

THE TRUTH OF GOD'S SALVATION

NO. 2356

A SERMON INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S DAY, APRIL 15, 1894.
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
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“O God, in the multitude of Your mercy hear me, in the Truth of your salvation.”
Psalm 69:13.

I WOULD have you admire the educational power of prayer, for prayer is, in itself, an education for a saint. God might have given us every blessing at once without our asking Him for anything, but He says, even of that which He has promised to His people, “I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them,” the reason being that, sometimes, the *prayer* for the blessing is as beneficial to us as the blessing, itself, and thus we are twice blessed—first in asking—and then in receiving! Prayer brings the mercy, but in fetching it for us, prayer, itself, gives us an additional blessing. We are, ourselves, graciously helped of God as we pray, and we grow thereby.

Will you also observe that, usually, when saints plead mightily with God, they draw their arguments from the Lord Himself? In this case, David speaks to God of, “Your mercy,” and, “the Truth of your salvation.” We do not bring pleas to God from abroad—we find them in Him with whom we plead. We say to Him, “You are such a One, therefore, will You not do this for me?” Or, “You have said it, therefore, do as You have said.” Our best pleas lie within the compass of God’s Character and God’s promises.

Now, because of this fact, you will at once see why prayer is so beneficial, for thus it helps us to communion. If we come to God and plead with Him on account of what He, Himself, *is*, we have, in that very pleading, fellowship and communion with Him. We have to think of Him, to consider Him, to endeavor to understand His attributes, and so we come into His Presence intelligently and profitably. This is no small gift, to have our fellowship with the Father fostered by our prayer to Him.

Out of this communion comes edification. Coming near to God, we learn more and more of Him, and we get that kind of knowledge which does not puff us up because it first breeds love, and then builds us up, and we, knowing more of God, are established in Him. “They that know Your name will put their trust in You.” Thus we grow in faith, love and every Grace, while prayer leads us to search out the Character of God in order to find these pleas that we use in our supplication. So that, praying is communion and praying is edification! I think that you will grow more in half an hour’s prayer than you will in an hour’s sermon-hearing! I am not sure that it will be so in every case, for God may bless a variety of means to different men and women, but I think that the most of us make our great advances in the Divine Life when we are pleading with God—pleading God’s own Character with our God, we are then getting near Him and being built up into Him.

And thus, you see, prayer even becomes a confession of faith. Public prayer may thus furnish a very useful means of instruction. That is not its main purpose, but it incidentally happens that, when we are seeking God, first, then other things are added to us in our public prayer. David, in this Psalm, instructs us concerning the multitude of God’s mercy and the Truth of His salvation. It does one good to hear a godly man pray. When he pours out his heart before God, his language may be very simple—as simple as it is fervent—but there is a kind of insensible teaching and a force of latent instruction which gets into our soul, almost unawares, when we are joining in the prayers of devout persons. Prayer may thus be speaking to the souls of others as well as unto God and, may be, for some men, the best testimony and witness to the Gospel which they are able to hear. It was certainly so with David.

But it is not my objective, tonight, to enlarge upon the manifold uses of prayer. I could not leave this point without notice, so I have given it to you by way of preface. Let it suggest to you to think still more how large a blessing has come

to you through prayer, especially when prayer has taken the form of arguing with God because of the characteristics of His own Nature, finding pleas with Him in Himself.

In the words before us, David pleads with God the Truth of His salvation—"Hear me in the Truth of your salvation," upon which I shall only make these two remarks—first, *God's salvation is a great reality* and, secondly, *We have proved it to be so.*

I. First, GOD'S SALVATION IS A GREAT REALITY, a great Truth of God—"The Truth of your salvation." There is a substance in it. It is not a shadow, it is not a myth, it is not a mere type or figure of speech. It is a substantial thing, there is the Truth of God in it—"The Truth of your salvation."

