

Free Grace Broadcaster

ISSUE 259

CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

*And beginning at Moses and all
the prophets, he expounded unto
them in all the scriptures the
things concerning himself.*

Luke 24:27

Our Purpose

*“To humble the pride of man,
to exalt the grace of God in salvation,
and to promote real holiness in heart and life.”*

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259

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THE KEY TO BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

J. C. Ryle (1816-1900)

And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.—Luke 24:27

LET us mark [in this verse] how full the Old Testament is of Christ. We are told that our Lord began “at Moses and all the prophets, [and] expounded¹ unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.”

How shall we explain these words? In what way did our Lord show “things concerning himself” in every part of the Old Testament field? The answer to these questions is short and simple. Christ was the substance of every Old Testament sacrifice ordained in the law of Moses. Christ was the true Deliverer and King of Whom all the judges and deliverers in Jewish history were types. Christ was the coming Prophet greater than Moses, Whose glorious advent filled the pages of prophets. Christ was the true seed of the woman Who was to bruise the serpent’s head—the true seed in Whom all nations were to be blessed, the true Shiloh to Whom the people were to be gathered, the true scapegoat, the true brazen serpent, the true Lamb to which every daily offering pointed, [and] the true High Priest of Whom every descendant of Aaron was a figure. These things—or something like them, we need not doubt—were some of the things that our Lord expounded in the way to Emmaus.

Let it be a settled principle in our minds in reading the Bible that Christ is the central sum of the whole book. So long as we keep Him in view, we shall never greatly err in our search for spiritual knowledge. Once losing sight of Christ, we shall find the whole Bible dark and full of difficulty. The key to Bible knowledge is Jesus Christ.

From Expository Thoughts on Luke, Vol. 2 (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1879), 500-501; in the public domain.

J. C. Ryle (1816-1900): Bishop of the Anglican Church; born at Macclesfield, Cheshire County, England, UK.



¹ **expounded** – explained; set forth in detail.

THE GOSPEL OF THE SERPENT'S DOOM

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between
thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou
shalt bruise his heel.—Genesis 3:15*

I pray you, never regard that story of the serpent as a fable...There was a real serpent, as there was a real paradise. There was a real Adam and Eve, who stood at the head of our race. And they really sinned, and our race is really fallen. Believe this.

When Satan—"that old serpent...the Devil, and Satan" (Rev 20:2), as the Apocalypse calls him—determined to tempt Eve in order that he might destroy the race in which God took much delight, he could not appear to the woman as a spirit. Spirits are not to be discerned by the eye since a pure spirit is a thing that none of the outward senses of human beings can apprehend. An immaterial spirit must be invisible; therefore, he must embody himself in some way or other before he can be seen. That Satan has power to enter living bodies is clear, for he did so upon a very large scale with regard to men in the days of Christ. He and his legions were even compelled to enter the bodies of swine rather than be cast into the deep. Being compelled to have an embodiment, the master evil spirit perceived the serpent to be at that time among the most subtle of all creatures; therefore, he entered the serpent, feeling that he would be most at home in that animal. Out of the serpent he spoke to Eve, as though the serpent itself had spoken. There was an actual and material serpent, but the evil spirit who is known as the "old serpent" was there, possessing the natural serpent with all his masterly cunning. Cruelly determining to lead the human race into sin that he might thus ruin it and triumph over God, the fallen angel did not hesitate to assume a reptile form.

Notice carefully that when the Lord comes to deal with the serpent, He does not question him as to his guilt and the reason of it. The reason is, perhaps, that the guilt of the archenemy was self-evident; or, better still, because the Lord had no design of mercy for him. He meant to make no covenant of grace for the devil or his angels...He pronounced a sentence upon the serpent, which, while it was terrible to him, is most

encouraging to us. And as far as our first parents understood it, it must have been a sun of light to their dark, depressed souls. For many a year this was the lone star of believing hearts: this gospel of the serpent's doom. Satan was their enemy; he had done them wrong. He was also God's enemy, and God would fight against him and call them into His battle. He would raise up One Who would suffer but would win the victory—One Whom He calls the seed of the woman. By Him Satan's head would be bruised; and in that very fact, the race of man would be unspeakably blessed...

Let us, [then,] think upon the ceaseless war with which God threatens the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." He reckoned upon an easy conquest and had apparently gained it; but he would find his victim become his antagonist and, at length, his conqueror. Satan can never know peace: he seeketh rest and findeth none (Mat 12:43). When he talked to that woman with his guileful¹ words of flattery, he thought he had made a friend of her. The charming creature in whom God had embodied the perfection of beauty—had he not seduced her from obedience to the great King? Had he not used her as the instrument to make her husband a traitor to his God? They were great friends, those two.

She felt, in the moment that she took the fruit, that she owed much to the serpent for giving her the gentle hint whereby she was led to find the opening of her eyes and the uplifting of her nature to be as God. How grievously was she deceived! Nor was the serpent to find himself advantaged. The league was broken, and the deceiver and his victim were at enmity. God declares most solemnly, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." God will see that there be no peace. There is a war to be waged between Satan and the woman's seed so long as the world stands!

Sometimes it looks as if there is going to be peace; for the world flatters the church, and the church seeks to conform herself to the world. As before Noah's flood the sons of God and the daughters of men were joined in unholy alliance, so again and again, there have been attempts at truce. But peace there cannot be. Today Satan tempts the ministers of Christ to soften down the gospel, adapt it to the age, and make it popular; and he also labors to throw down the division between the church and the world. "Fill up the gulf!" says he. "Cover it over like an old sewer, and forget that it ever existed!" Thus, he speaks like the sinner in the Proverbs: "Cast in thy lot among us; let us all have one purse"

¹ **guileful** – deceitful.

(Pro 1:14). But mark this, all ye that hear me: though all the pulpits should be captured and though it should seem that the very elect were deceived, yet God will not leave Himself without witness. [He] will find, somewhere or other, some chosen ones of the seed of the woman to carry on the holy war even to the end. Jehovah hath laid His hand upon His throne, and He has sworn to have war with evil from generation to generation. See how it was in Israel when the high priest of God, even Eli, winked at sin when his own sons as priests committed iniquity at the tabernacle door, and all Israel was thus made to do evil. Would not the lamp of truth go out? Would not the worship of the Lord be utterly abhorred? Ah, no! A little child was brought by his mother into the tabernacle to be the servant of the Lord, and in him the Lord found a champion. In the night did God call Samuel; and he answered, "Here am I" (1Sa 3:4). This Samuel stood before the Lord and gave forth prophecies that made both the ears of him that heard thereof to tingle, and the Lord was again great in Israel. Do not tremble for the ark of the Lord! God will not suffer the old serpent to spread his slime over all things. Satan's throne shall always be opposed.

This enmity is to be kept up by God Himself. He said, "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.*" See here the church of God announced in this verse! You have not only the gospel here but the church also. Christ, the seed of the woman, is the Head; and all who are in Christ are His body. He and they are the one seed. In these words, the Lord set up the church that continues to this day: a seed which is opposed to Satan and to evil; a seed that will remain by the power of the Spirit of God, waging constant war with the powers of evil. Do we belong to that seed? In this seed, there is a deep-seated hatred to everything that is false and evil. God will see that this seed shall never yield to the power of evil, for still it shall stand true: "*I will put enmity between thee and the woman.*" If there is false doctrine, there shall be a protesting reformer. If there is any form of wickedness extant, there shall be a witness born from on high to contend with it. This seed is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the Spirit of God, Who dwells in the true seed of the woman; and this seed shall be valiant for the Lord of hosts until the last enemy shall be destroyed (1Co 15:26).

Which side are you on this morning, my friend? I put the question very pointedly to everyone here: Are you born from above? "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (Joh 3:6). Only this last is the true seed of the woman.

Observe that we see in the text the limited achievement of the old serpent. What will he accomplish by all his schemes? “Thou shalt bruise his heel.” That is all. This is after the serpent’s manner. Satan is “an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward” (Gen 49:17). If he dares not attack you openly, he will assail you from behind. He is as a snake in the grass, biting at the heel of the traveler. The result of Satan’s six thousand years of cunning and enmity is that he has bruised the heel of his victim.

That bruised heel is painful enough. Behold our Lord in His human nature sorely bruised: He was betrayed, bound, accused, buffeted, scourged, spit upon. He was nailed to the cross. He hung there in thirst and fever, in darkness and desertion. They pierced His hands and His feet; and last, they set His heart abroach,² and forthwith there flowed from it both blood and water. Satan bruised the heel of the woman’s seed by death. It is a sad business; but when our Lord thought of the resurrection, the salvation of His chosen, and the conquest of the world, it seemed to Him to be a light thing; for He “endured the cross, despising the shame” (Heb 12:2).

Behold the seed of the woman as further comprehending all the Lord’s believing people! Satan has bruised their heel to the utmost of his power. Through the long persecutions, he has been assailing the heel of the church. The devil cast into prison many of the saints, and others he caused to be tortured for Christ’s sake; but their souls were not conquered. He could only bruise their heel; their spirit soared out of his reach. And you, today, when tempted, tried, and cast down, may be comforted because your Head is not hurt: Jesus reigns in heaven. The waters are black, and they cover the body; but our Head is above the billows, and the body is safe. The serpent’s bruises stay in the heel and spread no further. The suffering of the church, however great, is but a “light affliction,” not worthy to be compared with the “far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2Co 4:17). Thank God, the enemy can only bruise your heel.

The cause of God and truth in the world may, by Satan’s subtle power, be for a while sadly bruised as to the heel of its progress; but it cannot be wounded in the heart of its truth! The kingdom advances painfully because of the bruised heel, but it fails not. Even when lame, it takes the prey. Some doctrine which, possibly, may have been stated in a questionable manner is more fully studied, more carefully made known; so even the heel-bruise works for good. Though the church of

² **abroach** – pierced.

God may be under a cloud for a time, she will break out with all the greater splendor before long.

“Thou shalt bruise his heel.” Make the best thou canst of it, Satan, it does not come to much! All that thou art at thy greatest is but a heel-nibbler and nothing more. Thou art not allowed to poison the heel but only to bruise it. Though the man of God limps a while and suffers where the fangs have been, yet, leaning on his Beloved, he comes up from the wilderness without fail. Forgetting the bruises of his heel, he rejoices in the triumphs of his glorious Head...

We have marked the limited triumph of Satan, and we now observe his final doom. “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head.” Here is the end of the great conflict. Satan, who heads the powers of evil in the world, is to fight it out with all his cunning and strength, and he is so far to succeed as to bruise the heel of the champion with Whom he fights; but in the end the seed of the woman is to bruise his head.

This was accomplished when the Lord Jesus died: by dying [He] honored the Law, put away sin, slew death, and defeated hell! When the great Substitute drank the cup of wrath to its utmost dregs for every believing soul; when He unhinged the gate of the sepulcher and carried it away, as Samson carried the gates of Gaza, post, bar, and all (Jdg 16:3); when He opened the doorways of heaven and led captivity captive; then, indeed, the head of the dragon was broken. What can Satan now do? Is not the accuser of the brethren cast down? He is still doing his little best in bitterness and malice; but Christ hath crushed him. Yes, the very Christ Who “was despised and rejected of men” (Isa 53:3), the Man of the thorn crown and the marred visage,³ the Man of bleeding shoulders and pierced hands and feet, the Man Who was born of a virgin, the seed of the woman, hath broken the power of the enemy. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! He hath cast down the prince of darkness from his high places! Did He not Himself say, “I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven” (Luk 10:18)? He hath bruised the serpent’s head!

