

## SHUTTING, SEALING AND COVERING—OR, MESSIAH'S GLORIOUS WORK NO. 1681

DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY MORNING, SEPTEMBER 24, 1882,  
BY C. H. SPURGEON,  
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Seventy weeks are determined upon your people and upon your holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy.”*  
*Daniel 9:24.*

The Lord God appointed a set time for the coming of His Son into the world. Nothing was left to chance. Infinite Wisdom dictated the hour at which the Messiah should be born and the moment at which He should be cut off. His advent and His work are the highest point of the purpose of God, the hinge of history, the center of Providence, the crowning of the edifice of Grace and, therefore, peculiar care watched over every detail. Once in the history of the world has the Son of God appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself and this is the event before which all other events must bow. The studious mind will be delighted to search out the reasons why the Messiah came not before and why He did not tarry till yet later ages. Prophecies declared the date, but long before, Infallible Wisdom had settled it for the most profound reasons. It was well that the Redeemer came—it was well that He came in what Scripture calls the fullness of time, even in these last days.

Note, again, that the Lord told His people somewhat darkly, but still, with a fair measure of clearness, when the Christ would come. Thus He cheered them when the heavy clouds of woe hung over their path. This prophecy shone like a star in the midst of the sorrow of Israel! So bright was it, that at the period when Christ came, there was a general expectation of Him! Holy men and women, diligent in the study of the Scriptures, were waiting for Him—Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel—and Anna looked for redemption in Jerusalem with others of like mind. Not only the Jews, but the Samaritans expected Him, for the woman at the well exclaimed, “I know that the Messiah comes, which is called Christ.”

Even in heathen lands there was remarkable cessation from stir and battle; an unusual peace reigned over all the nations and the hush of expectation ruled the hour—

*No war, or battle's sound,  
Was heard the world around—  
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;  
The hooked chariot stood  
Unstained with hostile blood;  
The trumpet spoke not to the armed throng;  
And kings sat still with awful eye,  
As if they surely knew their Sovereign Lord was by.*

Men were looking out for the coming One, for the corn of earth was ripe for the reaper. Men were on the tiptoe of expectation and wondered when the promised Prince would arrive. Alas, they knew Him not when He appeared! After this fashion are things at the present moment with regard to the Second Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ. “Of that day and of that hour knows no man,” but it is known unto God and fixed in the roll of His eternal purposes. “Known unto God are all His works from the creation of the world,” and especially those grand works which concern the Person of our adorable Lord Jesus.

He shall come as God has appointed—the vision of His Glory shall not tarry. He has given us suggestive hints as to that glorious appearing and He has plainly taught us to be looking for and listening unto the Day of the Lord. Among His last words are these, “Surely I come quickly”—these are words of consolation as well of warning. He bids us watch constantly for the coming of the Lord—that it overtake us not as a thief in the night. And He assures us that He will descend from Heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God. Therefore comfort one another

with the glad tidings and whenever your hearts sicken because of abounding sin, hear with the ear of faith the voice of promise crying, "Behold, the Bridegroom comes." Rest assured that He comes who will, in the fullest and most manifest sense, finish transgression and make an end of sin—and bring in everlasting righteousness.

The advent of the Well-Beloved is the consolation of His mourning saints. Both at His first and second appearing the Lord not only comes to drive away the wicked as chaff, but also to comfort and exalt His elect—it is a day that shall burn as an oven and yet, to the redeemed, it will be the happiest day that ever dawned! The First Advent of our Lord is spoken of, in our text, as ordained to be before the 70 weeks were finished and the city should be destroyed. And so it was, even as the Prophet had spoken. I shall not occupy your time by attempting to fix the beginning and the end of the period intended by the 70 weeks and the seven weeks and three-score and two weeks. That is a deep study, requiring much research and learning, and I conceive that the discussion of such a subject would be of no great practical use to us this Sabbath morning.