And, first, let us view it in reference to the Lord, Himself. *To God, His salvation is, in the highest sense, full of Grace and His Truth.*

If I may venture to speak concerning Him of whom we can know nothing except as He reveals Himself, I may say that the truest and deepest thought of God is for the salvation of His people. This lies in the very center of His heart and the drift of His other thoughts and acts is all towards this point. He has ordained His Son to be the Head of a great family, of which He is to be the First-Born among many brethren, and the planning of the whole of creation was arranged in reference to the saved ones—those who are to be redeemed from among men. At the present time, the whole scheme of God's Providential working has a bearing upon the salvation of those whom He gave to His Son to be the reward of the travail of His soul. God's thoughts are high and not as our thoughts, but they are directed toward this central idea. They rest on this foundation principle—the underlying thought of all His works is the display of the Glory of His Grace in the salvation of the sons of men. This is the white of the target at which He shoots all His arrows and He fails not to hit it. In the grand gathering of all the redeemed, this shall be the loudest note in their song, "Unto Him that loved us, and that washed us from our sins in His own blood, to Him be Glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen." The display of all the characteristics of God in the salvation of His people is the subject of His truest, deepest thought.

This is, also, to Himself, the most solid and lasting of all His works. I speak with bated breath when I talk of the things of God, but let me show you, Brothers and Sisters, what I mean. God creates worlds as He pleases. We speak of them as though they had existed and were to exist forever, but, Brethren, even among the starry worlds that are visible to us, many changes have taken place. New stars appear—they are admired awhile for their brilliance, but soon they are gone from our sight. As for this round world in which we dwell, we talk of its "everlasting hills" and so forth, but it shall be burned up and shall pass away. Yon firmament, which seems like a new piece of azure-tinted cloth, is wearing out and, by-and-by, it shall be folded up like an old garment and put away as a worn-out thing. The things that are seen are, after all, but temporal. Do not suppose that you see anything solid—you only see shadows! Faith, alone, sees substance, but everything that the eye is capable of beholding is, of necessity, a temporal and temporary thing.

Look over the history of the whole world. Empires have arisen, all the thoughts of great men have been concentrated upon forming armies, building up enormous establishments and by State-craft consolidating the power of their realm. A dynasty has been formed, king after king has sat upon the throne and they thought, as they built their palaces, and walked in them, that Assyria and Babylon would never pass away! God's Providence lent itself to the building up of these great monarchies, but they were not substantial—they were only fading things, mere leaves upon the bay tree of existence. They came out and they, in due time, faded and dropped into the soil, again. But there is permanence in God's salvation—it will *never* fade—it is not a temporary work! The salvation of His people shall enlist the wondering gaze of angels throughout eternity and the songs of cherubim, seraphim and the hosts of the redeemed by blood shall go up before the Throne of God forever and forever because of the Truth of His salvation! This great work, which He has accomplished, He has made to last forever. Oh, Brothers and Sisters, what a wonderful work is that of the salvation of the sons of men in its abiding results!

And, further, I ask you to think, still from the God-ward aspect, of what Truth there is in salvation in this respect—it is that into which God has thrown His whole Self. When He makes a world, He speaks, and it is done! He commands and it stands forever fast. The morning light and all that is seen by it, are produced by His word and, in His Providence, He just nods and dictates the policies of empires. But in the work of salvation, He, Himself, comes! Behold the Cross! God, in the Person of His Son, bleeds and dies to save a soul! He has given Himself to this stupendous work. The Holy Spirit enters into human bodies and reigns and rules over human minds, abiding in them, continuing His gracious, com-

forting, enlightening and sanctifying work—He, Himself, personally dwelling in the saints! God throws His whole Self into the work of salvation!

His little finger can create the stars and light them up or quench them at His will! But even His right arm is not sufficient for the redemption of His people! Both hands must bear the cruel nails! Both feet must be fastened to the accursed tree! The heart of the Son of God must be pierced by the soldier's lance! He, even He, Himself, must come forth from the bosom of the Father and must descend, and still descend, and yet further descend till He goes down to the lowest parts of the earth—there to work out the salvation of His people! Oh, my dear Friends, when we come to the Truth of God's salvation, we have reached the rocks! Now we have left the ever-rolling sea and landed on the Divine *terra firma*. Here shall you see God, indeed! In other things, you see only His reflection in a mirror, but, in salvation, you see the express Image of the Father's Glory! In the work of the redemption of His chosen, you see God unveiling Himself as far as man is ever capable of seeing Him.

