

“HO, EVERY ONE THAT THIRSTETH.”

“HO, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” – Isaiah lv.1-3

The salvation of sinners is a glorious and unspeakable mystery. Traced to its source, we find it has its origin in the sacred bosom of the eternal God, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Salvation is of the Lord. This, beloved brethren, we shall not dispute, as those who are taught of the Lord, we readily bow before the throne of God, confessing his arm alone brought salvation to us poor, perishing sinners.

Gratuitous salvation is what the world will not, and cannot believe in. Soar as high as the carnal mind may, it can never attain to the apprehension of the doctrine of the grace of God; of his people being the election of grace, that by grace they are saved, through faith, and that not of themselves; it is the gift of God. And if election and salvation is of grace, it is no mere of works: otherwise grace is no mere grace. The only God that the world with all its wisdom can conceive of as having any being, is one to whom sinful men are to first give, and he will then recompense them again. Thus the doctrines of the religious world represent salvation resulting to the sinner upon his performance of the conditions of salvation (whatever in their carnal minds they vainly imagine them to be.) Even some of the called of God are a long time learning that in Christ Jesus our eternal election, and all spiritual blessings, our predestination to the adoption of children, our acception in the Beloved, our redemption and forgiveness of sins, is all “according to the riches of his grace.” – Eph. i. 7. Look at our text, poor sinners. Surely grace sparkles forth in its golden lustre in every line. Yes, every note in this divine proclamation is melodious with the grace of God. Let us contemplate the first word in this proclamation of Jehovah our King. “he.” This word tells us of his mighty power, of his invincible reigning grace, arresting his chosen and blood-bought people, and bringing them to hear, to taste and know, the glad tidings of the gospel of Christ. The apostle Paul speaks of his being apprehended of Christ Jesus. – Phil. iii. 12. When the Holy Spirit quickeneth a sinner, he is first feelingly apprehended by the law. It is most uncomfortable for a poor, guilty worm, to be thus apprehended. The sinner finds himself in the grasp of the law, and with dismay and grief experiences the law which is holy, just and good, to be the ministration of death. How hidden to the called of God is the grace and love of the Lord their God, while they suffer as guilty wretches under the rigorous teaching of the law. “Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Savior.” But I will not at the present dwell upon the subject of our being apprehended by the law, when the voice of eternal justice said, “he,” and took hold of us, and brought us to judgment, for I hope to treat upon these things as I progress in the exposition of the text. O, what a mercy to escape the damnation of hell!

“Ho, everyone that thirsteth.” This precious word, “ho,” in this royal proclamation, is in truth the word of the Lord of Hosts, the King of glory, and is with power bringing wayworn

travelers to a standstill. Poor and needy, wandering in a dry, parched land, they find no fountains that can give life to the perishing, or forgiveness of sins to the guilty. But in the time appointed of the Father, though far off, depraved, and prone to err, they shall hear the sovereign voice of

God saving in spirit in their hearts, “Ho, every one that thirsteth.” Their wanderings shall cease, and soon the gracious Lord shall indulge them to slake their thirst at “the streams of living water flowing from eternal love.” When a burdened, heavy-hearted sinner, with drooping head, and weeping eyes, hears this “he” of Christ’s gospel, his tear-stained countenance will be uplifted to see the voice that speaks such gracious heart-reviving tidings. Yes, when “the time of love,” Ezek. xvi. 8, is come, this “he” will attract the poor sinner, and he will be all attention. The Holy Spirit unstops the deaf ears, and so sweetly and powerfully is this “he” spoken, that we are turned from all other voices to listen to the charming news of Jehovah’s matchless, sovereign grace. Jesus says, “They shall hear my voice.” Truly, “Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound.” This blessed “he” turns us unto our God, and turns us away from all creatures, and all the works of the flesh, from all lying expectations, to look unto the God of salvation alone. “My soul wait thou only upon God: for my expectation is from him.” This gracious “he” takes hold of our hearts, and draws us away from all things else, to find life and health and salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. What a “he” was that which arrested Saul of Tarsus, while on his way to Damascus! “Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” Well might he say, “I was apprehended of Christ Jesus.” Our Savior says, “I am the good Shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.”