This is done in all believers also and shall be done yet more effectually. Brethren, in that day when the Holy Spirit led us to trust in the Lord Jesus, *we* bruised the serpent’s head. He had been accustomed to command, and we to obey; thus, sin had dominion over us. But as soon as ever we believed in Christ, that dominion was ended, and Dagon fell before the ark of the Lord. I see the serpent rise above me. This great python, with opened jaws, gapes upon me as though he would swallow

³ **marred visage** – disfigured appearance.

me up quick. But I am not afraid. O serpent, I have bruised thy head in Christ Jesus my Lord; for I, too, am of the seed of the woman! The serpent cannot lift himself against the chosen seed. What can he do with a broken head? He knows that God has decreed that every believer shall triumph over him. It is written, "God...shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly" (Rom 16:20). Hallelujah once again!

This bruise upon the head of the evil one is a mortal stroke. If he had been bruised upon the tail or upon the neck, he might have survived; but the Lord shall utterly slay the kingdom of evil and crush out its power. Reigning evil shall cease, and grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life! There shall be a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Christ Himself, the seed of the woman, shall come a second time, and He shall reign on earth amongst His ancients gloriously. Then shall He ride forth prosperously because of truth and righteousness, and His right hand shall exalt His people. His foot shall tread down their enemy. May you and I be among the happy throng that shall salute the seed of the woman in His second advent! May we reign with Him in that day! By the seed of the woman is Paradise restored to us, and all the mischief of the Fall is undone; He restoreth that which He took not away...

Is it well with you? Do you look to Jesus, the seed of the woman? Are you trusting in Him to break the power of the enemy? Do you wish the power of sin to be broken in yourself? Do you desire to have the very head of it crushed to powder? Do you pine to be free from sin and holy as God is holy? Are you trusting in Jesus to have this same thing wrought in you? Ah! Then you are on the conquering side. Victory shall be yours through the blood of the Lamb.

Thus have we found much gospel in the wonderful sentence pronounced upon that old serpent, the devil; but we have only skimmed the surface. To the eternal God be glory, world without end! Amen.

From a sermon delivered on Lord's Day morning, September 21, 1890,
at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington.

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892): Influential English Baptist preacher; born at Kelvedon, Essex, England, UK.



The incarnate Word is the key to the written Word. It is the Person and work of Christ that gives meaning and blessedness to what is found in the Old Testament types.—*A. W. Pink*

CHRIST AND ISAAC

George Whitefield (1714-1770)

And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.—Genesis 22:12

I think the patriarch¹ Abraham shines the brightest [among Old Testament saints] and differs from the others as one star differeth from another star in glory. For he shone with such distinguished luster that he was called the “Friend of God” (Jam 2:23), the “father of the faithful;” those who believe on Christ are said to be [his] sons and daughters and to be “blessed with faithful Abraham” (Gal 3:9). Many trials of his faith did God send this great and good man after He had commanded him to get out from his country and from his kindred unto a land that He should show him; but the last was the most severe of all—that of offering up his only son. By the divine assistance, I propose to make this the subject of your present meditation. And, by way of conclusion, [I propose] to draw some practical inferences from this instructive story, as God shall enable me...

What does God say to Abraham? “Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of” (Gen 22:2).

Every word deserves our particular observation. Whatever he was to do, he must do it now, immediately, without conferring with flesh and blood. But what must he do? “Take now thy son.” Had God said, “Take now a firstling² or choicest lamb or beast of thy flock and offer it up for a burnt-offering,” it would not have appeared so ghastly; but for God to say, “Take now thy son and offer him up for a burnt offering,” one would fancy,³ was enough to stagger the strongest faith. But this is not all: it must not only be a son, but “thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest” (Gen 22:2). If it must be a son and not a beast that must be offered, why will not Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman, do? No, it must be his only son, the heir of all, his Isaac (by interpretation,

¹ **patriarch** – male head of a family or tribe.

² **firstling** – first offspring of the flock.

³ **fancy** – imagine.

“laughter”). [It must be] the son of his old age in whom his soul delighted—“whom thou lovest,” says God, in whose life his own was wrapped up. This son, this only son, this Isaac, the son of his love, must be taken now, even now, without delay and be offered up by his own father for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains of which God would tell him...

At length, “they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood” (Gen 22:9).

And here let us pause a while, and by faith take a view of the place where the father has laid him. I doubt not but that blessed angels hovered round the altar and sang, “Glory be to God in the highest,” for giving such faith to man. Come, all ye tenderhearted parents who know what it is to look over a dying child: fancy that you saw the altar erected before you, the wood laid in order, and the beloved Isaac bound upon it; fancy that you saw the aged parent standing by weeping. (For why may we not suppose that Abraham wept, since Jesus Himself wept at the grave of Lazarus?)...I think I see the tears trickle down the patriarch Abraham’s cheeks; and out of the abundance of the heart, he cries, “Adieu, adieu, my son; the Lord gave thee to me, and the Lord calls thee away; blessed be the name of the Lord. Adieu, my Isaac, my only son, whom I love as my own soul; adieu, adieu.” I see Isaac at the same time meekly resigning himself into his heavenly Father’s hands, and praying to the most High to strengthen his earthly parent to strike the stroke. But why do I attempt to describe what either son or father felt? It is impossible. We may indeed form some faint idea of, but shall never fully comprehend it, until we go and sit down with them in the kingdom of heaven, and hear them tell the pleasing story over again. Hasten, O Lord, that blessed time! O let thy kingdom come!

And now, the fatal blow is going to be given. “And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son” (22:10). But do you not think he intended to turn his head away when he gave the blow? What is more, why may we not suppose that he sometimes drew his hand in after it was stretched out, willing to take another last farewell of his beloved Isaac, desiring to defer it⁴ a little, though resolved at last to strike home? Be that as it will, his arm is now stretched out, the knife in his hand, and he is about to put it to his dear son’s throat.

But sing, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Man’s extremity⁵ is God’s

⁴ defer it – put it off.

⁵ extremity – extreme distress or difficulty.

opportunity; for behold: just as the knife, in all probability, was near his throat, “the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham.” (The word is doubled to engage his attention; and perhaps the suddenness of the call made him draw back his hand, just as he was going to strike his son.) And Abraham said, “Here am I” (22:11).

“And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me” (22:12)...With what comfort may we suppose the good old man and his son went down from the mount and returned unto the young men! With what joy may we fancy he went home and related all that had passed to Sarah! And above all, with what triumph is he now exulting in the paradise of God and adoring rich, free, distinguishing, electing, everlasting love, which alone made him to differ from the rest of mankind. [That] rendered him worthy of the title that he will have so long as the sun and the moon endure: “the father of the faithful”...

But behold, I show you a mystery hidden under the sacrifice of Abraham’s only son, which, unless your hearts are hardened, must cause you to weep tears of love and plentifully too. I would willingly hope you would prevent me here, and are ready to say, “It is the love of God in giving Jesus Christ to die for our sins.” Yes! That it is. And yet, at the mentioning of this, perhaps you find your hearts not so much affected. Let this convince you that we are all fallen creatures and that we do not love God or Christ as we ought to. For if you admire Abraham offering up his Isaac, how much more ought you to praise, magnify, and adore the love of God, Who so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus our Lord, “that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Joh 3:16)? May we not well cry out, “Now know we, O Lord, that you have loved us, since you have not withheld from us your Son—your only Son”? Abraham was God’s creature...and therefore under the highest obligation to surrender up his Isaac. But, oh, stupendous love! While we were His enemies, “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (Gal 4:4) that He might become a curse for us. Oh, the freeness, as well as the infinity of the love of God our Father! It is unsearchable! I am lost in contemplating it; it is past finding out.

Think, O believers, think of the love of God in giving Jesus Christ to be a propitiation for our sins. And when you hear how Abraham built an altar, laid the wood in order, bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood, think how your heavenly Father bound Jesus

Christ His only Son and offered Him upon the altar of His justice! [He] laid upon [Jesus] the iniquities of us all. When you read of Abraham's stretching forth his hand to slay his son, think, oh think how God actually suffered His Son to be slain that we might live forevermore! Do you read of Isaac carrying the wood upon his shoulders upon which he was to be offered? Let this lead you to Mount Calvary...and take a view of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, bearing and ready to sink under the weight of that cross on which He was to hang for us. Do you admire Isaac so freely consenting to die, though a creature, and therefore obliged to go when God called? Oh, do not forget to admire infinitely more the dear Lord Jesus, that promised seed, Who willingly said, "Lo, I come"—though under no obligation to do so—"to do thy will," to obey and die for men, "O God" (Heb 10:9)!

Did you weep just now when I bid you fancy you saw the altar, the wood laid in order, and Isaac laid bound on the altar? Look by faith, behold the blessed Jesus, our all-glorious Emmanuel, not bound, but nailed on an accursed tree! See how He hangs crowned with thorns...see how the thorns pierce Him, and how the blood in purple streams trickle down His sacred temples! Hark how the God of nature groans! See how He bows His head; and at length humanity gives up the ghost!

Isaac is saved, but Jesus, the God of Isaac, dies! A ram is offered up in Isaac's place, but Jesus has no substitute: Jesus must bleed, Jesus must die! God the Father provided this Lamb for Himself from all eternity. He must be offered in time or man must be damned forevermore.

And now, where are your tears? Shall I say, refrain your voice from weeping? No, rather let me exhort you to look to Him Whom you have pierced and mourn, as a woman mourns her firstborn; for we have been the betrayers. We have been the murderers of this Lord of glory, and shall we not bewail those sins that brought the blessed Jesus to the accursed tree? He having done so much, suffered so much for us, forgiven so much, shall we not love much? Oh! Let us love Him with all our hearts, minds, and strength; and [let us] glorify Him in our souls and bodies, for they are His.

From Selected Sermons of George Whitefield; in the public domain.

George Whitefield (1714-1770): Anglican minister who became a great evangelist during the Great Awakening; born in Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England, UK.



CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS PROPHESED

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758)

BY the ancient prophecies, the sufferings of the Messiah were to be extremely great. “For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burnt as an hearth. My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave unto my skin. I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert...For I have eaten ashes like bread, and mingled my drink with weeping, Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down” (Psa 102:3-6, 9-10). “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd;¹ and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws...I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me” (Psa 22:14-15, 17). “The waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried...Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness” (Psa 69:1-3, 20). “We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted....He was wounded...He was bruised...The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted...It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief” (Isa 53:4-7, 10).

By the ancient prophecies, the outward meanness, abasement, disgrace, and contempt that the Messiah should be the subject of would be exceeding great, even to the utmost extreme, and that His enemies should greatly mock and deride Him. “But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head” (Psa 22:6-7). “Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face...I became a proverb to them. They that sit in the gate speak against me; I was the song of the drunkards...Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour...Reproach hath broken my heart” (Psa 69:7, 11-12, 19-20). “I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert...Mine enemies reproach me all the day” (Psa 102:6, 8). “As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of

¹ **potsherd** – fragment of a broken pot made of baked clay.

men" (Isa 52:14). "I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isa 50:6). That Jesus was sold for thirty pieces of silver, and the money given to the potter, is remarkably agreeable to Zechariah 11:12-13.

It was foretold that the Messiah should suffer greatly by the cruelty of men. "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion...For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet" (Psa 22:12-13, 16). "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty...Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me...Mine adversaries are all before thee...They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. Let their table become a snare before them...For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten" (Psa 69:4, 14, 19, 21-22, 26). "He is despised and rejected of men...He was oppressed" (Isa 53:3, 7), with the context. "They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek" (Mic 5:1).

Jesus being left alone in His suffering, forsaken of all His disciples, and deserted by those that a little before admired Him, crying "Hosanna," etc., is agreeable to Psalm 22:11: "Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help." "I am become a stranger unto my brethren...I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none" (Psa 69:8, 20). "I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house top" (Psa 102:7). These two last places were remarkably verified at the time of His agony when He watched and kept awake alone, and His disciples refused to watch with Him to comfort Him one hour, and when in His great distress, He came to them once and again, seeking to be comforted by their company. But when He looked to His disciples to take pity on Him, when He told them His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Mat 26:38), He found none to pity and looked for comforters but found none.