You will be better nourished upon the Lord, Himself, than upon times and seasons. Suffice it to believe that Jesus Christ our Lord, the Messiah, came exactly as it was prophesied and remained on earth as it was foretold He should do. In the middle of the predestined week He was cut off, when He had completed three and a half years of saving ministry. And within another period of like length, the Gospel was preached throughout all nations and Messiah's peculiar relation to Israel was cut off. At another time it may afford you profitable contemplation if you consider the 490 years from the decree of the king for rebuilding to the overthrow of Jerusalem.

We will, at this present hour, survey the work of the Messiah—that is His Hebrew name, or of Christ, which is the Greek interpretation thereof. Let us survey the work of the Anointed. Secondly, let us inquire as to our participation in it. And then, thirdly, let us contemplate the consequences which follow upon us being sharers in it, or upon our *not* being participants in it. Oh for a measure of the anointing, that we may fitly meditate upon our great theme! Come, Holy Spirit and rest upon us!

**I.** First, let us survey the Messiah's work. According to my text, it divides itself into two grand works, which two works subdivide themselves, in each case, into three particulars. The first work of our Lord Jesus Christ is the overthrow of evil and it is thus described—"To finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity." But our Lord's labor is not all spent upon pulling-down work! He comes to build up and His second work is the setting up of righteousness in the world, described, again, by three sentences—"To bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

The first work of the Messiah is the overthrow of evil. This overthrow of evil is described by three words. If I were to give you a literal translation from the Hebrew, I might read the passage thus—"To shut up the transgression, to seal up sin and to cover up iniquity." According to learned men, those are the words which are here used and the three put together are a singularly complete description of the putting away of sin. First, it is shut up. It is, as it were, taken prisoner and confined in a cell. The door is fastened and it is held in durance—it is out of sight; held to a narrow range—unable to exercise the power it once possessed. In a word, it is "restrained"—so the margin of our Bibles reads it.

The Hebrew word signifies to hold back, to hold in, to arrest, to keep in prison, to shut in or shut up. Its dominion is finished, for sin, itself, is bound. Christ has led captivity captive. But it is not enough to shut up the vanquished tyrant, unless he is shut up forever and, therefore, lest there should be any possibility of his breaking loose, again, the next sentence is, "To seal up." The uses of the seal are many, but here it is employed for certainty of custody. Just as when Daniel was thrown into the lions' den, the king sealed the stone with his own signet and with the signet of his lords. Or, better still, as when our Divine Master was laid in the grave, they rolled the stone to the mouth of the sepulcher and His enemies set a seal and a watch, lest His body should be stolen by His disciples.

In His case—

*"Vain the stone, the watch, the seal,  
Christ has burst the gates of Hell."*

But sin cannot thus arise. It is imprisoned in the sepulcher of Jesus and it can never come forth, for the royal seal of the Immutable God is set upon the door. Thus is sin placed doubly out of sight—it is shut up and sealed up—as a document put into a case and then sealed. "Finished," and, "made an end of," are the two words used in our authorized version, and they give the essence of the meaning. To borrow a figure from current events—Arabi, the Egyptian rebel, is shut up

as our prisoner and his defeat is sealed, therefore his rebellion is finished and an end made of it. Even thus is it with transgression—our Lord has vanquished evil and certified the same under the hand and seal of the Omnipotent—and, therefore, we may with rapture hear Him say, “It is finished,” and also behold Him rise from the dead to seal our justification!

Yet, as if this might not suffice, the next term in the Hebrew is, “to cover up,” for the word to make reconciliation or expiation is usually, in the Hebrew, to cover over. “Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.” Christ has come to cover sin, to atone for it and so to hide it. His glorious merits and substitutionary sufferings and death put away sin so completely that God, Himself, beholds it no more. He has blotted it out, cast it into the sea and removed it from us as far as the east is from the west! The two former sentences speak of finishing transgression and making an end of sin—and these expressions are full and complete—while this third one explains the means by which the work is done, namely, by an expiation which covers up every trace of sin.