I should need all night if I were to dwell upon these points. So let me observe, in the next place, that *God's salvation is a great reality to ourselves as well as to Him*. Do you remember when you first grasped the true idea of God's salvation, when you understood that God had of old thought out the plan of salvation and, in the fullness of time, had worked it out? Do you remember when you first saw that Truth of God and when you felt that it was just the salvation that you needed and that you must have it—that you must have it *then*, or else perish everlastingly? You did not lay hold upon it, in the hour of your distress, as upon a fiction. You did not grasp it as a thing that might be or might not be. Souls that have ever been drowning in the sea of wrath want to clutch at a *real* salvation and you clutched at it as real. That day when I saw Christ as my soul's salvation, the great Sacrifice for sin was, to my soul, the most real thing I had ever seen! Otherwise it had not staunched the gaping wounds of my poor bleeding heart! Otherwise it had never brought balm and peace to my tortured spirit! I was a *real* sinner—I do not know whether you are—but I was. I had *real* pangs of conviction and I saw a *real* Hell before me—and I needed a *real* salvation—and I grasped it as such!

Since then, dear Friends, God's salvation has been wonderfully real to us. Have we not daily found it more and more so? You have had many things that you doted on and trusted in, but, after a while, these poor cobwebs have been unable to bear the weight that you have hung upon them, and they have all disappeared. But have you not found Christ's salvation to be very real to you from that first day, even until now? If you have not, (excuse my putting it very plainly to you), you have missed your way. If you have not found a real Christ, you certainly *need* one! And if you have not found a real salvation and, by personal experience, known its reality, you are under a delusion and that comfort which you enjoy, tonight, is a false comfort! I wish that I could disturb you out of it, that you might find a real comfort. Remember that life is real, sin is real, death is real, judgment *will* be real and the final sentence will carry with it a *real* punishment! You need, therefore, to find in Christ Jesus the Truth of His salvation, a real salvation which, though you cannot touch it, is yet tangible to your soul, and which, if you cannot see it, is yet to be surely seen by the eyes of your spirit. But I shall be getting to my second head too fast if I dwell upon this point, so I will leave it.

I think that we can say, dear Friends, that it is a real salvation to us in another sense. There is a Truth in God's salvation in the way that it has operated on us. The way it worked in the change of your character, at first—was not that very real? And sometimes, now, when temptation suddenly comes upon you, does not God's salvation pull you up with a very real check? Yes, and when you get somewhat indifferent in duty, does it not urge you on with a very real spur? Have not some of us said, "I will speak no more in the name of the Lord," and have we not found His salvation to be in us, in the truth of it, like fire in our bones, so that we could not hold our peace? The most potent force upon a real Christian's mind is the Truth of God's salvation—it touches him in a way that nothing else can. We are like music boxes and the Savior holds the key—and when He winds us up, then every part of us begins to play, but not till then! The spiritual nature of man is like a mystic harp upon which only One can play so as to bring out the fullness of its music! And the hand that can play upon our hearts is the hand that was nailed to the Cross. The Truth of God's salvation operates most powerfully upon our minds and so proves to us that it is real.

Now, beloved Friends, to speak a little in detail of the Truth of this salvation, if we have really laid hold of the Truth of God's salvation, we believe in a real Fall. We do not believe that Adam's Fall is a mere fiction or parable, but we believe it to be a sad and terrible fact, for if there was not a real Fall, then there is no Truth of God in salvation! If we have not fallen from our first estate, we do not *need* picking up! But, alas, we have grievously fallen!

Next, if you have the Truth of God's salvation, you will believe in real sin. There are hosts of sham sinners about. They come into our Chapels and we preach the Gospel to them, but they never get any good out of it. You may relieve sham beggars, but God never does. He relieves those who are really in need. Truly needy persons never come to Him in vain, but your pretended, dressed-up, hypocritical sinners, who say, "Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners," when they are neither miserable nor yet consciously sinful, God never relieves them! If you know the Truth of God's salvation, you must believe in real sin. "Oh!" says one, "I have more than enough of that." Then come and have real salvation! You who have really transgressed—you are the men and women for whom there is Truth in God's salvation—but, if there is no truth in your sinnership, there is, to you, no Truth in Christ's salvation.