Jesus being compassed round by His enemies in His last sufferings—[who made] it their business to reproach, mock, and afflict Him—is agreeable to Psalm 22:12-13, 16: "Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion...For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me." And His being so compassed about by persons of various nations—Jews and proselytes from all parts of the world, from every nation under heaven, and Herod and his attendants, heathens, Romans, soldiers, and servants,

probably of many heathen nations—is agreeable to Psalm 118:10-12: “All nations compassed me about...They compassed me about; yea, they compassed me about...They compassed me about like bees.”

That the sufferings of Jesus were such as did in a peculiar manner mar and deform His visage—His countenance being first marred with a bloody sweat, by the spittle of His enemies, and by their wounds buffeting Him, striking Him with a rod on the head, and shedding out His blood on His face by the crown of thorns—I say, these things are agreeable to Isaiah 52:14: “His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men.” “Shame hath covered my face” (Psa 69:7). That Jesus was so spit upon by His enemies is agreeable to Isaiah 50:6: “I hid not my face from shame and spitting.” That the enemies of Jesus beat and wounded Him in the head and face with a stick and with their hands is agreeable to Isaiah 50:6: “I gave...my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair.” “They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek” (Mic 5:1). That Jesus was scourged is agreeable to Isaiah 50:6: “I gave my back to the smiters.”

It was foretold that the Messiah should die, that He should die a violent death, die by the hands of His cruel enemies, and die long before He came to the age of man or in the midst of His days. “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow...smite the shepherd” (Zec 13:7)...“After threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off” (Dan 9:26). “Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me” (Psa 22:15-16). “My days are consumed like smoke...my days are like a shadow that declineth...He weakened my strength in the way; he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days” (Psa 102:3, 11, 23-24). These places in Psalm 102 show that He was to die long before He came to the age of man and that He was to die in the midst of His days. This was exactly fulfilled in Jesus. And verse 8 shows that His death was by the malice and cruelty of His enemies: “Mine enemies reproach me all the day; and they that are mad against me are sworn against me.”

“He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter...He was cut off out of the land of the living...He made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death...thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin...he hath poured out his soul unto death” (Isa 53:7-10, 12). “O God, the proud are risen against me, and the assemblies of violent men have sought after my soul” (Psa 86:14). “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Gen 3:15). The prophecies of the

resurrection of Christ from the dead, which I shall afterwards take notice of, do imply that He should die...

Jesus died by the cruelty of the Jews, His brethren. His being hated and persecuted to death by their malice against Him, excited by His zeal for God—particularly by His vexing [them] by His zeal for the honor of the temple—and their contempt of God is agreeable to Psalm 69:7-9: "Because for thy sake I have borne reproach; shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." This prophecy had a remarkable fulfillment in Jesus Christ. The rulers and teachers of...the house of God were prodigiously provoked by Jesus' severe reproofs for their wicked mismanagements in that...house of God, of which they had the care and charge. Their false teaching, making void the commandment of God through their tradition, corrupting the worship of God's house; their proud behavior in God's house, affecting the uppermost seats in the synagogues and setting up themselves in the room of God; their desiring to be called, "Rabbi, Rabbi," and so reproaching God, Who alone was their master; for shutting up the house of God against men, neither going in themselves and hindering those that were entering; for joining long prayers in God's house with covetous practices and wicked extortion, devouring widows' houses and teaching men that if they swear by the temple or by the altar, it is nothing (Matthew 23); and by [Jesus'] going into the temple a little before His crucifixion and casting out all them that sold and bought in the temple, overthrowing the tables of the money-changers and the seats of them that sold doves, charging them with making the temple a den of thieves. By these things, they were enraged and never left until they had imbrued their hands in His blood.

Christ's dying [was] a very reproachful and ignominious death. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up [or consumed me, made an end of me]...the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me...Reproach hath broken my heart" (Psa 69:9, 20). This also may be inferred from the prophecies of Christ's death being so connected with prophecies of His extreme ignominy and reproach (Psa 22, 102; Isa 53).

It was foretold that the Messiah should be condemned to death in a judicial process. "He was taken from prison and from judgment...he was cut off out of the land of the living" (Isa 53:8). "They that sit in the gate speak against me" (Psa 69:12). It was foretold that the Messiah should suffer as a wicked man, be put to death as a vile malefactor, and suffer with such. "He was taken from prison and from judgment...he

was cut off out of the land of the living...And he made his grave with the wicked...he was numbered with the transgressors" (Isa 53:8-9, 12). It was foretold that His enemies should put Him to death by piercing His hands and His feet. "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet" (Psa 22:15-16).

Christ's enemies deriding of Him while under His last sufferings, insulting Him for His pretended high favor with God, wagging their heads, is a most exact and wonderful fulfillment of Psalm 22:7-8: "All they that see me laugh to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the LORD that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him." Their giving Jesus gall and vinegar when thirsty is agreeable to Psalm 69:21: "They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink." Their parting Jesus' garments among them and casting lots on His vesture is a remarkable fulfillment of Psalm 22:18: "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture." And what makes the fulfillment of this the more remarkable is that there should be such a special circumstance of Jesus' raiment that was the occasion of both these being fulfilled: the coat, the principal garment, being seamless, so that the executioners could not have equal shares, obliged them to cast lots for it.

We may conclude that in Jesus' death there was a remarkable fulfillment of...Psalm 22:14: "All my bones are out of joint." For He, having His strength exceedingly wasted and the sinews greatly relaxed before His crucifixion by His agony the night before; His watching all night and fasting under constant, cruel sufferings until that time; bearing His cross until He sank under it; and then hanging by His wounded hands, bearing His whole weight on them for three hours together, wasting all the rest of His strength and life and by degrees more and more relaxing and stretching the sinews and ligaments by which the bones were held together, the joints must needs be separated and bones be drawn asunder. It was foretold that the Messiah should die under great sorrow and distress of mind, as well as pain of body. "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death" (Psa 22:14-15). "Reproach hath broken my heart; I am full of heaviness" (Psa 69:20). "My heart is smitten, and withered like grass" (Psa 102:4). "He hath poured out his soul unto

death" (Isa 53:12). And indeed, the general tenor of Psalm 22 and 69 and Isaiah 53 shows this.

It is agreeable to the prophecies that God should remarkably withdraw from the Messiah and leave Him destitute of the comforts of His presence under His last sufferings. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring? O my God, I cry in the daytime, but thou hearest not; and in the night season, and am not silent" (Psa 22:1-2).

It was foretold that there should be a special hand of God in the sufferings and death of the Messiah, and that, so that those sufferings should be the fruit of His indignation and wrath. "For they persecute him whom thou hast smitten; and they talk to the grief of those whom thou hast wounded" (Psa 69:26). "It pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin" (Isa 53:10). "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man that is my fellow...smite the shepherd" (Zec 13:7). "I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one" (Eze 17:22). "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death" (Psa 22:15). "Because of thine indignation and thy wrath: for thou hast lifted me up, and cast me down. My days are like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass" (Psa 102:10-11).

It was agreeable to the prophecies that Christ should show Himself remarkably meek under His last sufferings and that He should be silent and speak little amid all the injurious accusations, reproaches, and cruel oppressions of His enemies. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth" (Isa 53:7). "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me" (Psa 22:15-16). So unreasonable and cruel were those that compassed Him about that it rendered it in vain for Him to speak.

It was foretold that the Messiah should be active in His own sufferings and death and that He should voluntarily undergo them. "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death" (Isa 53:12). "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isa 50:6).

That Jesus in the time of His last sufferings made intercession to His Father for those horribly wicked men, His crucifiers—even at the very time when, in the heat of their cruelty, bloodthirsty malice, and height of contempt, they were nailing Him to the cross and He was pleading for them, saying, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do” (Luk 23:34)—was a marvelous expression of the full and perfect submission, patience, and obedience of His soul under those sufferings set before Him. The glorious holiness, grace, and infinitely meritorious excellency of that act of His soul in offering Himself to die for sinners was done with perfect love, humility, meekness, and love to God and sinners under all the trial that He then [went through], both from the sufferings He endured and the sin of men that was then in its blackest color and most trying circumstances. And it was a wonderful fulfillment of that in Isaiah 53:12: “He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” The intercession there spoken of seems to be the intercession He made in His last sufferings: for that is what is spoken of in the context and in this verse. And the intercession here mentioned is spoken of as a meritorious circumstance and concomitant of His last sufferings, and a manifestation of His great and meritorious virtue in suffering on the account of which God would so gloriously reward [Him]. The whole verse being thus: “Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.”

It was foretold that though the Messiah should die under circumstances of great contempt as a wicked man and a malefactor, yet God, in some circumstances of His death, would take care to put honor upon Him as a reward of His innocence and merits by being in some respect with the rich in His death. “And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth” (Isa 53:9). This was remarkably fulfilled in Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, being extraordinarily stirred up to come boldly and beg the body of Jesus and give it a very honorable interment in his own new tomb. This rich man was excited thus to honor Jesus’ dead body because he was sensible in his own mind that He suffered wrongfully and that “he had done no violence” (Isa 53:9). [Jesus was not] guilty of any fraud or deceit that should render Him worthy to be thus punished by the magistrate.

It was foretold that the sacrifice of the Messiah should make full satisfaction to God’s justice, such as should make all other sacrifice after

that needless. “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy 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...In the midst of the week [or in the half of the week] he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” (Dan 9:24, 27). It is evident that in verse 24 “to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness” are various expressions to signify the same glorious and wonderful work that shall be done...The word in the original translated “make reconciliation for iniquity” is the same that is used in the Law for making atonement by sacrifice, so that the words imply that the Messiah should offer such an atonement for sin as should make an end of, or consume, the transgression and seal up sin, i.e., [He would] quite complete the business of reconciliation, so that there should be no further occasion for going about to make reconciliation or offer any further atonement for [sin]. So that by these expressions it seems as if sacrifices for sin thenceforward must cease and be made to cease by the Messiah. [In] verse 27, it is expressly said they should [cease] at that very time spoken of in this verse, viz., in the last half of [the] week of the seventy weeks. Putting these things together, we cannot understand those prophecies otherwise than that the Messiah should offer up such a sacrifice to atone for sin as should render all other sacrifices and oblations for sin needless and should put an end to them.

From “Fulfillment of the Prophecies of the Messiah,” in *Jonathan Edwards Documents* (New Haven, CT: The Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, 2016).

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758): American Congregational preacher and theologian; born in East Windsor, Connecticut Colony, USA.



The Old Testament types supply incontrovertible evidence that the gospel was no novel invention of New Testament times. When the risen Savior would make known to His disciples the meaning of His death, we read, “Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luk 24:27). So far from the evangel of the apostles’ being any (absolutely) new thing, every element in it was revealed long centuries before their birth, not only in words but in visible representations: there was both a wondrous anticipation of and preparation for the gospel. Thus, a reverent contemplation of the types supplies a blessed confirmation of faith, for they attest the divine authorship of both Testaments. Moreover, they stimulate adoration: even when we know a person, we enjoy looking at his picture; so here. It is Christ that is before us in them.—*A. W. Pink*

CHRIST IN THE PSALMS

William S. Plumer (1802-1880)

THE weightiest matter in controversy respecting the interpretation of the Psalms regards their application to Christ. How far are they Messianic? Has any part of them a primary application to David or Solomon and a secondary reference to Christ? Were these kings types of the Savior? If so, how far may we go in regarding them as typical? In this matter there may have been rashness and folly on both sides. An unbridled fancy may find supposed analogies where none were intended to be suggested. And a cold, critical turn of mind may reject the most striking types. To say that nothing in the Old Testament is a type of Christ unless in the New Testament it is expressly declared to be so is as contrary to reason as to say that no prophecy of the Old Testament relates to Christ unless it is quoted as such in the New. The entire old dispensation was full of figures. So Paul teaches in Hebrews 10:1. On the other hand, fanciful men will pervert anything. In explaining God's word, we must exercise sobriety. The Scripture calls on men to use common sense. Lacking this, they will err whatever may be the rules of interpretation adopted by them. They must prove all things.