Thus in the three, together, we have a picture of the utter extinction of sin, both as to its guilt and its power, yes, and its very existence! It is put into the dungeon and the door is shut; after this the door is sealed and then it is covered up, so that the place of sin's sepulcher cannot be seen anymore forever! Sin was, aforesaid, in God's sight, but through Christ Jesus we read, “You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have covered all their sin; You have taken away all Your wrath.” Sin was in God's way till Christ shut it up and now it pushes itself no more into the sight of the Lord. Sin was always breaking loose till Jesus sealed it up, but now it cannot come forth to lay any accusation against the justified.

The three words might be put into one word by saying Christ has made a clean sweep of sin of every kind. Whatever may be its special development, whether it is transgression, which means the breaking of bounds. Or sin, which is any lack of conformity to the Law. Or iniquity—that is to say, inequity, or the lack of equity, a default in righteousness. In all forms in which it can be described—Christ has shut it up, sealed it up and covered it up by His atoning Sacrifice, once and for all! The depths have covered it. If it is searched for, it cannot be found! Our blessed Scapegoat has carried it away into the land of forgetfulness—it shall not be mentioned against us anymore forever. Those three words contain infinitely more of meaning than I have either space or ability to set forth.

Observe, dear Friends, that the terms for sin are left in an absolute form. It is said, “to finish transgression,” “to make an end of sins,” “to make reconciliation for iniquity.” Whose transgression is this? Whose sins are these? Whose iniquity is it? It is not said. There is no word employed to set out the persons for whom Atonement is made, as is done in verses like these—“Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.” “I lay down My life for the sheep.” The mass of evil is left unlabeled so that *any* penitent sinner may look to the Messiah and find in Him the Remover of sin! What transgression is finished? Transgression of every kind! But what sins are made an end of? Sins of every sort—against Law and against Gospel, against God and against men—sins past, sins present, sins to come! And what iniquity is expiated? Every form of iniquity, whatever falls short by omission, whatever goes beyond by commission!

Christ, in this passage, is spoken of in general terms as removing sins, transgressions and iniquities in the mass. In other places we read of the objects of His Substitution, but here all is left indefinite to encourage all! He gives us no catalog of offenses—for where should He write it? The very heavens could not hold the enumeration! He takes the whole, unformed, horrible, black, disgusting mass and this is what He does with it—He encloses it, fastens it up and buries it forever! In the words of our version, He finishes it, makes an end of it and makes expiation for it. The Messiah came to wipe out and utterly destroy sin and this is, and will be, the effect of His work! Put all the three sentences into one and this is the sum of them.

Indulge me for a few minutes while I take the sentences separately and press each cluster by itself. And first notice that it is said He came to finish the transgression. As some understand it, our Lord came, that in His death, transgression might reach its highest development and sign its own condemnation. Sin reached its finish, its ultimatum, its climax, in the murder of the Son of God! It could not proceed further—the course of malice could go no further. They had stoned the Prophets and killed everyone that was sent to them. But now He came and God said, “They will reverence My Son,” but they did not. On the other hand, they cried, “This is the heir! Let us kill Him and the inheritance shall be ours.” Sin finished itself when it brought forth the death of the Son of God. It could produce no riper fruit, for no supposable crime can exceed the putting to death of Jesus our Lord.

Now has sin finished *itself* and now has Jesus come to finish it. “Thus far,” He says, “you shall go, but no further: here in My wounds and death shall your proud waves be stopped.” Sin virtually committed suicide when it slew the Savior, for His death became its death! The kingdom of sin was overthrown in that day when it smote the Prince of Peace! Then was a period put to the dominion of evil and, to come back to the Hebrew, the Lord restrained transgression and Satan was bound with a great chain. “The times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commands all men everywhere to repent.” Sin may no longer range unchecked! Sin is now arrested and held under warrant, restrained under the bonds of Law and, from the day of our Lord, by the preaching of the Gospel, sin has become more and more shut up as to its reigning power.

