

THE ONLY TRUE GROUND OF REJOICING

Preached at Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, London, 1845 – By John Kershaw

“The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”
(Isaiah 29:19)

There are two things, as leading principles in our text, that I want, by the help of the Lord, to call your attention to. The first is, to say a little of “the poor among men.” And secondly, to show that they “shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”

1. In the first place, then, let us notice, “the poor among men,” that are here spoken of by the prophet. Now, in a doctrinal point of view, they are the very characters that the Apostle Peter dedicates his epistles to. “Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” And he gives them the honoured and honourable appellation of “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”

The doctrine of God’s election is clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures. Everlasting, electing love is the spring and fountain of every blessing of grace and salvation. As, for instance, if you and I feelingly and experimentally know our spiritual poverty and destitution,, our knowledge of it has for its origin God’s covenant love and covenant mercy. But upon this I shall not dwell now.

“The poor among men,” intended by the words of the text are, “the redeemed of the Lord;” those who are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ from sin, the curse of the law and the pit of destruction. God’s election and Christ’s redemption are coupled and bound up together. All that Jehovah the Father loved, he gave into the hand of Christ their covenant Head. Christ in the covenant became their bond, their Surety and their Mediator; and, in the fullness of time, according to covenant engagements, he came forward, appeared in our nature, made of a woman, made under the law (the right of redemption falling upon him) to redeem his people from under, “the curse of the law,” being made a curse for them.

But we observe, in the next place, my friends, that the objects of the Father’s love, and the purchase of Christ’s blood, cannot be known, only as God the Holy Ghost makes them manifest. The Lord’s people, in their Adam-fall state, are no better than the rest of the world; they all have had their conversation among their ungodly neighbours in time past in the lusts of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and have by nature the same wrathful dispositions as others.

Now here I pause. And I say to you and myself, let us look back to how we were living when the Lord arrested us in our conscience. It has done me good many a time to look back, and I have often viewed with astonishment and wonder the riches of God's grace that made me to differ from what I once was, and from my sinful companions that surrounded me. It is "by the grace of God," we are what we are as Christians and believers; we have nothing but what we have received from the Lord, and all the glory from first to last redounds to him alone. The saint of God that knows these things feels a something rising up from the very bottom of his heart, which says, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." My friends, keep your minds fixed upon two points; and the two points are these: one is, that God's religion in the soul of a poor sinner always lays that sinner low; and the other, that God's religion in the sinner's soul always lifts the Lord Jesus Christ very high.

A good old gracious friend of mine I had in the north for many years, who was a great blessing to me when I first entered the ministry and who performed many good things for me as an instrument in God's hand, used to say, "There are two points which you can never push too far in preaching; and these are, to lay the sinner low in the dust of abasement, and exalt the riches of God's grace in the salvation of the soul."

But to return. We were observing that none can tell who the Lord's people are till God the Spirit makes them manifest. The Lord knows who they are: "Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." "Yes," say some, "He knows them when they begin to turn to him, when they accept the offers and proffers of salvation, and take hold of his grace; he knows them then." My friends, that is not God's way of working. He knows his sheep before he gives them eternal life; he says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." In God's religion, life is the first thing given. The poor sinner is dead in trespasses and sins. The Lord Jesus Christ is a "quickening spirit;" and he has "power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him." And in regeneration, the Holy Spirit makes no mistake. As a Spirit of knowledge, he knows who the Lord's covenant people are; and when the set time to favour Zion comes, he arrests them in the conscience. Saul was one of these vessels of mercy; and Zacchaeus also was a monument of grace; and therefore, at the appointed moment, the Lord the Spirit quickened them into spiritual life. There are not any whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life but what the blessed Spirit either has regenerated, or will in due time regenerate and begin the good work of grace in their precious souls, and carry it on in the face of every opposition from within and from without, from sin, men and devils. It is a good doctrine, my friends. Where God begins the work, he will surely carry it on and finish it till at last he lands the soul safe in immortal glory. He does not give the poor sinner a stock of grace to live on and cultivate. No, no! It is God's grace that cultivates the poor sinner, and not the poor sinner that cultivates the grace of God.