It has often been said that Cocceius¹ carried the typical interpretation to an extreme, finding Christ everywhere. Both Christ and His apostles taught that the Old Testament was very full of Messiah and His kingdom. See Luke 24:44 and Acts 3:24. These passages are supported by Luke 24:27, 2 Timothy 3:15, and many others. If, therefore, Cocceius did find Christ "in all the prophets," inspired men did the same thousands of years ago. He may have erred in some of his views, but some examination of his work on the Psalms satisfies me that he is a far safer and sounder guide than any of his traducers. This great man wrote at a time when the world was far gone astray, and his attempt to recall mankind to the simple truths of Scripture provoked violent opposition, which covered his name with unmerited reproach. He laid down no rule of interpreting the Psalms more comprehensive than that of Horsley: "There is not a page of this Book of Psalms in which the pious² reader will not find his Savior, if he read with a view of finding

¹ **Johann Cocceius** (1603-1669) – Dutch Reformed theologian.

² **pious** – godly.

Him.”³ Henry: In the Book of Psalms, “so much is there in it of Christ and His gospel, as well as of God and His law, that it had been called *the abstract or summary of both Testaments*... David was a type of Christ, Who descended from him, not from Moses, because [Christ] came to take away sacrifice (the family of Moses was soon lost and extinct), and to establish and perpetuate joy and praise; for of the family of David in Christ there shall be no end.”⁴

The great key to the interpretation of the Psalms respecting David and Solomon is found in 2 Samuel 7 where God gives a clear promise that the seed of David should reign forever. In no sense can that promise be made good except in Christ Jesus. Bishop Chandler very justly remarks that “The Jews must have understood David, their prince, to have been a figure of Messiah...They would not otherwise have made his Psalms a part of their daily worship, nor would David have delivered them to the church to be so employed, were it not to instruct and support them in the belief of this fundamental article. [If] the Messiah [were] not concerned in the Psalms, it [would be] absurd to celebrate twice a day in their public devotions the events of one man’s life, who was deceased so long ago as to have no relation now to the Jews and the circumstances of their affairs; or to transcribe whole passages from them into their prayers for the coming of Messiah.”⁵

Gill says that “The subject matter of this book is exceeding great and excellent; many of the psalms respect the person, offices, and grace of Christ; His sufferings and death, resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God; and so are exceeding suitable to the gospel dispensation.”⁶ Dr. J. A. Alexander: “The chain of Messianic promises, which for ages had been broken or concealed beneath the prophetic ritual, was now renewed by the addition of a new link in the great Messianic promise made to David (2Sa 7) of perpetual succession in his family.”⁷

In discussing the question “whether all the Psalms should be applied to Christ or not,” Scott says, “No doubt every pious mind will allow that each of them immediately points to Him in His person, character,

³ Samuel Horsley (1733-1806), *The Book of Psalms* (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1815), x-xi.

⁴ Matthew Henry (1662-1714), *An Exposition of the Old and New Testament*, Vol. 3 (Philadelphia, PA: Barrington & Haswell, 1828), 195.

⁵ Edward Chandler (1666-1750), *A Defence of Christianity from the Prophecies of the Old Testament* (London: James & John Knapton, 1728), 198.

⁶ John Gill (1697-1771), *An Exposition of the Old Testament*, Vol. 3, The Baptist Commentary Series (London: Mathews and Leigh, 1810), 524.

⁷ Joseph Addison Alexander (1809-1860), *The Psalms Translated and Explained* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot; James Thin, 1864), 7.

and offices; or may be so applied as to lead the believer's thoughts to Him Who is the center of all acceptable religion." Leighton: "There are many things in the Psalms and other parts of the Old Testament applied by the apostles to Christ, which, but for their authority, perhaps no one would have considered as referring to Him."⁸

We might therefore agree with Morison that we "perceive no infallible guide but in the comments and appropriations of Christ and His apostles";⁹ and yet with consistency we might say with him, "That many of the psalms have a double sense attached to them cannot be fairly disputed." And there is much truth in the remark of Dr. Allix, that "although the sense of near fifty Psalms be fixed and settled by divine authors...Yet Christ and His apostles did not undertake to quote all the Psalms they could quote, but only to give a key to their hearers, by which they might apply to the same subjects the Psalms of the same composure and expression."¹⁰

Nothing heretofore said was designed to oppose the rule of interpretation laid down by Melancthon¹¹ that we must always seek the grammatical sense of Scripture; nor that laid down by Hooker:¹² "I hold it for a most infallible rule in expositions of sacred Scripture, that where a literal construction will stand, the farthest from the letter is commonly the worst." Let us then in all cases admit the literal or primary sense of Scripture.

But this should not hinder us from also admitting in many cases the spiritual or secondary sense. A thing spoken of David may be literally true of him. Thus, we have the primary sense. But David was a type of Christ, and what he says primarily of himself may have a secondary fulfilment in Christ, and so we get the spiritual sense. Without admitting thus much, how is it possible ever to apply the doctrine of types in persons to the antitype? When we have a figure, the first thing is to discover the foundation and sense of the figure; the next is to apply it to the matter in hand.

This is not giving unbridled license to the vagaries of men of no judgment. Vitringa was right when he condemned what has often passed under the name of spiritualizing: "I do not deny that many men of uninstructed faculties and of shallow judgment have, in almost every

⁸ **Robert Leighton** (1611-1684) – Scottish minister and scholar.

⁹ **John Morison**, *An Exposition of the Book of Psalms* (London: Ebenezer Palmer, 1829), ix.

¹⁰ **Pierre Allix** (1641-1717), *The Book of Psalms* (London: John Taylor, 1701), ix.

¹¹ **Philp Melancthon** (1497-1560) – German theologian and Luther's successor.

¹² **Richard Hooker** (1554-1600), *Of Ecclesiastical Polity and Other Works*, Vol. 2 (London: Holdsworth and Ball, 1830), sect. 59, 211.

age of the Church, commended to persons like themselves, under the name of allegorical interpretations of Scripture, certain weak and stupid fancies in which there is neither unction, judgment, nor spiritual discernment; [they] have sought for those mysteries of theirs that spring from a most frigid invention, either in improper places or promiscuously in every place, without any discrimination of circumstances, without any foundation in allegory, or in verisimilitude¹³ of language. So I do not wonder that it has occurred to many sensible persons to doubt whether it would not be better to abandon this study altogether to the skillful use of which experience teaches us the abilities of but very few are adequate, than to expose Holy Scripture to the senseless experiments of the unskillful, so as to cause great injury to itself and to excite the applause of the profane.”¹⁴ The truth is that nothing is of more importance to the interpreter of Scripture than good common sense. A foolish or fanciful man will misapply the best rules of exposition. In vain do we expect wisdom from those who lack sobriety.

Martin Bucer: “It would be worth a great deal to the Church, if, forsaking allegories and other frivolous devices, which are not only empty, but derogate very much from the majesty of the doctrine of Christ, we would all simply and soberly prosecute that which our Lord intends to say to us.”¹⁵ Nor can we rightly apply to Christ the *penitential* psalms¹⁶ or represent Him as asking *forgiveness*. In Himself, He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, perfectly innocent, having nothing to repent of. And if sin imputed to Him was to Him forgiven, then it was not atoned for by Him. Indeed, forgiveness is non-imputation. Nor can we ever apply to Christ those parts of the Psalter that plead for the subduing of *corruptions*. He had no corruptions to subdue. Yet the remark of Hilary is of great weight: “The key of the Psalms is the faith of Christ.”¹⁷

From *Studies in the Book of Psalms* (Philadelphia; Edinburgh: J. B. Lippincott Company; A & C Black, 1872), 16-18; in the public domain.

William S. Plumer (1802-1880): American Presbyterian minister and author; born in Greensburg, PA, USA.



...shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.—Acts 18:28

¹³ **verisimilitude** – appearance of being true or real.

¹⁴ **Campegius Vitringa** (1659-1722) – Dutch Reformed biblical scholar.

¹⁵ **Martin Bucer** (1491-1551) – Protestant Reformer in Strasbourg, Alsace, France.

¹⁶ **penitential psalms** – seven psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, 143) that express repentance.

¹⁷ **Hilary of Poitiers** (ca. 315-368) – French bishop; defended the deity of Christ.

CHRIST THE SON OF GOD

John Calvin (1509-1564)

I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.—Psalm 2:7; God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.—Acts 13:33

THIS is the chief thing: that we know how properly and how well Paul applieth the testimony taken out of the Psalm to the present situation. We do not deny that David, when he saw that he was on every side assailed by his enemies and that they were of greater power and might than he was able to resist, doth set against them God's aid, Who he knew was the author of his kingdom and reign. But seeing that David was a figure of the true Messiah, we know that those things were shadowed in his person, which do wholly and perfectly apply to the Messiah alone.

The text itself doth prove sufficiently that there is not only a simple and bare thanksgiving contained there, agreeable to David's kingdom, but it is a higher *prophecy*. For it is well known that David did in his life scarcely taste of the hundredth part of the glory that is spoken of in this place (Psa 2:1-12)...

Now let us look higher into the words: kings are indeed called sons of God (Psa 82:6). But seeing that God doth intend to prefer David before all other kings and to exempt him out of the number of them, this title of honor is given to him principally above all other; not because so great honor resteth in his person because by this means, he should pass the angels, as it is in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 1. Therefore, he is thus gorgeously set out in respect of Christ, Whose image he was that God doth not take him for one of the common sort, or for some one of a great multitude; but He doth, as it were, acknowledge him to be His only begotten son. The proof followeth because God did beget [David] when He established the kingdom in his hand. For that was not done by man's industry, but God showed from heaven the invincible power of His hand, whereby it might plainly appear that he reigned according to God's counsel. Therefore, this begetting, by him mentioned, must be referred unto the understanding of knowledge of men, that is to say, because it was then openly known that he was begotten of God when as he was set upon the throne of the kingdom wonderfully,

contrary to the hope of all men and did by the heavenly power of the Spirit break infinite conspiracies; because he could not reign until he had brought all nations round about him in subjection as if a certain world were subdued.

Now let us come to Christ. He came not into the world without evidence to prove that He was the Son of God. For His glory did appear as was appropriate for the only begotten Son of God, as it is written in John 1:14. And He saith everywhere that He hath God for the witness and maintainer of this honor (Joh 5:36). Therefore, God “begat” Christ when He engraved on Him certain marks whereby He might be known to be His true and living image and Son. And yet this doth not prevent Christ being the Wisdom begotten of the Eternal Father before time (Pro 8:22-36). But that is the secret generation.¹ David now declareth that it was revealed to men—so that the relation is, as we have said, unto men and not unto God because that which was hidden in the heart of God was made known to men. And it is a well-chosen figure because Christ’s deity was no less declared and established than if He had been begotten of God before the eyes of men... When the Spirit of God Himself is His own interpreter, and whereas He doth explain by the mouth of Paul what He had said through David, we must not invent any other meaning. And forasmuch (as the same Paul doth witness) that Christ was declared to be the Son of God in power when He rose from the dead (Rom 1:4), we gather that this was the principal proof of His celestial excellency, and that the Father did then bring Him truly into view, that the world might know that He was begotten of Him. Therefore, though God began to raise Christ when He came into the world, yet His raising was then, as it were, perfect and full; because whereas He was humbled before, having taken, as it were, the form of a servant (Phi 2:7), He did then appear to be the conqueror of death and the Lord of life; so that He lacked nothing of that majesty that was suitable for the Son of God, and indeed for the only begotten Son.

From *Commentary upon the Acts of the Apostles*, translated by Christopher Fetherstone and edited by Henry Beveridge.

John Calvin (1509-1564): French Reformer; born in Noyon, Picardie, France.



Surely the Old Testament contains much more of Christ than some admit. Parts of [Psalm 21] can never receive any but a flat and meager interpretation unless they are applied to Christ.—*William S. Plumer*

¹ **secret generation** – refers to the doctrine of the Father’s eternal generation of the Son.

