw the king’s riches, and his servants, and his pomp, no heart was left in her; but Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like the Savior of men. He was not worthy to be a waiting footman at the table of our great King. Even the sight that Moses saw hardly bears comparison. He looked from Pisgah upon the land that flowed with milk and honey, and he tracked the land from Lebanon’s snow-crested peaks far away to the blue sea, and to the light brown desert that goes down to Egypt. With joyful eyes he beheld the cities where the tribes would dwell, and saw the hills which are round about Jerusalem; but he died, and entered not into the land. You and I see Jesus, and in that day we enter fully into possession of Him; all the milk and honey that ever flowed in Sharon’s plains, or Eshcol’s valleys, never could be compared for a single second to the everlasting joy and beatific blessedness that

are to be found in a sight of Christ. I think our sight of Christ will be even nearer and clearer than that of John in Patmos, though that is the nearest approach to it. John saw his Master but for a season—we shall behold Him forever, and see the Savior in His own Person—not a mere picture upon the camera of the imagination.

V. Lastly. From the text it appears that THIS SIGHT OF CHRIST EMINENTLY AFFORDS LIBERTY TO THE SOUL.

When we see not Christ, we cannot receive the possessions of the Covenant; but when we get a view of the King in His beauty, then we see the land that is very far off. A sight of Christ gives us a view of the dim past—a view of Electing Love we sweetly enjoy when we see the King in His beauty. And the future, which is dark with excessive brightness—that we also see when we see Jesus, and know that we shall be like He when we see Him as He is. If we live near to Jesus, we shall count no Covenant Mercy too great for Him to bestow. “He that spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?” Do any of you want to enjoy the high Doctrine of Eternal Love? Do you desire liberty in very close communion with God? Do you long to understand mysteries? Do you aspire to know the heights, and depths, and lengths, and breadths? Then, Beloved, you must get to see the King in His beauty. He who understands Christ, receives an anointing from the Holy One, by which he knows all things. Christ is the great Master Key of all the chambers of God; there is no treasure house of God which will not open and yield up all its wealth to the soul who lives near to Jesus. O that He would dwell in my bosom! Would that He would make my heart to be His house, His dwelling place forever. Open the door, beloved Hearers, and He will come into your souls. He has long been knocking, and it is this which He has wanted, that He may sup with you, and you with Him. He sups with you because you find the house or the heart, and you with Him because He brings the provision. He could not sup with you if it were not in your heart, you finding the house; nor could you sup with Him, for you have a bare cupboard, and He must bring the provision with Him.

Fling wide, then, the portals of your soul. He will come with that Love which you long to feel; He will come with that joy with which you cannot work your poor depressed spirit; He will bring you joy which now you have not; He will come with His flagons of wine and sweet apples, and cheer you till you shall have no other sickness but that of Love overpowering, Love Divine! Only open the door, then, and have no other sickness than that of Love. Only open the door, then, to Him; drive out His enemies; give Him the keys of your heart, and He will dwell there forever, and your eyes shall see the King in His beauty.

May the Lord give His blessing to these few remarks of mine, and cause them to live in His people’s souls, so that they may live near to Him and dwell in Him. You who never knew the Lord, take my word for it, you do not know what happiness is. If you have never seen my Lord, you have never seen anything worth seeing; if you have never rested in Him, you have not cast your anchor where it will hold. O hunger after Jesus! Long for Jesus! Never rest till you win Him! He is waiting to receive you—He has a great heart to receive sinners—

*“He sits on Zion’s hill,
And receives poor sinners still.”*

Do but come to Him. As for your sin and your righteousness—throw both of those away—come to Him as you are: He will never reject the soul that longs to be saved entirely by Him. May God bless you, for Jesus’ sake! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—ISAIAH 33.

Adapted from *The C. H. Spurgeon Collection*, Version 1.0, Ages Software.

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