Once more, if we get to know the Truth of God's salvation, we believe in a real Atonement. You know the description that is given of the Atonement as it is preached by some gentlemen of supposed "culture." It is this—that Jesus Christ did something or other which, in some way or other, is probably more or less remotely connected with the pardon of sin. Such a salvation as that would not save a mouse! No, no, we must have a real Atonement—the Substitution of our Lord Jesus Christ for guilty sinners—the bearing of our sin in His own body on the tree! They say that it is unjust that Christ should suffer for us. On the contrary, I venture to affirm that it was in the highest degree *just* that He should die for His people, for He was one with us! His death was not merely substitution for us, but He had *identified* Himself with us. He came here on purpose that He might be one with His people and, being one with them, as the Second Adam, it behooved Him that He should suffer. It was right that, having married His Church, He should go with her for better and for worse, and bear her sins in His own body on the tree. And He did so, blessed be His name! And I believe that He really expunged His people's sins, that He truly took away the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us and nailed it to His Cross that, by His precious death, He might put away all the transgressions of His people once and for all. You have not learned the Truth of God's salvation if you do not believe in a real Atonement.

Next, true faith brings to us a real pardon. If you have received the Truth of God's salvation, you are really forgiven. It was no fictitious document that was presented to you in that day when your Savior said to you, "Go, and sin no more. Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven." It was a real pardon, signed by the King's own hand, and your sins are gone—they shall not be mentioned against you any more, forever. "Do you believe this?"

Now the Holy Spirit is working in you a real sanctification. Have you that sign and token of Grace? Have you given up evil habits? Have you quit your vices? Do you hate the very thought of sin? Are you watchful over all things within you and all things around you? Is "holiness unto the Lord" inscribed upon your whole life? If not, you have *not* a real salvation, and you do not know the Truth of that salvation! But if God has made you truly holy, by the sanctifying power of His Spirit, then listen once more.

One part of the truth of this salvation is that there is a real Heaven for you. The Lord Jesus, Himself, says to you—

***"You shall see My glory soon!
When the work of Grace is done
Partner of My throne you shall be."***

And you shall dwell forever in a true Heaven, with a true Christ, in true Glory and only *then* shall you know to the fullest, the Truth of His Salvation!

Thus have I shown you that God's salvation is a great reality to God, Himself, and also to ourselves.

Further, if you would know the Truth of God's salvation, remember that the term used, here, signifies that *God's salvation is real in its constancy*. It will bear every strain and, therefore, it is that David uses it as a plea in prayer. He comes to God and he says, "Lord, I am in great distress. I beseech You, help me in my extremity by the Truth of Your salvation! Your salvation never fails, but endures every strain. Therefore, I beseech You, deliver me at this moment!" There are some times, when you are on your knees, and you need a master plea, that you can say, "Lord, if it is thus, then I beseech You, deliver Your servant. If this is a promise of Yours and You have spoken it, now do as You have said." It is no impertinence to plead with God in this way—"If this salvation of Yours is a fiction. If you have never spoken peace to my heart, nor brought me into the new and spiritual life, then, Lord, You may leave me. But if this is, indeed, as I believe it is, Your love to me, Your Grace in me, Your work for me—if I have, indeed, received Your salvation, then I beseech You, help Your servant and deliver me!"

You will find the value of such pleading if you have but faith to know that there is Truth in God's salvation, in the fact of its perpetuity, its constancy, its unfailing power to bear you right through to the end as surely as it has borne you thus far. Oh, may God grant us Grace to feel that the truest and most real thing in earth or Heaven is the salvation of the blessed God! There is no doubt that it is so and that there is substance and endurance in it—and we do well to use this fact as a plea when we need a substantial argument in prayer.

That is my first point, God's salvation is a great reality.

II. Now I shall ask your kind attention while, for a few more minutes, I speak upon the second head. WE HAVE PROVED IT TO BE SO—"The Truth of your salvation."

We have proved it, first, *by our experience of a new life*. Now reach for your diaries. "They are at home," you say. Take out your pocketbooks, then. You have not brought them with you tonight? Use your memories, then. Think what has been the experience of the new life in your soul. If there is Truth in God's salvation, you are not, now, what you once were, and you are now what you once never dreamed of being! There is within you, now, a life as much superior to the ordinary life of man as the life of an angel would be to that of the swine at the trough! Are you aware of that? Has such a life as that come into you? If so, that is one of the proofs of the Truth of God's salvation to you. An ungodly man sitting here may say, "That is no proof to *me*." No, of course it is not! You have not experienced it, so it cannot be evidence to you. Swine that were turned into angels would have, within themselves, a proof of some Divine operation upon them, would they not? Have you ever known what it was to be like the beast that perishes? Perhaps you have, for your thoughts never rose towards God—you were worldly, sensual, animal, perhaps devilish.