CHRIST THE ELECT SERVANT

Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench: he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth: and the isles shall wait for his law.—Isaiah 42:1-4

WE are sure that these verses are to be understood of Christ, for the evangelist tells us expressly that in Him this prophecy was fulfilled (Mat 12:17-21). “Behold with an eye of faith, behold and observe, behold and admire My Servant, Whom I uphold.” Let the Old Testament saints behold and remember Him. Now what must we behold and consider concerning Him?

I. The Father’s concern for Him and relation to Him, the confidence He put and the [pleasure] He took in Him. This put an honor upon Him and made Him remarkable above any other circumstance (v. 1). 1. God owns Him as one employed for Him: He is “my servant.” Though He was a Son, yet, as a Mediator,¹ He took upon Him the form of a servant, learned obedience to the will of God and practiced it, and laid out Himself to advance the interests of God’s kingdom. [In this,] He was God’s servant. 2. As one chosen by Him: He is “mine elect.” He did not thrust Himself into the service, but was called of God and pitched upon² as the fittest person for it. Infinite Wisdom made the choice and then avowed it. 3. As one He put a confidence in: “He is my servant on whom I lean,” so some read it. The Father put a confidence in Him that He would go through with His undertaking, and, in that confidence, brought “many sons unto glory.” It was a great trust that the Father reposed in the Son, but He knew Him to be equal to it, both able and faithful. 4. As one He took care of: He is “my servant, whom I

¹ **Mediator** – literally: “one who goes between”; “It pleased God in His eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus His only begotten Son, according to the covenant made between them both, to be the Mediator between God and Man; the Prophet, Priest and King; Head and Savior of His Church, the heir of all things, and judge of the world: unto whom He did from all eternity give a people to be His seed, and to be by Him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.” See Second London Baptist Confession of 1689, 8.1, and FGB 183, *Christ the Mediator*, available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

² **pitched upon** – chosen.

uphold”; so we read it. The Father bore Him up and bore Him out in His upholding Him. He stood by Him and strengthened Him. 5. As One Whom He took an entire [pleasure] in: “mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.” His delight was in Him from eternity, when He “was by him, as one brought up with him” (Pro 8:30). He had a particular satisfaction in His undertaking: He declared Himself well pleased in Him (Mat 3:17; 17:5) and therefore loved Him because He laid down His life for the sheep. Let our souls delight in Christ, rely on Him, rejoice in Him, and thus let us be united to Him. Then, for His sake, the Father will be well pleased with us.

II. The qualification of Him for His office: “I have put my Spirit upon him,” to enable Him to go through His undertaking (Isa 61:1). The Spirit did not only come but “rest upon him” (11:2), not “by measure,” as on others of God’s servants, but without measure (Joh 3:34). Those whom God employs as His servants, as He will uphold them and be well pleased with them, He will put His Spirit upon them.

III. The work to which He is appointed: It is to “bring forth judgment to the Gentiles,” that is, in infinite wisdom, holiness, and equity, to set up a religion in the world under the bonds of which the Gentiles should come and the blessings of which they should enjoy. He came to bring forth the judgments of the Lord to the Gentiles, which had been hidden from them (Psa 147:20); for He was to be “a light to lighten” them (Luk 2:32).

IV. The mildness and tenderness with which He should pursue this undertaking (vv. 2-3). He shall carry it on 1. In silence and without noise. “He shall not strive nor cry” (Mat 12:19). It shall not be proclaimed, “Lo, here is Christ; or lo, he is there” (Mar 13:21), as when great princes ride in progress or make a public entry. He shall have no trumpet sounded before Him nor any noisy retinue³ to follow Him. He shall not strive against the opposition He meets with, but patiently endure the contradiction of sinners against Himself. His kingdom is spiritual; and therefore, its weapons are not carnal, nor is its appearance pompous.⁴ It comes not with observation. 2. Gently and without rigor. He will be patient with those that are wicked when He has begun to crush them so that they are as bruised reeds. He will give them space to repent and [will] not immediately break them. He will bear with them as He did with Jerusalem, though they are very offensive as smoking flax (Isa 65:5). He will be tender to those that are weak, those that have but

³ **retinue** – group following and attending to some important person.

⁴ **pompous** – marked by magnificence and splendor.

a little life, a little heat. [Those] that are weak as a reed, oppressed with doubts and fears as a bruised reed, that are as smoking flax, as the wick of a candle newly lighted, which is ready to go out again—He will not despise them; He will not plead against them with His great power. [He will not] lay upon them more work or more suffering than they can bear, which would break and quench them. But [He] will graciously consider their frame. More is implied than is expressed. He will not break the bruised reed, but will strengthen it that it may become a cedar in the courts of our God. He will not quench the smoking flax, but blow it up into a flame. Note, Jesus Christ is very tender toward those that have true grace, though they are but weak in it; and [He] accepts the willingness of the spirit, pardoning and passing by the weakness of the flesh.

V. The courage and constancy with which He should persevere in this undertaking to carry His point at last (v. 4): “He shall not fail nor be discouraged.” Though He meets with hard service and much opposition, and [though He] foresees how ungrateful the world will be, yet He goes on with His part of the work until He is able to say, “It is finished” (Joh 19:30). He enables His apostles and ministers to go on with theirs too and not to fail nor be discouraged until they also have finished their testimony. Thus, He accomplishes what He undertook. 1. He brings “forth judgment unto truth.” By a long course of miracles, and His resurrection at last, He shall fully evince⁵ the truth of His doctrine and the divine origin and authority of that holy religion that He came to establish. 2. He sets judgment in the earth. He erects His government in the world, a church for Himself among men. [He] reforms the world and, by the power of His gospel and grace, fixes such principles in the minds of men as tend to make them wise and just. 3. The isles of the Gentiles “wait for his law,” wait for His gospel, that is, [they] bid it welcome as if it had been a thing for which they had long waited. They shall become His disciples, shall sit at His feet, and be ready to receive the law from His mouth: “What wilt thou have us to do?”

From *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*,
in the public domain.

Matthew Henry (1662-1714): Presbyterian preacher, author, and commentator; born at Broad Oak, Flintshire, Wales, UK.



⁵ **evince** – show in a clear manner; prove.

CHRIST THE ANOINTED PREACHER

Charles Simeon (1759-1836)

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified.—Isaiah 61:1-3

IMPORTANT as these words evidently are on account of the blessed truths contained in them, they come recommended to us with double force, from their having been made the subject of our Lord's first discourse after His entrance on His prophetic office. The interpretation of them, which He has suggested, leaves us no doubt respecting the propriety of applying them to Him (Luk 4:17-22). While, therefore, we "begin at this Scripture, and preach unto you Jesus," we may truly say, "This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears." May the rehearsal of it excite amongst us, not merely a transient admiration, but a deep and permanent desire to enjoy the blessings revealed in it. The prophet, speaking of the Messiah, declares,

I. His call to His office: Our Lord was consecrated to His prophetic office by a visible unction of the Holy Spirit. As the priests and kings were separated to their respective offices by pouring oil upon their heads, so, on some occasions, were the prophets also (1Ki 19:16). Our Lord, Who in all His offices infinitely excelled all that had gone before Him, was consecrated by an unction of which the anointing oil was but a type and shadow. "The Spirit of the Lord God" was poured out upon Him at the time of His baptism; and the descent of the Spirit in a visible shape like a dove upon Him marked Him as divinely commissioned to execute the work and office of the Messiah (Joh 1:32-34). Indeed, He was called Messiah and Christ from that very circumstance of His being "anointed with the oil of gladness" above all that ever had partaken of that heavenly gift (Heb 1:9 *cf.* Psa 45:7). By that unction too, He was qualified for the discharge of the office committed to Him.

Though, as God, our Savior was incapable of improvement, yet as man, "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature" (Luk 2:52) and needed

to be offered with those gifts and graces that were proper for the discharge of His mediatorial office. Accordingly, we read that “God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him” (Joh 3:34) as to other prophets, but in all His fulness; and that it rested on Him as “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD” (Isa 11:2-3). Thus, He was both called and qualified at the same time: for though He was destined for His work from eternity and prepared for it from His first conception in the virgin’s womb, yet were not His qualifications completed until the great seal of heaven was affixed to His commission, and He was openly consecrated to the service of God. The prophet (Isaiah) proceeds to open at large,

II. The commission given Him: The terms in which His commission are expressed have especial reference to the jubilees¹ that were proclaimed every fiftieth year. He was sent,

1. To [proclaim] salvation to all who needed it: At the time of jubilee, all who had by any means been reduced to sell their estates and to surrender up themselves and families as slaves to their creditors were liberated from their bondage and restored to the full possession of their inheritance the very instant the trumpet sounded (Lev 25:10, 41). The gospel is that trumpet, and it proclaims “liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound” (61:1). Our Lord’s office was to sound this trumpet, to announce these glad tidings, to declare that this acceptable year had arrived, and that the “day” had come wherein God would take “vengeance” on all their enemies and oppressors (61:2). These are glad tidings indeed to those who are sensible of their bondage to sin and Satan and who know that they have sold the inheritance of heaven for the pleasures of sin! But to those who are unconscious of their guilt and misery, the sound of the trumpet seems an empty noise—or rather, an insult implying a state of degradation,² which they do not feel and will not acknowledge. Hence, our Lord’s commission, though extending to all, was more particularly to “the meek”; for it is to them only, who are humbled under their wretched condition that the [proclaiming] of a free salvation contains any welcome news.

2. To impart salvation to all who desired it: To the brokenhearted and the mourners in Zion, He came to “appoint” and to “give” the blessings they desired. He was expected as “the consolation of Israel”

¹ **jubilees** – in Jewish history, God-ordained years of emancipation and restoration.

² **degradation** – declining from an honorable morality and getting worse in moral decay.

(Luk 2:25); and in that character, He particularly appeared. Were any bowed down with “a spirit of heaviness” and mourning in “dust and ashes” (Job 30:19; 42:6), He came to “bind up their broken hearts” and to exhilarate their souls that they might be comforted and become as persons anointed with oil and arrayed in gayest apparel for some great festivity³ (61:2-3). We may conceive the feelings of a man who in one instant has been restored from the lowest degree of servitude and want,⁴ to affluence⁵ and honor; but we must experience the blessedness of salvation before we can form any adequate idea of the joy and gladness that Christ infuses into the contrite⁶ and believing soul. Thus far, our Lord Himself applied the passage; but the prophet adds,

III. The ends⁷ for which He executes this commission: Our Lord in every part of His work connected two great ends:

1. The benefit of man: Though once we were planted a noble vine, we are become the degenerate plants of a strange vine; and instead of producing good fruit, we bring forth nothing but grapes of Sodom and clusters of Gomorrah (Jer 2:21; Deu 32:32). But Christ desires to rectify⁸ our fallen nature and to make us “trees of righteousness” (Isa 61:3) that, “instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree” (Isa 55:13), so that we may be as trees planted and watered by the hand of God. This was the end of His mission; and it is invariably the effect of His ministration.⁹ Let us only view the converts on the day of Pentecost, and in them we shall behold a just specimen of the effects produced by the preached gospel—and to whomsoever the word of Christ comes with power, the same blessings are given. They are transplanted from the wilderness into the garden of the Lord, and they have their “fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life” (Rom 6:22).

2. The glory of God: This could not be but the great end that Jesus ever had in view: He [would have] sinned if there had been any consideration in His mind superior or even comparable to this. And how well was His commission calculated to promote it! View Him as undertaking our cause and coming from heaven to redeem us; can we fail of admiring the love and condescension of that God Who sent Him? Hear

³ There is in the original a paronomasia [*play on words; pun*] that cannot be expressed in a translation; he will give *Phoar* for *Ephar*, that is, “beauty for ashes.”

⁴ **servitude and want** – slavery and poverty.