Some men have been altogether delivered from the rule of evil and other men, who remain its slaves, yet go not to such a pitch of outward riot as they would have done had not Christ appeared. Sin is being besieged! It skulks behind its earthworks. Its sorties are becoming fewer and less forcible. And though it is still powerful, the hour of its pride is passed, its head has received a deadly wound—the age has come in which the victory of truth and righteousness is guaranteed by the death of Jesus Christ our Lord! Your finis is written, O Transgression! Written by the pierced hands! Your huge volume has in it writing long enough and grievous enough, full enough of blasphemy against God and of evil towards men, but now the Lord Jesus takes the pen from you and you shall write no more as you have done. The huge leviathan of evil has met its match and is placed under the power of the Avenger.

Thus says the Lord, “Behold, I will put My hook in your nose and My bridle in your lips, and I will turn you by the way by which you came.” The Lord has set bounds to the transgression which aforesaid broke all bounds! Where sin abounded, Grace does much more abound! Sin is shut up that Grace may have liberty. This is one part of our Lord's great work—all Glory be unto His name—He has accomplished it with power and the power of the enemy is broken!

Now take the second sentence, which, in our version is, “To make an end of sin.” Messiah has come to proclaim so free, so rich, so gracious a pardon to the sons of men that when they receive it, sin virtually ceases to be—it is made an end of. The man that is *in* Christ and has Christ for His covenant Head, is, this day so delivered from all sin that he may boldly ask the question, “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?” If Christ has made an end of sin, that is the end of it—the matter is ended and no more is to be said!

Down among the dead, men let sin lie, forever buried by the right hand of the conquering Savior. But the Hebrew has it, “to seal up sins.” Now, I take it to mean just this. There are certain handwritings which are against us and they would be produced against us in court. But by order of the Judge, all these handwritings are sealed up and regarded as out of sight—no man dare break the seal and no man can read them unless the seal is broken—therefore they will never be brought against us. They have become virtually null and void. Everything that can be brought as an accusation against God's people is now sealed up and put out of the way, once and for all, never to be opened and laid to their charge before the living God!

Or, if you regard sin as a captive prisoner, you must now see that by Christ's death, the prison wherein sin lies is so sealed that the enemy can never come forth, again, in its ancient power. Sin could once sit on the highest mountain and look over the world and say, “All this is mine.” And the embodiment of sin could come to Christ and say of all the kingdoms of the world, “All these will I give You,” as though he claimed them all for his own. But it is not so today! The mountain of the Lord's house is, this day, exalted upon the top of the hills and though, as yet, all nations do not flow unto it, yet a glorious company comes streaming up to the Temple of the living God—and that company shall increase from day to day! As when a brooklet grows to a stream and the streamlet rises to a river, and the river swells till it rolls in fullest force into the shoreless main, so is it yet to be with the ever-growing Church of Jesus Christ, which, before long, shall carry all before it and cover the earth with blessing.

Evil, you cannot reign! Jesus has come and overcome you, Himself, and taught man to vanquish you! You cannot come, again, to the crown you once had, for the Seed of the woman has broken your head! He shall reign forever and ever and you shall die! Hallelujah! The coffin of sin is both shut up and fastened down with the seal of Christ's victory! But now, the last expression is in English. He has come “to make reconciliation for iniquity,” that is, to end the strife between God and man by a glorious reconciliation—a making, again, of peace between these two—so that God loves man and, as a consequence, man loves God. In the blessed Atonement of Christ, God and man meet at a chosen meeting place. Christ is Jehovah's darling and our delight. A slain Savior is well-pleasing to God and oh, how pleasing He is to a sinner

who is deeply under a sense of sin! Here, here is that Mercy Seat sprinkled with blood where man may speak to God without fear—and where God does speak to man without wrath! Here Righteousness and Peace have met together! Mercy and Truth have kissed each other! Oh, glorious reconciliation which Christ has made by honoring the Law in His life and in His death!