“I wandered from him while I could,
Till “shall come,” stopped my feet;
And now through Jesus’ precious blood,
I shall come to his scat.”

Was it anything meritorious in us that attracted the Lord toward us, and procured to our souls his heavenly dispensations? Never! Very precious is the thought that there is nothing uncertain, nothing indefinite in this blessed “he,” in the gospel of Christ. “Even things without life-giving sound, whether pipe or harp, except they give a distinction in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped “For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?” Before today, when journeying along the highways on the earth, the cry of “he” has assailed my ears, but if some other name than my own were called, onward I have gone, heedless of the cry. But if when hearing the cry of “he,” my name was attached to it, then I was arrested, my pace was slackened, and I have turned toward the one who hailed me, to learn what business he wanted with me, or what tidings he had to communicate. The God of Israel says, “I have called thee by thy name.” Perhaps some poor, trembling one who reads these lines may be sighing, My name, I fear, will never be mentioned in the Royal proclamation. It is his people the King calls, his elect, the redeemed. The sheep hear the voice of the good Shepherd; they hear his heavenly accents, he draws them, and they follow him, charmed by his gracious words. His doctrine drops upon them as the rain, and his speech distills upon them as the dew; but I am a poor, withered, parched up thing. I a wretched outcast am, so destitute of all that is good. Ah, I am unworthy to rank with the Hock; far off in a waste wilderness I wander. My heart desires, but I fear there can be no “he” in the gospel calling me by name. Poor, troubled one,

incline thine ear to the divine proclamation recorded in Isaiah xxxv. 3, 4. Thus saith the Lord, “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a feeble heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you.” Hearken to the cry, “he, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price.” Every one that thirsteth, and he that hath no money. Is not this thy name, poor sinner? You confess it is indeed, yet are there not, you ask, many that have this same name? and after all I may not be the one that is meant; it seems too good to be true, that I am one he calleth. I fear I am not one of God’s elect. O, did the Savior die for met Hearken ye, poor, doubting soul, to the good news of Christ’s gospel. “Ho, every one that thirsteth.” Every one of such ones are the chosen of God, and heirs of the everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David. How graciously Jehovah speaks. “Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people.” Let us mere particularly inquire who these are in this proclamation of the Lord, who are designated “every one that thirsteth, and he that hath no money.” The precious gospel of Christ shall most certainly declare them unto us. They are such persons in whom is exhibited the gracious workmanship of the Holy Ghost. Most sovereignly the Holy Ghost gathers out from the nations of the earth, a people to shew forth the praises of the Lord. “This people have I formed for myself, they shall shew forth my praise.”

“Every one that thirsteth.” Natural thirst is an evidence of natural life; the dead have no desire for the cool, refreshing water. So the appetite, the hungerings and thirsting felt in the soul after righteousness, after the pure river of the water of life, is the sure token that God has given divine life to the sinner. From this spiritual life in the soul, there issues forth desires after holiness and purity. The sinner thirsts for the living God. – Psalm lxi. 1. He thirsts for the streams that flow from the throne of God, and of the Lamb. He would slake his thirst in those streams of God’s goodness, his pardoning love, that peace that flows from the precious blood of the Lamb. In all the realms of the flesh, in all the works of the creature, there cannot be found the things to satisfy the cravings of the life of God in us. The quickened sinner finds it is not in his power to produce that which his heart longs after. “The flesh profiteth nothing.” “Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens cause showers! Art not thou he, O Lord our God! Therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.” All the idols of the popular religions of the world can never yield to the elect of God, that righteousness, salvation and blessedness, which they crave, and which they feel they must have, or perish forever. In many dreary, desert places, they wander, hungering and thirsting, their soul fainting in them.