⁵ **affluence** – abundance of money, goods, or property; wealth.

⁶ **contrite** – crushed or broken in spirit by a sense of sin.

⁷ **ends** – goals.

⁸ **rectify** – put or set right; remedy a bad or faulty condition.

⁹ **ministration** – serving or ministering in religious matters.

the tidings He proclaims: a full, a free, an everlasting salvation to perishing sinners! Are we not filled with wonder at such stupendous mercy? See the myriads whose broken hearts He has healed; see them rejoicing on earth or shouting their hallelujahs in heaven! Are we not ready to clap our hands for joy and to break forth into acclamations and hosannahs? There is not any part of Christ's work, whether as performed by Him or enjoyed by us, but what calls upon us to glorify God with our whole hearts! And to all eternity will the praises of God resound from myriads of the redeemed, who with united voices will exclaim, "Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev 5:13).

This subject may be IMPROVED,

1. For conviction: All profess to hope for salvation through Christ, even though they be insensible of their lost and helpless state. But, if it be to the meek, the mourners, and the brokenhearted that Christ came, what can they have to do with Him, whose hearts are whole and who are unhumiliated before Him? "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick" (Mar 2:17); nor did He come to "call the righteous"—*those who fancy themselves righteous*—"but sinners to repentance." Let none, then, expect to take part [in] His salvation, unless they feel their need of it and consent to receive it as His free, unmerited gift.

2. For consolation: They who are sensible that they have sold heaven and their own souls "for a thing of nought" (Isa 29:21) are ready to say, "Can such a 'lawful captive' ever be delivered?" (Isa 49:24). We answer, "You may instantly cast off your bonds and assert your liberty if you will but accept the [proclaimed] mercy. Only believe in Christ, and the forfeited inheritance of heaven shall be yours"... You have [nothing] to pay for your deliverance but to receive it freely! You have nothing to fear from your enemies, for the day of God's vengeance is come. And He will bruise all your enemies under your feet. Let but these tidings sink into your hearts, and God will glorify Himself in your eternal happiness.

From *Horae Homileticae: Isaiah*, Vol. 8 (London: Holdsworth & Ball, 1832), 559-563; in the public domain.

Charles Simeon (1759-1836): Anglican minister, who had lasting influence on English evangelical thought; born in Reading, Berkshire, England, UK.



All things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.—*Luke 24:44b*

CHRIST AND HIS GOSPEL

James Durham (1622-1658)

*Who hath believed our report? And to whom is the arm
of the LORD revealed?—Isaiah 53:1*

WE hope it shall not be needful to insist on opening the scope of this chapter or in clearing¹ to you of whom the prophet means and is speaking. The eunuch once questioned it when he was reading this chapter: “Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?” (Act 8:34). And it is so clearly answered by Philip, who from these words began and preached to him of Jesus Christ that there needs be no doubt of it now. To Christians, these two may put it out of question that Jesus Christ and the substance of the gospel is compended² and summed up here.

1. If we compare the letter of this chapter with what is in the four evangelists,³ we will see it so fully and often so literally made out of⁴ Christ that if any will but read this chapter and compare it with them, they will find the evangelists to be commentators on it and setting it out more fully.

2. That there is no Scripture in the Old Testament so often and so convincingly applied to Christ as this is, there being scarcely one verse, at least not many, but are by the evangelists or apostles made use of for [presenting] Christ.

If we look then to the sum of the words of this chapter, they take in the sum and substance of the gospel. They take in these two: 1. The right description and manifestation of Jesus Christ; and 2. The unfolding and opening of the Covenant of Redemption.⁵ Where these two are, there the sum of the gospel is; these two are here, therefore the sum of the gospel is here.

First, Jesus Christ is described. 1. In His person and natures: as God,

¹ **clearing** – clarifying; making clear or easy to understand.

² **compended** – narrated briefly.

³ **four evangelists** – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John and their Gospels.

⁴ **made out of** – made clear; set forth.

⁵ **Covenant of Redemption** – agreement between the members of the Godhead, especially between the Father and the Son, about the plan of redemption: God the Father purposed 1) the accomplishment of salvation through the Person and work of God the Son and 2) the application of salvation through the regenerating power of the Spirit.

being eternal; as man, being under suffering. 2. In all His offices: as a priest, offering up Himself as a sacrifice to satisfy justice; as a prophet, venting⁶ His knowledge to the justifying of many thereby; and as a king, dividing the spoil with the strong. 3. In His humiliation, in the *cause* of it, in the *end* of it, in the *subject* of it, in the *nature* and *rise* of all: God's good pleasure. 4. And in His exaltation, and outgate⁷ promised Him on the back of all His sufferings and humiliation.

Secondly, the Covenant of Redemption is here described and set out.

1. In the parties of it: God [the Father] and the Mediator. 2. As to the matter about which it was: the seed that was given to Christ and all whose iniquities met on Him. 3. As to the mutual engagements on both sides: the Son undertaking to make His soul an offering for sin; the Father promising that the efficacy⁸ of His satisfaction shall be imputed and applied for the justification of sinners; and the terms on which, or the way how, this imputation and application is brought about, to wit, "by his knowledge"⁹ (Isa 53:11). All are clearly held out here.

This is only a touch of the excellency of this Scripture and of the materials (to say so) in it, as comprehending the substance and marrow of the gospel. We shall not be particular in dividing the chapter, considering that these things we have hinted at are interwoven in it.

The first verse is a short introduction to lead us into what follows. The prophet has in the former chapter been speaking of Christ as God's Servant, [Who] should be extolled and made very high; and before he proceeds more particularly to unfold this mystery of the gospel, he cries out by way of regret, "Who hath believed our report?" "Alas!" would he say, "for such good news as we carry, few will take it off our hand,¹⁰ such is man's unconcern, yes, malice and obstinacy,¹¹ that they reject it." "And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" points to the necessity of the power of God to accompany preaching and even the liveliest ordinances to make them effectual. How few are they that the power of God captivates to the obedience of this truth?

For the first part of this verse: "Who hath believed our report?" To open it a little, take these four or five considerations, ere¹² we come to

⁶ **venting** – giving utterance or expression.

⁷ **outgate** – outcome; in this context, the inheritance promised to Christ for His obedience (Eph 1:22; Heb 2:7-8; Phi 2:5-11).

⁸ **efficacy** – power to produce a desired effect.

⁹ **by his knowledge** – by the knowledge of Christ and His work in the gospel, sinners believe unto everlasting life.

¹⁰ **few...our hand** – few will take it on our authority and believe the good news of Christ.

¹¹ **obstinacy** – state of stubbornly refusing to change one's opinion or course of action.

¹² **ere** – before.

the doctrines.

1. Consider first, the matter of this report in reference to its scope: it is not every report, but a report of Christ and of the Covenant of Redemption and of grace. In the original it is, “Who hath believed *our hearing*,” actively; that is, “that which we have proposed to be heard.” And the word is turned *tidings* [in] Daniel 11:44, and *rumor* [in] Jeremiah 51:46. It is the tidings and rumor of a suffering Mediator, interposing Himself between God and sinners. It may be *hearing* is mentioned to point out the confidence that the prophet had in reporting this news. He first heard it from God and in that was passive; and then actively, he proposed it to the people to be heard by them.

2. Consider that the prophet speaks of this report, not as in his own person only, but as in the person of all that ever preached or shall preach this gospel. Therefore, this report is not particular to Isaiah, but it is our report, the report of the prophets before, and of these after him, and of the apostles and ministers of the gospel.

3. Consider that Isaiah speaks of this report, not only in respect of what he met with in his own time, but as foreseeing what would be the carriage of people in reference to it in aftertimes. Therefore, this same place is alleged to give a reason of the Jews’ unbelief (Joh 12:38; Rom 10:16) because Isaiah foretold it long before.

4. Consider that when he complains of the [lack] of faith to the report and tidings of the gospel, it is not of the [lack] of historical faith, as if the people would not give Christ a hearing at all, but is of the [lack] of saving faith. Therefore, it is said, “Though he had done many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him” (Joh 12:37); and this prophetic Scripture is subjoined¹³ as the reason of it: “That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report?” (Joh 12:38), applying the *believing* spoken of here to that saving faith whereby folk believe and rest upon Jesus Christ.

Consider that though there is no express party named to whom the prophet complains, yet no doubt it is to God. Therefore [in] John 12:38 and Romans 10:16, when this Scripture is cited, it is said, “Lord, who hath believed our report.” So, it is the prophet’s complaint of the little fruit [he] had and that the ministers of the gospel should have in preaching of the gospel—regretting and complaining of it to God as a sore matter that it should come to so many, and so few should get good

¹³ **subjoined** – added to the end.

of it, so few should be brought to believe and to be saved by it.

Though these words are few, yet they have four great things in them to which we shall reduce them for speaking more clearly to them: (1) That the great subject of preaching, and [the] preacher's great errand, is to report concerning Jesus Christ, to bring tidings concerning Him. (2) That the great duty of hearers (implied) is to believe this report and by virtue of it to be brought to rest and rely on Jesus Christ. (3) That unbelief is the great though ordinary sin of the generality of the hearers of the gospel. "Who hath believed?" That is, it is few that have believed; it is a rare thing to see a believer of this report. (4) That the great complaint, weight, and grief of an honest minister of the gospel is this: his message is not taken off his hand, that Christ is not received, believed in, and rested on. This is the great challenge ministers have against the generality of people and the ground of their complaint to God: whatever they report concerning Christ, He is not welcomed, His kingdom thrives not.

That we may speak to the first, considering the words with respect to the scope, we shall draw five or six doctrines from them.

Doctrine One: The first of which is more general: that revealing Christ Jesus and making Him known is the greatest news, the gladdest tidings, and the most excellent report that ever came or can come to a people. There is no such thing can be told them, no such tidings can they hear; this is the report that the prophet speaks of by way of eminency, a report above and beyond all other reports. It is newsworthy to be carried by angels! Behold, says one of them, "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people" (Luk 2:10). And what are these tidings so prefaced to with a *Behold*? "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luk 2:11)! These are the good tidings that Jesus Christ is come and that He is the Savior by office. We shall not insist on this; only (1) we will find a little view of this subject in the following words that clearly hold forth Christ—God and man in one person—so completely qualified and excellently [equipped] for His offices. (2) It is also clear, if we look to the excellent effects that come by His being so [equipped], such as His satisfying of justice, His setting free of captives, His triumphing over principalities and powers, His destroying the works of the devil, etc. There *cannot* be more excellent works or effects spoken of. (3) It is clear if we look to Him from Whom this report comes and in Whose breast this news bred¹⁴ (if we may speak so), they are the result of the counsel

¹⁴ **bred** – springs forth; originates.

of the Godhead. Therefore, as the report here is made in the Lord's name, so He is complained to when it is not taken off the prophet's hand.¹⁵ (4) And it is clear if we look to the mysteriousness of this news; angels could never have conceived them, had not this report come. These things tell that they are great, glorious, and good news—glad tidings, as it is in the end of the former chapter. That which hath not been told them, shall they see; and that which they have not heard, shall they consider.

Use 1: The first use is to draw our hearts to be in love with the gospel and to raise our estimation of it. People's ears are itching after novelties, and you are much worn out of conceit with this news; but is there in any news such an advantage as [the gospel]? When God sends news to men, it must be great news! And such indeed it is.

Use 2: Therefore, be afraid to entertain loathing of the plain, substantial truths of the gospel. If you had never heard them before, there would be likely some Athenian itching to hear and speak of them (Act 17:21); but they should not be the less thought of because they are often heard and spoken of.

Use 3: Therefore, think more of the gospel, seeing it holds the substance of this good news and glad tidings; and think more of gospel ordinances, whereby these good tidings are so often published and made plain to you.