Now, take the Hebrew for it, and read the sentence thus—to cover iniquity. Oh, what bliss this is! To think, dear Friends, that sin is now, once and for all, covered! Not as though it lay rankling there beneath some coverlet through which fire might burn, or lightning strike, but *Christ's* covering is such that, if you could heap Hell over sin, it were not so hidden! And if you could pile worlds upon it, were not so concealed! And if all Heaven bowed to overlay it, it were not so out of sight as when Jesus buried it deeper than the lowest depths, where no memory can remember it, or mind perceive it!—

*“Our guilt shall vanish quite away,  
Though black as Hell before,  
Shall be dissolved beneath the sea,  
And shall be found no more.”*

This is what is to be done with the whole kingdom of evil, as well with the power of it and with the guilt of it. Dagon is to fall and to be broken—and the very stump of him is to be demolished. As when the darkness flies before the sun, not a trace of its blackness is left, so is sin to be utterly destroyed from the redeemed of the Lord! It is not merely the guilt of sin that is shut up and sealed and covered, but sin *itself*, its power, its dominion, its habit, its defilement—the dread that comes of it and the fear and the burning of heart which it engenders. All the foul birds of sin's filthy cage must fly away, never to return, chased away by the glorious work of Him who shall save His people from their sins! For this the Messiah was cut off, and this, by His death, is achieved—

*“O love! You bottomless abyss!  
My sins are swallowed up in thee;  
Covered is my unrighteousness,  
Nor spot of guilt remains on me.  
While Jesus' blood, through earth and skies,  
Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries!”*

I fail to describe this triumphant overthrow of sin and Satan. I have neither wisdom nor language answerable to such a theme. I invite you, now, for a few minutes to consider the second work, namely, the setting up of righteousness. This is set before us in three expressions—first, in the words, “to bring in everlasting righteousness.” And what is that? Why, His own righteousness which is from everlasting to everlasting and will never be taken away from those who have it and will never cease to be their beauty and their glorious Jesus! The work of Christ in His life and death is, by God, *imputed* to His people—indeed, it is theirs because they are one with Christ! He is the Lord, their righteousness, and they are the righteousness of God in Him. Saints are so righteous in Jesus Christ that they are more righteous than Adam was before he fell, for he had but a *creature* righteousness, but they have the righteousness of the Creator—Adam had a righteousness which he lost—but Believers have a righteousness which they can never lose, an *everlasting* righteousness!

Nor is that all the meaning of our text—those to whom God imputes righteousness, to them, also, He *imparts* righteousness. He makes them pure in heart. He changes their desires. He makes them love that which is right and just and good and so He gives them Grace to lead godly, sober, honest and holy lives! This righteousness shall not be crushed out of them, for the work of the Spirit shall continue until they shall become perfect and be meet to dwell with God in His Light. Happy are those spirits to whom Christ gives an everlasting righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of God and in it they shall shine forth as the sun! They are right and they shall be right! They are true and they shall never degenerate into falsehood! They are God's own children and they shall go on to develop the image of Christ, their elder Brother, till they shall be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing! This Christ came to do—He imputes and imparts righteousness and thus brings in everlasting righteousness as the foundation of His Kingdom.

Next, in order to the setting up of a Kingdom of righteousness, He is come that He may, “seal up vision and prophecy.” That is, by fulfilling all the visions and the prophecies of the Old Testament in Himself, He ends both prophecy and vision. He seals up visions and prophecies so that they shall no more be seen or spoken. They are closed and no man can add to them and, therefore—and that is the point to note—the Gospel is forever settled, to remain eternally the same!