“Ho! ye despairing sinners, hear;
Ye thirsty, sin-sick souls, draw near;
Here’s water, whose all-powerful stream,
Shall quench your thirst, and wash you clean.
Its healing power has always wrought
Beyond the reach of human thought.”

What stores of goodness and mercy the Lord has treasured up for the poor, he will make them drink of the river of his pleasure.

“He that hath no money.” This is surpassing grace. It forbids the approach of the rich. O, ye self-righteous, do you presume to draw nigh with a price in your hand! You will be sent empty away. When Jehovah, the Spirit, enlightens the sinner to see his true condition, as a transgressor, he begins to feel he is needy, and in due time he will know that all the doings of the flesh to be but dung and dross, all valueless, and while he learns the righteous requirements of the law, the Holy Spirit will also discover to him how much he has come short of rendering that obedience to his Creator which is his due. He will at last confess he has utterly failed.

“So destitute, so poor, he nothing has to bring,
Wherewith to claim the love of Zion’s holy King,
Poor and lonely, desolate, he unto God doth sigh,
Let thy salvation, gracious Lord, set me up on high.”

The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich. All the fancied wealth that we doted upon is turned to corruption, and vanishes away.

“Come ye to the waters.” These soul-satisfying waters How from the throne of God and the Lamb. – Ezek. xlvii; Rev. xxii. “Buy wine and milk without money, and without price.” What a market is this? There is none like it in all the earth. It is the market of the new covenant, of the gospel of the grace of God. I have been in this market, contemplating the wares, and have been greatly interested in the multitude of buyers which come hither from every quarter. As I have been musing upon the scene, I have forgotten that I was sitting with my pen in hand to write. I do not care to leave this wondrous place, so, dear reader, I would have you with me, and we will together mingle among the buyers, and behold the abounding stores which Jehovah in his goodness has provided for the poor. O, what an astonishing sight! Thereon the outskirts of the market-place are the rich, and noble, and proud ones of the earth. None of them buy in this market. Christ .Jesus, the Lord of the market, whose fullness and riches in glory, unceasingly provides its abounding stores, said long ago to such, “Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life.” No indeed, they would sooner trade anywhere else. But O, the wondrous and sovereign grace of God brings vile sinners low, and shows them their poverty, and then brings them to Zion, to the place of plenty, and graciously and royally supplies their needs. Every day is market day; in summer, and winter, at all hours, early and late, the poor and needy are welcomed to buy. Its gates are opened continually. There is never any scarcity in this market of the new testament. The humble and destitute who come hither to buy, never hear that speech, “We are just out of that line of goods.” Its fullness is inexhaustible. Here we shall find the Bread of life for the hungry, and Water of life for the thirsty; milk for babes, and strong meat for the aged. Wine for the heavy hearted, and the oil of gladness, that makes the countenance of the mourners shine. Here can be found clothing for the naked, glorious apparel, beautiful garments, clothing of wrought gold, and raiment of needlework. The pilgrim shall find shoes for his feet, that wax not old, and all that see them exclaim, How beautiful are thy feet with shoes! Yes, a ring for thy hand, and a diadem of beauty for thy head. Then there is also beauty given in exchange for ashes, the oil of joy, for mourning, and the garment of praise, for the spirit of heaviness. Tabrets, and the harps of God, the music which tills the souls with sweetest melody to the Lord our King, and causes even the lame to leap as the hart, and to go forth in the dances of them that make merry, but the half cannot be told of the exceeding riches of grace to poor sinners that the new covenant market contains. Look at the buyers. Here they come; some are limping and ragged, with sad, woe begone countenances. Some are timid, others feeble; some are halting, and of stammering speech. They come believing,