I do not know whether you ever sank so low as that, but if the Grace of God has come into your heart and made you feel sorrows and joys that you never knew before, you have a proof of the Truth of God's salvation! When Luther was talking with the pretended prophets who claimed to be Inspired, he said to one of them, "Did you ever have births and deaths within your soul?" The man looked at him in amazement. "You knew nothing of it," said Luther—"You knew nothing of it, for he that knows the Lord has had births and deaths, creations and destructions within his own spirit." It is even so.

My Hearer, do you know anything about this? Ordinary men do not know it—they are soulish, they have the life of a soul, they are far above the brutes—but Christian men are as far above *them* as *they* are above the brutes, for they have received a third and higher principle of life! The Spirit of God dwells in them! The Spirit of God has become dominant in them and this has elevated them into quite another region. This world that you see is not the world in which Believers live. You see mountains and hills—so do they—but you do not hear them break forth into singing before you, as Believers do. You see the trees of the field, but you never heard them clap their hands, as saints have done. There are many things, I guarantee you, which have not entered into your philosophy unless you have been born again. He who has been regenerated and has burst the shell that held him, like the unhatched bird within it, has emerged into new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness—and that fact is to him the proof of the truth of his salvation.

How else do we prove this? There is one sweet proof which we sometimes have of the Truth of God's salvation and that is, *our sense of sonship*. It is a great thing to be able to say, "Abba, Father," to know that God is our Father, not taking it as an abstract Truth that God is our Father, but feeling the Spirit of adoption witnessing within us, regarding Him not as Father in name only, but in *reality*, so that the thought of Him draws out emotions of love, delight, trust and nearest relationship. Oh, if you have that, you have proved the Truth of God's salvation! By nature you are of your father, the devil, and his works you do. But if you are now of your Father who is in Heaven, and you love Him and you grow like He, that is a grand proof to you of the Truth of His salvation!

Let me tell you one or two other things. Time flies, so I will only mention them. Sometimes, God gives us proofs of the Truth of His salvation by *our ecstatic joy*. This is not a theme that I like to speak of except in very select company, but, believe me, we do have "high days and holidays." We have our hard days, sometimes, and you know about them, but you do not see our joys. Oh, if you did but know them, you would be willing to live a life of sorrow to have one day with us on the holy Mount with the transfigured Christ! I have thought, sometimes, that I never could doubt, again, after an experimental acquaintance with the banqueting house, and a sight of the banner of love waving over my head!

Oh, the joy, the overwhelming joy, of the torrents of Divine Love when they come pouring into the soul! They bear everything away. If a man or a devil were then to come up and say to us, "There is no Truth of God in all this," we would

feel as if we could not do him the honor to pour contempt upon him! We are blessedly sure of the Truth of God's salvation when we get a grip of Christ, when, with Mary, we sit at His feet! When, with John, we lie in His bosom! When, like the spouse, we even touch His dear lips and receive the kisses of His mouth! You who have enjoyed this delightful experience know the Truth of God's salvation.

Now let me turn to another leaf of the diary of which I spoke. You know something of the Truth of God's salvation if you have done business in great waters and have had *Divine support in trouble*. Were you ever in this condition, that they said of you, "There is not a second person who justifies his course of action"? "It was proposed to pass a vote of approval of his conduct, but there was no one to second it." Did you ever open letter after letter and find that this friend will never help you again? That the next is ashamed of you and that the next one blasphemes God and you, also? You go on being stripped of one thing after another till you seem to have come to your last rag and then you say, "Still, I do not falter, I do not mean to budge an inch. I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that if all men forsake me, He will help me!" And you find, just then, a flush of joy come over you such as you never felt before, because now you are leaning on God's bare arm and there is nothing between you and the Almighty!

I admire that saying of Luther, when he looked out of the window and exclaimed, "There stands the arch of Heaven, without a single pillar and yet it never falls." That is the way to stand—when all the pillars are knocked away. So many of us are like ships on the stocks—there we lie, in the dock, and we shall never do any good as we are! But if the dog-shores are all knocked away and there is nothing left to support us, we go slipping into the water and so begin our true lifework. God help you, dear Brothers and Sisters, by His own Presence! And if you have once known the Presence of God in the utter absence of every form of comfort or help from mortal man, you will have had a most convincing proof of His salvation! The Lord can help you when you are in a fever—He can help you when you have gone, time after time, to the grave, and now that your last friend is buried. He can help you when that little income is suddenly taken away. He can bear you up when the vilest slander is cast upon your spotless reputation. And you can still, for all that, say, "The Lord is my portion, says my soul and, therefore, will I hope in Him." These are testing times, but it is *then* that you know the Truth of God's salvation!