Christ has set up a Kingdom that shall never be moved. His Truth can never be changed by any novel revelation. If any man comes to you and says, "I am a Prophet!" bid him go and find believers among the foolish, for, to you, Jesus has sealed up prophecy and vision and there is to be no more of it. There is no *need* of it, because in Christ, God has spoken all He means to say concerning the way of salvation. Until such time as Christ Himself shall come, the canon is complete, and though there are many voices crying, "Lo, here!" and, "Lo, there!" and some so fascinating that they might deceive, if it were possible, the very elect, yet those whom Christ has chosen know the Shepherd's voice and, "a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers."

Brothers and Sisters, there was always something better yet to come in all times till Christ arrived, but after the best, there comes none. A certain philosopher taught this; the next philosopher taught that and the next one contradicted this and that and taught another thing—while another master arose and contradicted all who went before. So man groped, as in the dark, for the wall, but now, the day has dawned and the true Light of God shines, for Christ has appeared! This, then, is an essential part of the setting up of that which is good—namely, to settle truth on a fixed basis whereon we may stand steadfast and immovable. The candles are snuffed out because the day, itself, looks out from the windows of Heaven. Rejoice in this, Beloved! God makes you righteous in Christ and with Christ, and in order that you shall never be perplexed with change, He sets aside all other teachers, that Christ may be your All in All!

Then, as if this were not enough, and truly it would not be enough, He is also come to anoint the Most Holy, or the Holy of Holies, as you may read it. And what does this mean? Nothing material, for the Holy of Holies, the place into which the High Priest went of old, is demolished, and the veil is torn in two. The Most Holy place is now the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ! He was anointed that God might dwell in Him. Together with Christ, the Holy of Holies is now His Church and that Church was anointed or dedicated when the Holy Spirit fell at Pentecost, to be with us and to abide in us forever. That was a noble part of the setting up of the great Kingdom of Righteousness, when tongues of fire descended and sat upon each of the disciples and they began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.

This is Christ's work, for which He came and for which He ascended on high, to set up the Truth of God, to set up righteousness and to make it everlasting by the dwelling of the Holy Spirit in the Church of God in the midst of the sons of men. Thus you see, in six ways, which condense themselves into two, our Lord set about His lordly enterprise. Heaven rings with the praises of the Messiah who came to destroy the work of sin and to set up the Kingdom of Righteousness in the midst of the world!

**II.** Let us now inquire as to our participation in these two works. I will put a few questions as briefly as I can, and I pray God, the Holy Spirit, that every one of us may honestly answer them. First, dear Brothers and Sisters, Christ has come into the world to do all this good work, but has He done it for us? "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son." What for? "That whoever believes in Him might not perish." There is a *general* aspect to the Atonement, but there is quite as surely a *special* objective in it. God loved the world and, therefore, He gave His Son. But to what end did He give His Son? Here is the answer, "That whoever believes in Him might not perish, but have everlasting life."

There was a special eye to *Believers*. Come, then, have you believed? The first question that is to help you to answer that inquiry is this—Is your sin shut up as to its power? "Sin shall not have dominion over you" if Christ is in you. How is it between your soul and evil? Is there war, or peace? Once you loved sin—you could not have enough of it. Is it so now? Do you still delight in evil? For if you do, the love of God is not in you! Can you still put forth your hand to iniquity as you once did? Then do not pretend that Christ has done anything for you! If you are a Believer, your sin may not be absolutely dead, but it is shut up for dead—it is held fast in the condemned cell. It may still breathe, but it is crucified with Christ!

How it tugs to get its hands loose from the nails! How it struggles to get its feet down from the tree! But it cannot, for He that nailed it there knew how to drive nails and how to fasten the offender to the tree. Do you begin to grow weary of iniquity? Is it distasteful and unpleasant to you? And, when looking over the day, you perceive where you have spoken unadvisedly or acted hastily, or in any other way soiled your character—do you feel as if you would gladly wash out every spot with tears? If it is so, Christ has begun with you—He has come to shut up your sin and to end its reign—it shall no more have dominion over you. It may be in you, but it shall not be on the throne! It may threaten you, but it shall not command you! It may grieve you, but it shall not destroy you! You are under another Master—you serve the Lord Christ. Judge for yourself how this matter fares with you.