But now, my friends, we will come more into the experimental part of the text. The "poor among men," are those that feel their spiritual poverty and destitution. A man may be a nobleman and possess immense wealth; yea, he may be a king, wear a

crown on his head and wield a sceptre in his hand, and yet be one of, "the poor among men." For instance, David, the king of Israel, was one of, "the poor among men," in a spiritual point of view. And every one of you, my friends, here tonight who feels his spiritual poverty and destitution, the Holy Ghost has found room in your very heart and soul for the language of the man after God's own heart. What were the words of David that we have room for and which so fit us? "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." "But I am poor and sorrowful: let thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." "I am a poor, mourning, sorrowful, sighing, groaning, weak, vile helpless and worthless worm." This is a description of the feelings of David, and of every one of the Lord's quickened family, "the poor among men," who, "shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." A man may be as poor as poverty can make him in a literal point of view, and yet be very proud and high-minded in himself. "There are that make themselves (imaginary) rich, and yet have nothing; and there are that make themselves poor, and yet have great riches." It is a great blessing, my friends, feelingly and experimentally to know our poverty and destitution before God. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Now these are the characters that God has a special regard to. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." The first term that God here makes use of suits me well, "to him that is poor." I very generally feel my poverty and destitution, and cannot join in with those that say, "they are rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing;" for I feel by daily experience that I am, "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." It is a mercy to know this, my friends. The Pharisee did not know it; but the poor publican did, and groaned before God on account of it.

But then, in reference to the next term, I mostly feel my lack of it, "a contrite spirit." Now instead of having, generally, a humble and contrite spirit, a broken-down, feeling heart before the Lord, I am mourning and crying over a hard and barren heart and a stubborn mind, beseeching the Lord to take away this stony heart and give me a heart of flesh, a feeling heart. I am sighing and mourning because of a corrupt heart, unclean thoughts and vain and foolish imaginations, which make me cry out, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Well, my friends, be it so. If you have the feelings I have described, you are the very characters who stand in need of what God has promised to give, a new heart, a right spirit and a tender conscience. But the Lord will be enquired of by the house of Israel that he may do these things for them. They have feelings of deep necessity; and they cry to the Lord that he would hear their prayer and regard their cry. Now then, God says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." The Lord hears a humble spirit before a spirit of presumption; and though such may have many fears and tremblings, yet they shall be brought to rejoice with trembling.

Do you not see, then, that God has a special regard to these, "poor among men," these spiritually poor who feel their inward poverty and destitution before the Lord? The psalmist speaks on the subject thus: "He will regard the cry of the destitute, and

will not despise their prayer." The destitute, then, are such as have nothing of their own, those who feel themselves only a mass of sin, weakness and helplessness before the Lord.

Now these are the characters, my friends. The Lord strips them of all the imaginary goodness they once thought they had; he empties them of all this, brings down their high looks and breaks their rocky hearts, and thus he makes the poor soul feel his weakness, that he cannot save himself, nor do that which is the alone work of the Lord the Spirit. And thus these really, "poor among men," feel the importance of the Lord's own words: "Without me ye can do nothing." Now Paul was one of these, "poor among men;" he felt that he could do nothing by his own power or ability, but he could do all things by the power of Christ strengthening him.

2. But secondly. "The poor among men," the destitute, the weak, the helpless, the lost and the undone, "shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." Indeed, my friends, they have nothing else to rejoice in. "The poor among men," God's spiritually poor people, cannot rejoice in the world or the things of it. There is nothing in it that will do them good, nor indeed can they be satisfied with anything short of the rich treasure which is treasured up in the Lord of life and glory. Thus it is that the truly poverty-stricken, bankrupt, undone sinner and Jesus Christ, in his glorious salvation, rich treasure and inexhaustible fullness, meet so blessedly together, the One being so adapted to the other. A full sinner and a full Saviour will not do together at all; but an empty sinner and a full Saviour, a filthy, vile and polluted sinner and the efficacious blood of Christ to cleanse it away, a naked and undone sinner and the robe of Christ's justifying righteousness, a weak and helpless worm and the power of the mighty God of Jacob to keep, support and hold him up, these things blessedly harmonize together. And this is God's way of working.

"The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;" for they cannot rejoice either in themselves, or in the world. "Finally, my brethren," says Paul, "rejoice in the Lord;" and God takes very good care that Christ alone shall be the ground and basis of all their joy and consolation. Instead of, "the poor among men," rejoicing and triumphing in themselves, the more they are led to see what dwells and lurks within, the more they are brought to groan and cry out to the Lord under the burden of it. Looking to ourselves will bring us nothing but sighing and sorrowing. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "For in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." No, all the goodness is in, "the Holy One of Israel."