Doctrine Two: More particularly observe that Jesus Christ and what concerns Him (the glad and good news of a Savior, and the reporting of them) is the very proper work of a minister, and the great subject of a minister's preaching. His proper work is to make Christ known. Or take it thus: Christ is the native subject on which all preaching should run. This is the report the prophet speaks of here, and in effect, it was so to John and the other apostles, and should be so to all ministers. Christ Jesus and what concerns Him in His person, natures, and offices; to know and make Him known in His offices to be Priest, Prophet, and King; to be a Priest in His suffering and satisfying justice; to be a Prophet in revealing the will of God; to be a King for subduing folk's lusts and corruptions; and to know and make Him known in the way by which sinners—both preachers *and* hearers—may come to have Him to themselves.

This, this is the subject of all preaching, and all preaching should be leveled at this mark. Paul is peremptory¹⁶ in this. "I determined not to

¹⁵ **not taken...hand** – not believed even though delivered authoritatively by the prophet.

¹⁶ **peremptory** – assertive; positive.

know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified” (1Co 2:2), as if he had said, “I will meddle with no other thing, but betake myself to this.” Not only will he forbear to meddle with civil employments, but he will lay aside his learning, eloquence, and human wisdom, and make the preaching of Christ crucified his great work and study.

The reason of this is because Christ stands in a fourfold relation to preaching. (1) All preaching is to explain Him: “To him give all the prophets witness” (Act 10:43). And so do the four evangels¹⁷ and the apostolic epistles, which are as so many preachings of Him; and that preaching, which stands not in relation to Him, is beside the text and mark.¹⁸

(2) He is held out as the foundation and groundwork of preaching, so that preaching without Him [lacks] a foundation and is the building, as it were, of a castle in the air. “I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1Co 3:10-11)—importing that all preaching should be squared to and made to agree with this foundation stone.

(3) He stands as the great end of preaching, not only that hearers may have Him known in their judgments, but may have Him high in their hearts and affections. “We preach not ourselves” (2Co 4:5), that is, not only do we not preach ourselves as the subject, but we preach not ourselves as the end of our preaching; our scope is not to be great or much thought of, but our end in preaching is to make Christ great.

(4) He stands in relation to preaching, as He is the power and life of preaching, without Whom no preaching can be effectual, no soul can be captivated and brought in to Him. Hence, Paul says, “We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock [they cannot abide to hear Him], and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called...Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God” (1Co 1:23-24).

From *Collected Sermons of James Durham: Christ Crucified: The Marrow of the Gospel in 72 Sermons on Isaiah 53*, Vol. 2, ed. Coldwell (Dallas, TX; Grand Rapids, MI: Naphtali Press; Reformation Heritage Books, 2017), 83-87; used by permission.

James Durham (1622-1658): influential Scottish Covenanter and Presbyterian minister; born and died in Scotland, UK.



¹⁷ **four evangels** – four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

¹⁸ **beside the text and mark** – at variance with the text and authenticity.

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

George Whitefield (1714-1770)

*In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely:
and this is his name whereby he shall be called,
THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.
—Jeremiah 23:6*

I am to consider who we are to understand by the word *Lord*: “THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” If any Arians¹ or Socinians² are drawn by curiosity to hear what the babbler has to say, let them be ashamed of denying the deity of that Lord that has bought poor sinners with His precious blood. For the person mentioned in the text under the character of *Lord* is Jesus Christ. “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Jer 23:5-6).

By the righteous Branch, all agree that we are to understand Jesus Christ. He it is that is called “the Lord” in our text. If so, if there were no other text in the Bible to prove the deity of Christ, that is sufficient. For if the word *Lord* may properly belong to Jesus Christ, He must be God. For as you have it in the margins of your Bibles, the word *Lord* is in the original *Jehovah*, which is the essential title of God Himself. Come then, ye Arians, kiss the Son of God, bow down before Him, and honor Him even as you honor the Father. Learn from the angels, those morning stars, and worship Him as truly God. For otherwise you are as much idolaters as those that worship the Virgin Mary.

And as for you Socinians, who say Christ was a mere man and yet profess that He was your Savior, according to your own principles you are accursed. For, if Christ be a mere man, then He is only an arm of

¹ **Arians** – followers of Arius, a bishop of Alexandria (A.D. 250/56-336), who taught that God the Son was at one point created by God the Father and that before that time the Son did not exist, and that though the Son is a heavenly being who existed before the rest of creation and who is far greater than all the rest of creation, he is still not equal to the Father in all his attributes: he was divine, but not deity. Jehovah’s Witnesses are modern day Arians.

² **Socinians** – followers of the sect founded by Faustus Socinus, 16th century Italian theologian, who denied the deity of Christ and denied that the cross brought forgiveness of sins.

flesh. And it is written, “Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm” (Jer 17:5). But I would hope there are no such monsters here. At least, that after these considerations, they would be ashamed of broaching such monstrous absurdities anymore. For by the word *Lord*, we are to understand the Lord Jesus Christ, Who here takes to Himself the title of *Jehovah*, and therefore must be very God of very God, or, as the apostle devoutly expresses it, “God blessed for ever” (Rom 9:5).

How the Lord is to be man’s righteousness comes next to be considered. And that is, in one word, by imputation. For it pleased God, after He had made all things by the word of His power, to create man after His own image. And so infinite was the condescension of the high and lofty One, Who inhabiteth eternity, that although He might have insisted on the everlasting obedience of him and his posterity, yet He was pleased to oblige Himself, by a covenant or agreement made with His own creature, upon condition of an unsinning obedience, to give them immortality and eternal life. For when it is said, “The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17), we may fairly infer [that] so long as he continued obedient and did not eat thereof, he should surely live. The third [chapter] of Genesis gives us a full but mournful account how our first parents broke this covenant and thereby stood in need of a better righteousness than their own to procure their future acceptance with God. For what must they do? They were as much under a covenant of works as ever. And, though after their disobedience they were without strength, yet they were obliged not only to do, but continue to do all things, and that too in the most perfect manner which the Lord had required of them. And not only so, but to make satisfaction to God’s infinitely offended justice for the breach they had already been guilty of.

Here, then, opens the amazing scene of divine philanthropy: I mean, God’s love to man. For behold, what man could not do, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father’s love, undertakes to do for him. And that God might be just in justifying the ungodly, though He was “in the form of God,” and therefore “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” yet He “took upon him the form of a servant,” even human nature (Phi 2:6-7). In that nature, He obeyed and thereby fulfilled the whole moral law in our stead, died a painful death upon the cross, and thereby became a curse for, or instead of, those whom the Father had given to Him. As God, He satisfied at the same time that He obeyed and suffered as man; and being God and man in one person, He worked out a full, perfect, and sufficient righteousness for all to whom it was to be imputed.

Here, then, we see the meaning of the word *righteousness*. It implies the active as well as passive obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ. Generally, when talking of the merits of Christ, we only mention the latter, namely His death, whereas the former, namely His life and active obedience, is equally necessary. Christ is not such a Savior as becomes us unless we join both together. Christ not only died, but lived; not only suffered, but obeyed for, or instead of, poor sinners. And both jointly make up that complete righteousness that is to be imputed to us, as the disobedience of our first parents was made ours by imputation. In this sense, and no other, are we to understand that parallel which St. Paul draws in the fifth [chapter] of the Romans between the first and second Adam. This is what he elsewhere terms our being “made the righteousness of God in him” (2Co 5:21). This is the sense wherein the prophet would have us to understand the words of the text; therefore Jeremiah 33:16 [says], “She [that is the church itself] shall be called, [having this righteousness imputed to her] The LORD our righteousness”—a passage, I think, worthy of the profoundest meditation of all the sons and daughters of Abraham...

But it is time for me to come a little closer to your consciences. Brethren, though some may be offended at this doctrine, and may account it foolishness, yet to many of you I doubt not but it is precious, it being agreeable to the form of sound words, which from your infancy has been delivered to you, and coming from a quarter you would least have expected, may be received with more pleasure and satisfaction. But give me leave to ask you one question: can you say, “The Lord *our* righteousness”? I say, “the Lord *our* righteousness.” For entertaining this doctrine in your heads without receiving the Lord Jesus Christ savingly by a lively faith into your hearts will but increase your damnation. As I have often told you, so I tell you again: an unapplied Christ is no Christ at all. Can you then, with believing Thomas, cry out, “My Lord and my God” (Joh 20:28)? Is Christ your sanctification as well as your outward righteousness? For the word *righteousness* in the text not only implies Christ’s personal righteousness imputed to us, but also holiness of heart wrought in us. These two God hath joined together. He never did, He never does, He never will put them asunder. If you are justified by the blood, you are also sanctified by the Spirit of our Lord.

Can you then in this sense say, “The Lord our righteousness”? Were you never made to abhor yourselves for your actual and original sins, and to loathe your own righteousness (or, as the prophet beautifully expresses it, your “righteousnesses”) “as filthy rags” (Isa 64:6)? Were you never made to see and admire the all-sufficiency of Christ’s

righteousness, and excited by the Spirit of God to hunger and thirst after it? Could you ever say, “My soul thirsts for Christ, yes, even for the righteousness of Christ? Oh, when shall I come to appear before the presence of my God in the righteousness of Christ! Oh, nothing but Christ! Nothing but Christ! Give me Christ, O God, and I am satisfied! My soul shall praise thee forever.” Was this, I say, ever the language of your hearts? And after these inward conflicts, were you ever enabled to reach out the arm of faith and embrace the blessed Jesus in your souls, so that you could say, “My beloved is mine, and I am his” (Song 2:16)? If so, fear not, whoever you are. Hail, all hail, you happy souls! The Lord, the Lord Christ, the everlasting God is your righteousness. Christ has justified you; who is he that condemneth you? Christ has died for you, nay is risen again, and ever liveth to make intercession for you (Rom 8:33-34). Being now justified by His grace, you have peace with God (Rom 5:1), and shall ere long be with Jesus in glory, reaping everlasting and unspeakable redemption both in body and soul. For there is no condemnation to those that are really in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:1). “Whether Paul, or Apollos...or life, or death...all are yours” (1Co 3:22), if you are Christ’s, for Christ is God’s!

O my brethren, my heart is enlarged towards you! Oh, think on the love of Christ in dying for you! If the Lord be your righteousness, let the righteousness of your Lord be continually in your mouth. Talk of, oh, talk of and recommend the righteousness of Christ, when you lie down and when you rise, at your going out and coming in! Think of the greatness of the gift, as well as of the giver! Show to all the world in Whom you have believed! Let all, by your fruits, know that the Lord is your righteousness, and that you are waiting for your Lord from heaven! Oh, study to be holy, even as He Who has called you and washed you in His own blood is holy! Let not the righteousness of the Lord be evil spoken of through you. Let not Jesus be wounded in the house of His friends; “but grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” day by day (2Pe 3:18). Oh, think of His dying love! Let that love constrain you to obedience. Having much forgiven, love much. Be always asking, “What shall I do to express my gratitude to the Lord for giving me His righteousness?” Let that self-abasing, God-exalting question be always in your mouths. Oh, be always lisping out, “Why me, Lord? Why me? Why am I taken, and others left? Why is the Lord my righteousness? Why is He become my salvation, who have so often deserved damnation at His hands?”

Oh, my friends, I trust I feel somewhat of a sense of God’s distinguishing love upon my heart! Therefore, I must divert a little from

congratulating you, to invite poor Christless sinners to come to Him and accept of His righteousness that they may have life.

Alas, my heart almost bleeds! What a multitude of precious souls are now before me! How shortly must all be ushered into eternity: and yet, O cutting thought! was God now to require all your souls, how few, comparatively speaking, could really say, "The Lord our righteousness."

And think you, O *sinners*, that you will be able to stand in the day of judgment if Christ be not your righteousness? No, that alone is the wedding garment in which you must appear. O Christless sinners, I am distressed for you! The desires of my soul are enlarged! Oh, that this may be an accepted time! Oh, that the Lord may be your righteousness!