The next question arising out of the text is, Is your sin sealed up as to its condemning power? Have you ever felt the power of the Holy Spirit in your soul, saying to you, "Go in peace; your sins, which are many, are all forgiven you"? Have you clutched that promise, "He that believes in Him is not condemned"? Have you believed in Jesus? Has that blessed Word of God, "There is therefore now no condemnation," breathed a deep calm over your spirit? Some of you do not know what I mean, but others of you do. Oh, what bliss, what a Heaven it is to know, "I am washed in the blood of the Lamb! I am delivered, clean delivered from every sin—past, present and to come—as to any possibility of its being laid to my charge! Christ has put my sins into a bag, sealed them up, hurled that bag into the sea and flung them out of existence! They are gone, never to be found again, ever!"

He has made an end of sin. Come, dear Hearer, do you know anything about this? If you do not, it is the one thing you need to know and, until you know it, you will never have any rest to your spirit, but you will be tossed to and fro as upon a raging sea. "There is no peace, says my God, to the wicked." There is no peace to any of us till Christ has made an end of our sin! How is it with your hearts? And next, is your sin covered as to its appearance before God? Has the Lord Jesus Christ made such an expiation for your sin that it no longer glares in the Presence of the Most High, but you can come unto God without dread? Can you hopefully say, "Lord God, You see no sin in me, for You have covered me with the righteousness of Christ and washed me in His blood"? Did you ever feel the sweetness of that? It is rapture! I can remember times when I have been driven to doubt whether it could be true, it seemed too good—and then again, when my faith has revived, I have said—"Good as it is, it is true, for it is like God to do these great marvels and to put away the sins of His people and cover them once and for all."

Oh, then there has been a joy within my spirit not at all like the joy of harvest, or the joy of marriage, or the joy of a first-born child in the house. No! It is a joy like the bliss of angels, deep, unspeakable, mysterious, Divine! Have you ever felt it? You will feel it constantly if Christ comes to dwell with you! You will, then, be assured in your heart that He has made an end of your sin. Further, let me question you about the next point. Has the Lord Jesus Christ made you righteous? Do you Glory in His blood and righteousness and do you now seek after that which is pure and holy? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap." If we continue in sin, we shall perish in sin. He is saved who comes out from evil and seeks to live honestly, righteously, soberly after the manner of the godly and the saintly. Is it so with you? Is there a great and deep change in your spirit, so that you now love those good things which once you despised and ridiculed in others? Oh, if you cannot answer my poor questions, how will you stand before the Judgment Seat of God when He shall test you as with fire?

Furthermore, are the prophecies and visions sealed up as to you? Are they fulfilled in you? When God declares that He will wash us and make us whiter than snow, is it so with you? When He declares that He will cleanse our blood, which has not yet been cleansed, is it so with you? When He says, "A new heart, also, will I give them, and a right spirit will I put within them: and I will write My Law upon their hearts"—is it so with you? Are you fishing about after empty dreams and fancies, or have you laid hold upon the old prophecies and the ancient visions and discovered the substance of them to be deeply worked in your very heart?

Nor is this all—are you anointed to be most holy to the Lord? Are you set apart that you may serve Him? Has the Holy Spirit come upon you, giving you a desire to do good? Have you a wish to rescue the perishing, a longing to bring the wandering sheep back to the great Shepherd's fold? Is the Spirit of God so upon you, today, that you can truly say, "I am not my own; I am bought with a price"? Jesus, the Messiah, came to do all these things and if He has not done them to you, then He has not come to you—you are still a stranger, still far off from Him! Oh, may the Lord make you desperately unhappy till you come to Jesus! May you never know what quiet means till you find it at the pierced feet! From this hour may you breathe sighs and may every pulse be a new agony of spirit, till, at last, you can say, "Yes, the Messiah was cut off, and cut off for me, and all that He came to do He did for me, and I am a sharer and a partaker in it all."