Paul understood these things well, and he explains in the seventh of Romans in a heartfelt way what every one of "the poor among men," spoken of in our text, knows something about; he says, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" This is the inward feeling of every one of the Lord's saints concerning themselves. There is no rejoicing in our wretchedness, nor any triumphing in our sinfulness and vileness. Whatever some men may say, who brand us with rejoicing in our corruptions and wretched feelings, they do not do us justice, my friends; for instead of rejoicing in my weakness and infirmities, my very soul is mourning and sorrowing because of these things before God; so that my cry is, "Dear Lord, hold and keep me up; preserve me from evil; be thou my guide and

keeper all through the wilderness, and land me at last safely in glory where I shall praise thee for evermore.”

“The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” It is Christ alone that is the Christian’s rejoicing. Paul speaks of it thus: “We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.” This is the way God circumcises the hearts of his people with the circumcision of Christ, made without hands, which cuts them off from all hope of saving themselves; and by the circumcising knife of his law, he stops their mouth from all boastings and brings them in guilty and condemned. The Holy Ghost leads them away from self to a precious Jesus. He leads to a discovery of Christ in all his covenant characters, and shows how he took their case into his hands before all worlds. He opens up to them the glories of Christ in his incarnation; he shows them that, “it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” So that this is the ground of their rejoicing, that Jesus Christ is an able, willing, glorious and an all-sufficient Saviour.

“The poor among men,” rejoice in a finished salvation, all of grace; not a salvation partly accomplished by Christ and the rest made up by the sinner. A gospel of this kind will not save, “the poor among men.” I tried for months at saving myself in this way, and when I missed it here and missed it there, I tried it again, for I was determined to hit it. I could see no way of salvation only by being good; therefore I resolved to be good. But with all my trying and tugging, I felt myself to be getting weaker and weaker and further and further off from God, till I was afraid at last that I should surely sink under the terrors of God in a broken law in the waves of damnation, if there were no other way of salvation than my own. I wanted now something more than my good doings. O, my friends, it is dreadful work thus to sink in “the horrible pit and the miry clay.” But however painful, it is profitable. The more sick we are made of ourselves, the more we are brought to feel our own weakness and inability, the more well be our joy and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, “the Holy One of Israel.”

“The poor among men,” then, rejoice that salvation is finished, that sin is for ever put away by the sacrifice of Jesus, that law and justice are satisfied, that everlasting righteousness is wrought out and brought in, that the world is overcome, that death and hell are conquered, for

“Hell and our sins resist our course,
But hell and sin are vanquished foes;
Our Jesus nailed them to the cross,
And sang the triumph when he rose.”

Thus, as the believer is enabled to look away from self by faith to a precious Christ, to see Christ in the triumphs of his cross, Christ in the power of his resurrection, Christ in the power of his ascension, for the God of salvation is, “gone up with a shout,” as the Holy Spirit leads, “the poor among men,” by faith to the place where Christ, the Forerunner, has for us entered, there is a spring of joy and gladness rising up in the soul, which has a precious Christ and a finished salvation at the

bottom of it. And O what sweetness and consolation there is to the heart when Christ is thus received, believed on and triumphed in!

The Lord Jesus Christ, in our text, is called, "The Holy One of Israel." And this he is experimentally felt to be by all God's spiritual Israel. But I shall not detain you tonight in reference to, "Israel," by defining the term particularly. Let it suffice that Paul says, "They are not all Israel, which are of Israel: neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children;" but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. A man might be able to trace his genealogy from the patriarchs, and yet not be an Israelite in the best sense of the word. We are Gentiles according to the flesh; but though this is the case, many of us here, I trust, are of the spiritual Israel. But whether Jew or Gentile, if we are of the true circumcision, we are made to know that there is no holiness in ourselves, but that it is all in a precious Jesus. Christ is our, "all in all."

"The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;" for he is their holiness; they cannot produce it in themselves. What holiness can you find in your heart? The words of Mr. Hart have come into my mind with overwhelming power many times, for I find that I have the daily feelings of them in my soul. He says,

That we're unholy needs no proof,
We sorely feel the fall;
But Christ has holiness enough
To sanctify us all."

And let him but make that holiness manifest in thy soul, poor sinner, and thou wilt rejoice, "in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Christ is, "the Holy One," of his spiritual Israel. We have no holiness in ourselves. Paul had none, yet the dear child of God is ready to say, "O that I was as Paul! He was indeed a vessel of mercy! O that I felt as Paul felt!" And do you not feel as Paul felt? "When I would do good," he says, "evil is present with me." Do you not find that he describes your feelings in the seventh of Romans? If you do, you know that there is no purity or holiness in your hearts by nature. Now, my friends, I make two very broad assertions, but I will stand fast to them, there is not one particle or grain of true holiness in the whole world but what comes from Christ, "the Holy One of Israel;" and there is not one grain of holiness amongst the, "spirits of just men made perfect," now before the throne but what has emanated from a precious Christ, "the Holy One of Israel." As all natural light is from the sun, so all spiritual holiness is from Christ, "the Holy One of Israel."