For whither would you flee if death should find you naked? Indeed, there is no hiding yourselves from His presence. The pitiful fig leaves of your own righteousness will not cover your nakedness when God shall call you to stand before Him. Adam found them ineffectual, and so will you. Oh, think of death! Oh, think of judgment! Yet a little while, and time shall be no more; and then what will become of you if the Lord be not your righteousness? Think you that Christ will spare you? No, He that formed you will have no mercy on you. If you are out of Christ, if Christ be not your righteousness, Christ Himself will pronounce you damned. And can you bear to think of being damned by Christ? Can you bear to hear the Lord Jesus say unto you, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Mat 25:41)? Can you live, think you, in everlasting burnings? Is your flesh brass and your bones iron? What if they are? Hellfire, that fire prepared for the devil and his angels, will heat them through and through! And can you bear to depart from Christ? Oh, that heart-piercing thought! Ask those holy souls who are at any time bewailing an absent God, who walk in darkness and see no light, though but a few days or hours; ask them, what it is to lose a sight and presence of Christ? See how they seek Him sorrowing and go mourning after Him all day long! And if it is so dreadful to lose the sensible presence of Christ only for a day, what must it be to be banished from Him to all eternity?

But thus it must be if Christ be not your righteousness. For God's justice must be satisfied; and unless Christ's righteousness is imputed and applied to you here, you must be satisfying the divine justice in hell-torments eternally hereafter. Nay, as I said before, Christ Himself, the God of love, shall condemn you to that place of torment. And oh, how cutting is that thought! Methinks I see poor, trembling, Christless wretches, standing before the bar of God, crying out, "Lord, if we must

be damned, let some angel or some archangel pronounce the damnatory sentence.” But all in vain. Christ Himself shall pronounce the irrevocable sentence. Knowing, therefore, the terrors of the Lord, let me persuade you to close with Christ, and never rest until you can say, “The Lord our righteousness.” Who knows, but the Lord may have mercy on, nay, abundantly pardon you? Beg of God to give you faith; and if the Lord give you that, you will by it receive Christ with His righteousness and His all. You need not fear the greatness or number of your sins. For are you sinners? So am I. Are you the chief of sinners? So am I. Are you backsliding sinners? So am I. And yet the Lord (forever adored be His rich, free, and sovereign grace!), the Lord is my righteousness. Come, then, O young men, who (as I acted once myself) are playing the prodigal and wandering away afar off from your heavenly Father’s house, come home, come home, and leave your swine’s trough. Feed no longer on the husks of sensual delights. For Christ’s sake, arise and come home! Your heavenly Father now calls you. See, yonder the best robe, even the righteousness of His dear Son awaits you. See it, view it again and again. Consider at how dear a rate it was purchased, even by the blood of God. Consider what great need you have of it. You are lost, undone, damned forever, without it.

Come then, poor, guilty prodigals, come home. Indeed, I will not, like the elder brother, be angry. No, I will rejoice with the angels in heaven. And oh, that God would now bow the heavens and come down! Descend, O Son of God, descend; and as Thou hast shown in me such mercy, oh, let the blessed Spirit apply Thy righteousness to some prodigals now before Thee, and clothe their naked souls with Thy best robe!

From a sermon delivered on Friday, September 11, 1741;
available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

George Whitefield (1714-1770): Anglican minister, evangelist in the Great Awakening, and a founder of Methodism; born in Gloucester, England, UK.



When [Jesus] berated the two disciples for their slowness of heart to believe, we are told that “beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself” (Luk 24:27). The Divine Oracles are designated “the word of Christ” (Col 3:16) because He is the substance of them. Where the Scriptures have not gone, Christ is unknown. Clear proof is this: that an acquaintance with Him cannot be gained apart from their inspired testimony.

—A. W. Pink

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635)

*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise
with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up
as calves of the stall.—Malachi 4:2*

FROM the most glorious creation—“the sun”—he expresseth the most glorious Creator—“Christ Jesus”—taking occasion to help our understanding in grace by natural things.¹ He teaches us thereby to make a double use of creation, corporal and spiritual. Out of the excellency of created things, He raises up our minds to consider the excellency of the Creator. So, if these things have beauty and strength and are comfortable,² how much more is He that endueth³ these things with these qualities. Thus, as the rivers lead to the sea, so these created things should lead us to the glorious majesty of God.

But the main observation is that Christ is the Sun of righteousness. For as by nature there was no guile⁴ found in His lips, so He is habitually and actually righteous. He is wisdom, justification,⁵ sanctification,⁶ and redemption⁷ (1Co 1:30). He is compared to the sun because,

First, as all light was gathered into the body of the sun and from it [is communicated] to us, so it pleased God that in Him should the fullness of all excellency dwell (Col 1:19). Therefore, those that look for perfection out of Christ do look for light without the sun.

Secondly, as there is but one sun, so there is but one Sun of righteousness. Therefore, what need [is there for] two heads or two

¹ **EDITOR’S NOTE:** This article has been edited more than usual for readability.

² **comfortable** – pleasing to the senses.

³ **endueth** – provides; gives.

⁴ **guile** – deceit.

⁵ **justification** – Justification is an act of God’s free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins (Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7), and accepts us as righteous in His sight (2Co 5:21) only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us (Rom 5:19), and received by faith alone (Gal 2:16; Phi 3:9). (*Spurgeon’s Catechism*, Q. 32) See Free Grace Broadcaster 187, *Justification*, both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

⁶ **sanctification** – Sanctification is the work of God’s Spirit whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God and are enabled more and more to die to sin and live to righteousness. (*Spurgeon’s Catechism*, Q. 34) See Free Grace Broadcaster 215, *Sanctification*, both available from CHAPEL LIBRARY.

⁷ **redemption** – deliverance of God’s children from sin through the ransom paid by Christ on their behalf.

husbands? One must needs be an adulterer! Christ doth all by His Spirit, Who is His vicar.⁸ One needs no other vicar though there were a thousand worlds more.

Thirdly, as the sun is above in the firmament, so Christ is exalted up on high to convey His graces and virtues to all His [people] here below. [He does so] even as the sun conveys life and quickens⁹ the earth, yes, and all things thereon, though it is but one sun.

Fourthly, as the sun works largely in all things here below, so doth Christ.

Fifthly, as the sun is the fountain of light and the eye of the world, so Christ is the fountain of all spiritual light. “I am the light of the world,” saith He of Himself (Joh 8:12). He was that light that enlightens the world, saith St. John of Him (Joh 1:9), and therefore Zacharias termeth¹⁰ Him “the day-spring¹¹ from on high” (Luke 1:78).

Sixthly, as the sun directeth us whither to go, and which way, so doth Christ teach us to go to heaven, and by what means: what duties to perform, what things to avoid, and what things to bear.

Seventhly, as the sun is pleasant (Ecc 11:7), and darkness is terrible, so Christ is comfortable. For He makes all at peace where He comes and sends His Spirit the Comforter. Now He is in heaven. Therefore, as ignorance and error are expressed by darkness, so, on the other hand, joy and honor and knowledge, which bringeth it, is expressed by light (Est 8:16); Christ is our director, our supporter. Without Him, what are we? And what do we but glory in our shame?

Eighthly, by the beams of the sun are conveyed influence¹² to make things grow and to distinguish between times and seasons. Thus, Christ, by His power, makes all things cheerful, and therefore is called the “quickening spirit” (1Co 15:45). For He quickens the dead and dark soul, which, until Christ shines on us, is a dungeon of ignorance and unbelief. And as His Spirit blows on our spirits, so also it works a spring in growth of grace or a summer in strength of zeal.

Ninthly, the sun works these effects not by coming down to us, but by influence. And shall we, then, be so sottish¹³ as to imagine that Christ of necessity must come bodily in the sacrament to us or that

⁸ **vicar** – person who acts in the place of another; the Holy Spirit represents Christ on earth.

⁹ **quickens** – gives life.

¹⁰ **termeth** – names.

¹¹ **day-spring** – dawn; sunrise.

¹² **influence** – power.

¹³ **sottish** – foolish; stupid.

there is no other work of the Spirit by that ordinance.¹⁴ Can the sun be thus powerful in operation by nature and shall not this Sun of righteousness be more powerful by the influence of His Spirit to comfort and quicken us, though He cometh not bodily down into a piece of bread?

Tenthly, as the sun doth work freely, drawing up vapors to dissolve them into rain upon the earth to cherish it when it is dry, so doth Christ. He freely came from heaven to us and freely draws up our hearts to heaven, which cannot ascend thither but by His exhaling power.¹⁵ Christ is our loadstone¹⁶ that draws these iron hard hearts of ours upward, causing us to condemn¹⁷ this base¹⁸ world, counting it dross and dung...

Eleventhly, as the sun shines upon all but doth not heat all, so Christ is offered to all. He shines on all where the gospel cometh, but all are not enlightened; and all that are enlightened do not burn in love to Him. Nay, some are more hardened by it, as it is the nature of the sun to harden some bodies.

Twelfthly, and lastly, as the sun quickens and puts life into dead creatures, so shall Christ by His power quicken our dead bodies and raise them up again when He shall come to judgment. And despite all these particulars, yet He is not everyway like it: for the sun shines upon all alike. But Christ doth not thus, for many are in eternal darkness, despite this light. He is mercy, yet many are in misery.

From *The Complete Works of Richard Sibbes*, ed. Alexander Balloch Grosart, Vol. 7 (Edinburgh; London; Dublin: James Nichol; James Nisbet and Co.; W. Robertson, 1864), 169-170; in the public domain.

Richard Sibbes (1577-1635): Early Puritan preacher at Cambridge and later Gray's Inn, London; born at Tostock, Suffolk, England, UK.



It is well to see that the true doctrine as to the Savior of man is not that of the New Testament only, but of the whole Bible. The unity of divine revelation will thus appear. The testimony of prophecy will be added to that of the miracles that attended the life of Jesus and the ministry of His followers. The authority of the later revelation will be seen to rest, not upon these miracles alone, but also upon the concurrence of its teachings with the inspired truth already accepted by the Jews.—*James Petigru Boyce*

¹⁴ As Roman Catholics believe about transubstantiation.

¹⁵ **exhaling power** – power to draw upwards.

¹⁶ **loadstone** – magnet.

¹⁷ **condemn** – treat as despicable.

¹⁸ **base** – of little value; worthless.

CHRIST IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES

Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892)

He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.—Luke 24:27

THE two disciples on the road to Emmaus had a most profitable journey. Their companion and teacher was *the best of tutors*. The interpreter [was] one of a thousand “in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge” (Col 2:3). The Lord Jesus condescended to become a preacher of the gospel, and He was not ashamed to exercise His calling before an audience of two persons; neither does He now refuse to become the teacher of even one. Let us court the company of so excellent an instructor, for until He is made unto us wisdom we shall never be wise unto salvation.

This unrivalled tutor used as His class book *the best of books*. Although able to reveal fresh truth, He preferred to expound the old. He knew by His omniscience what was the most instructive way of teaching; and by turning at once to Moses and the prophets, He showed us that the surest road to wisdom is not speculation, reasoning, or reading human books, but meditation upon the Word of God. The readiest way to be spiritually rich in heavenly knowledge is to dig in this mine of diamonds, to gather pearls from this heavenly sea. When Jesus Himself sought to enrich others, He wrought in the quarry of Holy Scripture.

The favored pair were led to consider *the best of subjects*, for Jesus spake of Jesus and expounded the things concerning Himself. Here the diamond cut the diamond, and what could be more admirable? The Master of the House unlocked His own doors, conducted the guests to His table, and placed His own dainties upon it. He Who hid the treasure in the field Himself guided the searchers to it. Our Lord would naturally discourse upon the sweetest of topics, and He could find none sweeter than His own person and work.

With an eye to these, we should always search the Word. O for grace to study the Bible with Jesus as both our teacher and our lesson!

From *Morning and Evening: Daily Readings* (London: Passmore & Alabaster, 1896); in the public domain.



Search the scriptures...they are they which testify of me.—*John 5:39*