And then, to turn over another leaf—a bright leaf this time—when all those troubles are ended and you get out of your difficulties—when *God has worked great deliverances for you*—then you know the Truth of His salvation! Then Miriam takes her timbrel! I do not remember hearing of her having a timbrel before. Miriam, where was your timbrel when you came out of Egypt? Why, then, poor Miriam was busy carrying some of her household goods like the rest who had their kneading-troughs upon their shoulders! But she found her timbrel when the Lord had triumphed gloriously and the horse and his rider had been thrown into the sea. Some of us have our timbrels at home. We are beginning to get our fingers ready for playing on them, for the Lord will work for His people, and He will bring forth His chosen, as He has said, "I will bring again from Bashan, I will bring My people, again, from the depths of the sea." Then it is that we know the Truth of His salvation.

But if you do not have these ups and downs, beloved Friends, you may know the Truth of God's salvation, and you ought to know it by *the sweet realizations of faith*. Where faith is strong, it has the faculty of anticipation, and that is a blessed faculty of the Divine Life, the power of stretching out your hands across the ages and bringing the far-off distance near. Perhaps you and I may not be in Heaven for another 20 years—we cannot tell, but Faith sits still and sees Heaven all round about her—and sometimes she puts on her crown and takes it off and casts it at her dear Lord's feet. Now and then she gets her heavenly harp and lays her fingers among the strings. I have known her put on all her holy array and walk in her white robes down the golden streets of Paradise—and she has seen and heard things which it were not lawful for her to utter!

Do you ever have these good times? If you do not and you are a child of God, you are losing a great deal He is both able and willing to give to you! There lies, a little to the right of the road to Heaven, a hill called Mount Clear. Pass it not by in a hurry, but climb to the top of it and stand there. With a clear faith, believe in all that your God has told you—stay there till you can see! They say, "Seeing is believing." That is not true—*believing* is seeing when you "believe" fast enough and steadily enough. I say not that every Believer can see all this at once. If you have good milk—of course you do not all have it pure—but if you have good milk, there is no cream on it at first. But if you stand it for a little while and let it be still, there will come some cream to the top.

So it is with faith. It is good milk, but you must let it stand a while and then you will find the cream of enjoyment, assurance and realization which will make you feel, "I know that God's salvation is true. I am sure of it, for I have as clearly perceived it by faith as if I had seen it with my natural eyes." If the senses, faulty as they are, can convey any sort of conviction to the mind, much more can that higher and truer God-given sense of faith convey to us a conviction that it is even as God has revealed unto us!

I wish any dear friend, here, who is not yet saved, might be led to test the Truth of God's salvation. God, through Jesus Christ, can ease you of your burden at once! It is a cold wintry night. You came in here and you have had a little shelter, and you are going out, again, into the cold, but go not away with your burden—leave it in the pew! Better still, cast your burden upon the Lord! Jesus can give you ease and rest. Go not away with your foulness—Jesus can wash you! Go not outside till you, yourself, are whiter than the snow! The Lord grant you Grace to do so! Your faith will give you God. The longest arm of the greatest giant can never reach to Heaven, but the *finger* of faith can touch the Savior! Believe! Trust, and the work is done and you shall know the Truth of His salvation!

Let us go our way with just this word of prayer. Lord, let us all know the Truth of Your salvation! May we all trust You! May we trust You more, and more, and more, and more, and more! May we trust You implicitly! May we trust You up to the hilt and glorify You thus by our childlike faith, for Jesus' sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON:

Psalm 37:1-18.

Let us read, tonight, part of the 37th Psalm. David, here, first of all, dissuades himself and us from falling into a very common evil—that of envying the wicked because of their prosperity and murmuring against God because we, perhaps, are not so highly favored in our earthly affairs.

Verses 1, 2. *Fret not yourself because of evildoers, neither be you envious against the workers of inequity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.* No one envies the grass, let it be ever so green. No one envies flowers, let them be ever so fragrant, for we know that grass must be cut and that flowers must wither. Let us look upon the wicked in the same light—their time of perishing shall soon come, their end hastens on—therefore, let all envying be out of the question since they are such short-lived beings.