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is, "the Holy One of Israel," whether we speak of him in his complex character, or as God. He is holy in all his attributes and in all his operations; so much so that he is said to be, "Glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders," both in, "the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." They that appear before him are said to veil their faces, exclaiming with holy admiration, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts."

And if we look at the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is, "the Holy One of Israel;" for though he was, "made of a woman, yet he was not of a sinful nature. Here is a part of the mystery: "Great is the mystery of godliness." How he could be made of a woman, partake of the nature of the woman, and that woman a fallen creature like the rest of mankind, and yet be holy himself is a mystery. But so it is. The angel said to her, "That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee," not that impure thing, but, "that Holy Thing," shall be called, "the Son of God." He was, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." He was the immaculate Jesus; the, "Lamb without blemish and without spot, whom God verily foreordained." So that in his complex character, as God-man, he is the perfection of beauty, purity and holiness; so much so that the divine Father, in viewing his Person and all that appertained to him, exclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

He is, "the Holy One of Israel," also, not only in the constitution of his Person, but in all the thoughts of his heart, in all the expressions of his lips and in all the actions of his life. Nothing but holiness and purity ever centered in or flowed from him; so that he is, "the Holy One of Israel," in the strictest sense of the word. He is now enthroned in glory, inhabiting the praises of his Israel above. He is, "the Holy One of Israel," in the realms of bliss. And as I before said, all the holiness and purity of the redeemed comes from him; they owe it all to him. In him they exult and glory, and cast their crowns at his blessed feet, while they sing, "the song of Moses and the Lamb."

"The poor among men," then, shall rejoice in this precious Christ, "the Holy One of Israel." We can find no holiness in ourselves; but Jesus Christ has a holiness which is made over to us. Now, I know I am on ground which many of our professedly pious religionists do not like. The very sound of, "imputed holiness," they abhor and detest; they are for having a holiness in themselves.

Indeed, my friends, I was in this hole for many years. There was one text which I was always hitting at; it was this: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." I maintained that I was chosen of God before all worlds; that I was chosen to be holy in myself; that I was to grow in grace till I became holy and unblamable before God. I aimed at this year after year but could never attain to it. Instead of attaining to holiness and unblameableness, I saw myself to be more and more unholy; to be blameable in this and blameable in that; and if my outward walk and conversation was such that my brethren could not blame, nor the world lay hold of, my conscience was always accusing and blaming me. I was groaning and mourning about as a poor, guilty wretch; and I believe if I live to be fourscore years old, it will be the same.

So that there is no holiness in us as sinners, in which we can stand unblamable before God, but what is in Christ. Blessed be God, we have a holiness and unblameableness in the Lord Jesus Christ in which we stand before him holy as Christ is holy and pure as Christ is pure. What does the church say? There are two words, they are very broad but very firm. Speaking of herself as she viewed herself

in Christ by the eye living faith, she says, "Comely," through, "the comeliness which thou hast put upon me." Again; black, "as the tents of Kedar," white, "as the curtains of Solomon." The Lord, addressing the church as she is in Christ, says, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."

"And lest the shadow of a spot
Should on my soul be found,
He took the robe the Saviour wrought,
And cast it all around."

So that Christ is, "the Holy One of Israel," and the holiness of his people Israel, and it is only as they stand in him that they are holy and unblamable before a just and righteous God in love. If any man were to tell me that he was holy and unblamable before God in any other way than in Christ, I should know that he was a liar, and the Bible would prove it; for it says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Man in his best estate is vanity; what then must he be in his worst? What does the church say? "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities like the wind have carried us away." But as the church is viewed in Christ, it is said, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them."

The Lord enable us, then, to trust alone in a precious Christ, and not to attempt to cleanse ourselves from our defilement. We might as well attempt to wash a black skin white as to effect it; for, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." But in the Lord Jesus Christ there is righteousness to justify us; in the Lord Jesus Christ there is efficacious blood to cleanse us; in the Lord Jesus Christ there is holiness to sanctify us; and in him there is everything that we can stand in need of. Thus there is great ground for, "the poor among men," to rejoice in, "the Holy One of Israel," and in him alone."