but many are sorely plagued with unbelief, but with wistful eyes they look upon the rich supplies of sovereign grace. What, such a treasure as the forgiveness of sins for such a poverty stricken sinner like me? Surely it is too good to be true, and yet who can tell? There are some who have been buying: with songs of adoring gratitude flowing from their hearts, they tell what great things the Lord has done for their souls. See those famished ones slaking their thirst at the fountain of the water of life. But let us nearer approach, and converse hold with the buyers, that we may with greater accuracy learn how they have obtained such needful and precious things; for by their countenances, by the way they are admiring, and fondly hugging to their bosom, what they have bought, all appear well pleased with their possessions. Here is one; her face is wet with tears, but smiles light up and make radiant their countenance. She has a loaf of bread in her hands. Handmaid of the Lord, how came you to buy that loaf of bread? O, the Lord has indeed had compassion upon me! In my flesh I am an alien, a foreigner. I am not worthy to sit at the table with the children of the King, but I heard of him, and came and fell at his feet, and asked for the “children’s crumbs,” and see, he hath given me the whole loaf. Then the God of Israel has given you exceeding abundantly above all that you asked or thought. Truly the Lord is gracious. My daughter was grievously vexed with a devil, and with aching heart I came and fell at Jesus’ feet, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou Son of David, my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. Lint he answered me not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away, for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. According to the flesh I am in truth a Gentile, an alien from the commonwealth of Israel. Then came I and worshiped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and to cast it to dogs. And I said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master’s table. Then Jesus answered, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And my daughter was made whole from that very hour. – Matt. xv. 22-28. Yonder a strange scene is being enacted. Two men we see, one with a look of self-complacency upon his features. He appears to be righteous. The other, how dejected his appearance! With downcast eyes, and blushing face, he seems too timid to venture near, but stands afar off, smiling upon his breast. Do you think they are both buyers? We will approach and see. This we can see, that Jehovah in Zion takes no notice of the self-contented one, but his eyes of compassion are upon that far off wretched one. One is a pharisee, the other a publican. The pharisee stands talking thus with himself, “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in a week, I give tithes of all that I possess.” Why, he is no buyer, he needs nothing. See, there is this pharisee being sent empty away, and the prophet hustles him out of the marketplace, saying, “Who hath required this at your hand to tread my courts?” Unto the wicked, God saith, “What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee. When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers. Thou givest thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit. Thou “sittest and speakest against thy brother; thou slanderest thine own mother’s son. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence; thou thoughtest that I was altogether such an one as thyself: but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes. Now consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver. Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.” – Psalm 1. 16-23. Ah, there stands the miserable publican who cries, “God, be merciful to me, a sinner.” O, with what tenderness, and wondrous grace, the Lord speaks to him. Thou art justified freely by my grace through the redemption that is in