III. Lastly, we have but a brief interval in which to speak of the results of participating in all this. The results! I need a week to speak of them! They are, first of all, security. How can that man be lost whose transgression is finished and whose sin has ceased to be? What is there for him to dread on earth, in Heaven, or in Hell? If Christ has put away my sin, I cannot die! If Christ has washed away my guilt, I cannot be condemned! I am safe and may triumphantly sing—

*"More happy, but not more secure,  
The glorified spirits in Heaven!"*

Therefore, rejoice in this!

And now, inasmuch as you are secure, you are also reconciled to God and made to delight in Him. God is your Friend and you are one of the friends of God! Rejoice in that hallowed friendship and live in the assurance of it! Now you have the anointing, do not doubt it! Christ has made it yours by His death. The Spirit of the Lord rests upon you; you are fit for service; set about it without further question. The anointing is upon you; you are most holy to the Lord; so let your life be wholly consecrated. Your heart ought to be, and shall be, by the Spirit's power, as holy as that innermost shrine into which no unauthorized foot ever intruded—into which only once in the year the High Priest went—and then not without blood. God dwells in you, and you in God! Oh, blessed consequences—you shall soon dwell with Him forever!

But now, suppose when I put the question, you had to shake your head and say, "No, it is not so with me"? Then hear these few sentences. If the Messiah has not done this for you, then your sin will be finished in another way—sin, when it is finished, brings forth death. An awful death awaits you—death unto God, purity and joy. Woe, woe, to you! Death, on the pale horse pursues you, and will overtake you soon! Then will one woe be past, but another will follow it. If Christ has never made an end of your sin, then mark this, your sin will soon make an end of you and all your hopes, your pleasure, your boasts and your peace will perish! Oh, terrible end of all that is hopeful within you! You shall be a desolation forever and forever!

Has Christ not reconciled you? Then mark this, your enmity will increase! There is no peace between God and you, now, but soon will the war begin in which He must conquer and you, never yielding, will continue forever more to hate God and to find in that hate your utmost torment, your fiercest Hell! Have you never had the righteousness of Christ brought in? Then mark this, your unrighteousness will last forever! One of these days God will say, "He that is unholy, let him be unholy, still: He that is filthy, let him be filthy, still." That will be the most awful thing that can ever happen to you! You have heard of the fable of Medusa's head—whoever looked upon it, when it was held up, was turned to stone—and one day, Sinner, you shall look at Death—and it will petrify your character so that it shall be forever what it is when death came to you! Where death finds you, there *judgment* shall find you, and there *eternity* shall leave you! Oh, wretched Soul, to have nothing to do with the everlasting righteousness of Christ! Are not the prophecies fulfilled in you, the prophecies of mercy? Then listen! The prophecies of woe will be written large across your history. "The wicked shall be turned into Hell, with all the nations that forget God." Beware, you that forget God, lest He tear you in pieces and there be none to save you!

I will not detain you with many such words of terror, but through the Old Testament they roll like peals of thunder, nor is the New Testament less stern towards him that goes on in his iniquity and will not turn to the Christ. Lastly, will you never be anointed to be most holy? Then remember, holiness and you will stand at a distance, forever—and to be far off from holiness must necessarily be to be far off from Heaven and happiness! Sin is misery. In it lies both the root and the fruit of eternal woe. Purity is paradise—to be right with God is to be right with yourself and all created things! But if you will not be holy, then you must, by force of your own choice, be forever tossed about upon the restless sea of wretchedness! God save you, Brothers and Sisters! God save you for Christ's sake! Amen.

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