"Well," say some, "but is there not a holy and divine nature communicated from God to his people?" Yes, there is; and that is a great blessing indeed. Christ has taken our nature into union with his divine nature, and in that nature he has bled and died for us, sin being condemned in his flesh. In that nature he has been made a curse for us, and wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness; and this is imputed to us. He has gone to heaven, and taken our nature with him. He now appears in the presence of his Father:

"Arrayed in mortal flesh, he like an angel stands,
And holds the promises and pardons in his hands."

And as sure as he lives to represent us and plead our cause before the throne, so in the set time to favour us, in the hour of regeneration, he implants within us a holy principle, a new nature, a meek and quiet spirit, the new man of the heart, the new man of grace, and which is of the very nature of the Lord in respect of holiness.

But what is the result or effect of this? Does the Lord communicate to us this holy and “divine nature,” to renovate or change our old Adam nature into holiness, purity and perfection? Some will have it so. They say that a new nature is so communicated that it changes our old nature, and the whole lump becomes holy and pure. And this is what they call, progressive sanctification,” getting better and better every day, more pure and holy as they advance in years, till at last they become free from sin, when God takes them to glory like a shock of corn fully ripe is gathered into the garner. But is it so with you, my friends? Are you getting better and holier as you grow older? I am at a point about it in my own experience. The old man of sin is still the old man of sin, “corrupt according to his deceitful lusts;” and he will still be the old man of sin while we are in these bodies: “for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.” What shall we ever see in the Shulamite but, “the company of two armies?” It is only as, “grace reigns through righteousness unto life,” and as the Lord enables us to wield the weapons of our spiritual warfare, which, “are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ,” that we shall raise the song of triumph and tread upon the necks of our enemies.

When the Lord appears in the conscience, bringing light and gladness, it is a day season to our souls; and then the ugly beasts of prey skulk into their holes and dens, because they cannot stand the light, power and glory of the Lord. But when we come into a night of darkness in our experience, then these beasts come forth from their lurking places and prey upon our souls. O, my friends, what are we in the night season? We feel shocked at ourselves; we feel that we are nothing but vile, guilty and miserable wretches. But, blessed be the Lord, our holiness is in, “the Holy One of Israel.”

“And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” Now mark, my friends in our text we have one of God’s “shalls”. It does not say, “the poor among men,” shall have an offer and proffer of salvation, and then if they accept it, and their faith lays hold of it, they, “shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.” No, no: there would be no rejoicing on such grounds as these. If there were anything to be done by men, I am sure I could not do it, for I am so helpless, weak and feeble in spiritual things that I can neither exert faith nor lay hold of any promise whatever; and when I am in the dark, I can only grope about and feel as blind and as stupid as a fool.

How are we to rejoice, then, in, “the Holy One of Israel?” Why, when the Holy Spirit puts faith into our hearts and the Word of God lays hold of us, then our faith lays hold of the Word of God. And this is the best way, my friends. The poor child of God is brought to feel that he cannot embrace salvation when he will, nor enjoy it when he pleases. Our springs of comfort are all in the Lord; and it is only when he works in us by his blessed Spirit that we feel joy and gladness.

He says, “The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;” and what God says shall be must be. Neither sin, men nor devils can turn one of God’s shalls or wills upside down. His shalls and wills are as firm as his throne; and as surely as he says, “The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel,” so certainly

will it be. The Lord will come and pay the poor sinner a visit; and when he comes into the heart, and sheds abroad his love there by the Holy Spirit, (O my friends, have you ever felt it)? there is, "joy unspeakable and full of glory." I have felt it, and I want to feel more of it; it is so sweet and blessed, and makes the heart so joyful.

When the Lord is thus graciously pleased to come, and by the efficacy of his blood to purge our conscience and speak peace and pardon to it by saying to us, "Son, or daughter, thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee," then joy will spring up in the soul more than in the heart of the man whose corn and wine are increased. When the Spirit comes and reveals this to us, as he doth not to the world, our joy and comfort abound in the Lord; he leads us from ourselves to Christ, and makes him our, "all in all." It is our happiness, then, to sink into nothing and to lie low at his blessed feet. Now, my friends, is it so with you?

It is a great source of comfort and joy that, "the Holy One of Israel," is a Friend that, "loveth at all times, and that sticketh closer than a brother." The Lord does not change as you and I do. There are no ups and downs, colds and hots with him. No; Jesus Christ, "the Holy One of Israel," and really it does my soul good to think of it, even before I speak it, is, "the same yesterday, and today, and for ever." Let us feel as we may, "the Holy One of Israel," who hath loved us from the beginning, will love us to the end. Blessed be his name, he will take care of us, watch over us for good, hold us up in life, and at last land us safely in glory, where we shall shout his praise for evermore!