Christ Jesus.” His countenance is uplifted, and in adoring gratitude he goes down to his house justified. Truly this market suits a sinful one like me. Here I, too, would buy. How are you suited with it, my companions? There is a group of buyers just entered the marketplace; they look haggard and tattered, and some have swollen faces, telling of the sorrows endured by their way hither. Ah, I see we are among the church of the Laodicians. Well, brethren, how is your welfare? You say you have been in troubles; what have been your grievances? I see that some of you still look miserable enough, and some of you are purblind. I should think you could not well see the King in his beauty, nor behold the land that is very far off. But to your story, dear brethren, what source did your miseries spring from? Foreign merchandise, from alien markets, brought in among us, has procured all our disorders, and has made us to be seen in this woeful plight. Some of our members having, as they supposed, accumulated a little money, went abroad, and were enticed to buy in the markets of antichrist, some toys, notions and traditions, such cheap goods, wonderfully cheap, they said. Others, who did not want to be behind in possessing some thing of their own, strayed off also to these markets, and brought in their wares, till there was not room for the wares of the new covenant market, and the merchandise of Babylon, to be housed in the same house. Indeed a clamor was made that preference should be given for the display of these newly acquired possessions; thus a considerable portion of the principles of the gospel were set aside and crowded out, as antiquated furniture. You ask what were these foreign goods? Ah, they are too many to enumerate, but they can all be classed under the name, “damnable heresies,” for every departure from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ is heresy, and damnable, too, this we now know to our sorrow. Hides were introduced other than the law of Christ provides, traditions of men, old covenant maxims; attempts were made to infuse them among the gospel principles of the new covenant, which is another covenant, not according to the old covenant. O, the new covenant is a better testament, with better sacrifices, better promises, a better hope, and hath a mere excellent ministry. But the leaven of errors introduced among us, began to work, and we heard in our assemblies a great deal, that we ought to do our duty and be happy. Indeed, do, do and be happy, became the hobby of some, till some of the feeble-minded did not know whether they were under the law, or under the grace of Christ, our gracious Mediator of the new covenant. Yes, this attempted infusion of old covenant precepts, with their conditions, and penalties, and legalizing the commandments of the law of Christ, became as a grievous yoke upon the necks of the disciples. Ah, this astounding confounding of the obedience, promises and blessings of the two covenants. These attempts to blend, to make Ishmael and Isaac live together in joint-heirship, bred much mischief in our midst. Those who thought they were always doing their duty, became proud, and called themselves, and were called, happy. These were like the fat cattle, in Ezekiel’s time, who ate up the good pastures, and trod the residue under their feet. They thrust with side and shoulder, and pushed all the diseased with their horns, (Ezek. xxxiv. 17-22,) telling them they might be well, and fat, and strong, and happy, if they would only do their duty. Then suggestions were introduced that it would be to our advantage to soften down some points of the doctrine, such as eternal election, predestination, and the atonement of Christ for his body, the church, so that some very nice, genteel, influential persons, might find the doctrine a little mere palatable, and who could tell they might be induced to join our congregation, and that would be a great help to us socially and financially. Externally things looked prosperous, and it became to be said among us, “We are rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.” All this time spiritual companionship and divine intercourse among the members declined, and love one toward another waxed cold. We were in a state of spiritual decay; gray hairs were here and there upon us, but we knew it not. At length our beloved Redeemer and King, whose love no

variation knows, had compassion upon us, and laid upon us the chastening rod, saying, "As many as I love I rebuke, and chasten; be zealous therefore, and repent." lie discovered to us our nakedness and poverty. Sad in heart, with weeping and supplications, we have come hither to buy. O, there is so much we need that cannot be bought elsewhere. Hark! there is the King's market crier, "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knoweth not that thou art wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Look, my companions, how those members of the church hasten to buy, drawn by that gracious proclamation. They flock to buy the things of the kingdom, as the doves fly to their windows. The Lord in Zion well knows that they are poor, with nothing to pay, but he upbraideth not. He welcomes and encourages them to buy, saying, "Buy of me, without money, and without price." Ah, no merits, no worthiness whatever, have they to bring, to purchase the blessings and treasures of the new covenant. They are buying the truth, saying, "O send forth thy light, and thy truth, and let them guide me." Some are putting on beautiful garments; they are clothed with humility, and ornamented with a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price; and others, that a little while ago were miserable indeed, are wearing crowns of the loving-kindness, and tender mercies of the Lord. – Psalm ciii. 4. Happy and cheerful, I expect the next time they assemble together as a church, there will be a feast of fat things among them, and the King himself will sit at his table, and will sup with them, and they with him.

Who is that person over there dressed in rather gaudy apparel, and stands with money in his hand to buy! He surely must be ignorant of the rules of the market. Simon Magus, yes, it is he. Before this time he has had great traffic in other markets, buying and selling, and now thinks to make a lucrative investment in Emmanuel's market. Filthy lucre is the price in his hand, and this he offers, saying, "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost." See, there is his hand held out with the money in it! Ah, Simon Magus, you may hold out your hands, heaped up with corruptible things, as silver and gold, until the day of doom, but it will not avail to buy anything in this market. What answer does he get! Peter is the mouthpiece of it, saying, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness! and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. Then answers Simon, Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." He does not appear to have that disposition of heart to pray for himself, and I think his asking Peter to pray for him, was in veiled hypocrisy. Did you ask, are there other Simon Maguses beside this one? Numbers of them, my dear companions. They vainly imagine that money, money, gold, gold, can procure anything in the kingdom. Now we, beloved of God, know that the precious things of Christ "Cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold." Well, what have these Simon Maguses done, do you think? They have set up another market-place, stocked it with counterfeit wares, and their market criers are continually bawling out, "Lo, here is Christ." They make