3. *Trust in the LORD, and do good.* There you have the secret of the active life of the Christian! The root of his activity lies in his faith—"Trust in the Lord." The outward manifestation of his inner life is in the good that he does and where there is this faith, proven to be living faith by good works, there follows the promise—

3. *So shall you dwell in the land, and verily you shall be fed.* It does not say, "Young man, verily you shall prosper in business." It does not say, "O ambitious man, you shall dwell in a palace, or revel in luxuries," but it *does* say to you, O humble-minded Christian, trusting in God, "Verily, you shall be fed." You know, when the word, "verily," is used, there is something upon which God sets His seal as being true—"Verily, you shall be fed." God's, "Verilys," are better than men's oaths. Believe, then, Christians, and let there be no more fretting about your temporal trials. I know you have come in here, tonight, very anxious and vexed with care and grief—take this, "Verily," and lay it, like Isaiah's lump of figs, upon the boil and, "Verily," you shall soon be healed!

4. *Delight yourself, also, in the LORD; and He shall give you the desires of your heart.* Delight is a Christian's duty. To sorrow, to mourn, to despair—these belong not to the Believer. "Delight yourself in the Lord." Christians, here is a river to swim in—plunge into it! Here is a bottomless abyss of delights—the Person, the Grace, the works, the attributes of our Covenant God! And here is a promise given to each one of those who carry on this excellent duty, "He shall give you the desires of your heart."

5. *Commit your way unto the Lord; trust, also, in Him; and He shall bring it to pass.* Put the helm of your ship into the hand of the Almighty Pilot. Leave the guidance of your pilgrimage to Him who has led many caravans across the desert and who has never suffered any to perish! What an easy way this is and yet how difficult do we find it to carry it out! It is to unload ourselves and put our burden on our God. Oh, that we had the sanctified commonsense to make us fulfill this duty!

6. *And He shall bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your judgment as the noonday.* Leave your character with God—it is safe, there. Men may throw mud at it, but it will never stick long on a true Believer—it shall soon come off and you shall be the more glorious for men's slander.

7-11. *Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him: fret not yourself because of him who prospers in his way because of the man who brings wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not yourself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yes, you shall diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.* This is now a Gospel blessing, for Christ pronounced it upon the mount among His other benedictions—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Somehow or other, the only persons who truly enjoy life and get happiness out of this present vale of tears, are the meek spirits, the men who can say—"Mine are the valleys, and the mountains mine; my Father made them all." Even the possessions of other men make these people glad! They are like the man we have heard of in China who met a mandarin covered with jewels and, bowing to him, said, "Thank you for those jewels." Doing this many times, at last the mandarin asked the cause of his gratitude. "Well," said the poor but wise man, "I thank you that you have those jewels, for I have as good a sight of them as you have; but I have not the trouble of wearing them, putting them on in the morning, taking them off at night, and having a watchman keeping guard over them when I am asleep. I thank you for them—they are as much use to me as they are to you." This meek man can walk along the broad acres of a rich man's farm! He can see his noble oaks and other forest trees and he can say, "Thank God for them all! I have as much enjoyment from these as the rich man, himself, has, for they are mine to enjoy as truly as they are his." "The meek shall inherit the earth, and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace," not in the abundance of wealth, but in the abundance of *peace!* To a meek man, *peace is his wealth*, and holy quietness and calm his true riches!

12-18. *The wicked plots against the just, and gnashes upon him with his teeth. The Lord shall laugh at him: for He sees that his day is coming. The wicked have drawn out the sword, and have bent their bow, to cast down the poor and needy, and to slay such as are of upright conversation. Their sword shall enter into their own heart, and their bows shall be broken. A little that a righteous man has is better than the riches of many wicked. For the arms of the wicked shall be broken: but the LORD upholds the righteous. The LORD knows the day of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever.* He knows their dark days and *He* will be their light—He knows their sunny days and *He* will be their shelter. He knows their last day and *He* will be their confidence. He knows their resurrection-day and *He* will be their glory—"Their inheritance shall be forever."—

***"Go, you that boast in all your stores,
And tell how bright they shine.
Your heaps of glittering dust are yours,
But my Redeemer's mine."***

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—196, 210, 191.

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