offers of their Christ, offers of mercy, overtures of grace, to every passer by, upon what they term the easy terms of performing the conditions of salvation, doing our part. The poor, the weak, those poor sinners who have no might, and are without strength, cannot buy in this market, Indeed, those who do buy are worse off than ever. For money you can be schooled in their theological schools, and become a market crier in their markets, a preacher of their doctrines, and thus acquire a bishopric among them. Money is mighty in their estimation. According to their proclamation of its virtues, many that otherwise would have been lost, have been saved from hell, (especially in far off heathen lands) by liberal donations of gold, to the missionary cause. But I will not occupy the time talking to you. I have no doubt that not a few of the buyers in this market, have knowledge of these markets of antichrist, having had dealing with them before they came to this place of broad rivers and streams of Jehovah's goodness; and they no doubt will willingly tell us about their experience among these markets: what they purchased, whether they were satisfied with what they bought, or whether they were cheated. Listen to what that one is saying in a kind of soliloquy, "The treacherous dealers have dealt treacherously; yea, the treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously." – Isaiah xxiv. 16. Ho! friend, what is that you are saying? You surely do not mean to say that you have been treacherously dealt with in Zion's market? No! no! indeed! I am abundantly satisfied with the goodness of God's house, even of his holy temple. O, the Lord's loving-kindness is better to me than life, and my lips shall praise him. I was reviewing my past experience in other markets, and in remembrance of my treatment in those places, I saw that the treacherous dealers had dealt very treacherously with me. I was a fool to ever go to such places. I thought I had a little money, and I was allured, and ensnared to spend what I had; but what I gained by trading in these places, I now count but loss, for Christ. The mere you have of their commodities, the worse off you are. "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death, if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." O friend, we love to hear you speak in this strain; it is a joyful sound. Then let us sit down at this place of the drawing of water from the wells of salvation, and I will rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord in my soul's behalf. – Judges v. 11. From a far country I am come. I was far off from God: but the Lord with his loving-kindness has drawn me to this place. In the time appointed by the Lord, I was made, to feel I was a sinner, condemned by the law, and exposed to endless woe. I felt the sorrows of death to compass me, and the pangs of hell gat hold upon me. I found trouble and sorrow. Then my soul sought relief. This I felt I must have, or perish forever in my sins. Markets all around me there were, and I thought in any, or in some one of them, I could find what I needed. The criers in all these markets kept up their cry, "Lo, here is Christ." I went to one, and told them I was unrighteous, and wanted a covering of righteousness. I was welcomed, and told that I had come to the right place to get it. All they asked was that I should pray to the Lord; give my heart to him; take him at his word, and do what was right, and then I should be dressed as well, and be as righteous as they were. I gave what strength I had to fulfill these conditions; but when I had laid out my last mite of money, I found I had a wretched covering of filthy rags; a spider's web, that afforded me no shelter from the storms that beat upon me, a poor, wayfaring fool. Like so much blotting-paper, there was no substance in such a garment. Often I found I could not pray. I found I had a sinful heart, so given up to the vanities of the flesh, how could I give such a heart unto the Lord! and to do what was

right was beyond my strength. To will, indeed, was present, but how to perform that which was good, I found not. Still unrighteous, destitute, naked, I at length felt that by my deeds I could not attain unto righteousness. I went again to market. I asked them if there was not somewhere in their market a righteousness for the destitute, which could be had without works, which God would impute unto me in his great bounty, and cover all my sins. I told them I now had no money, nothing in my hand to buy with, that I was destitute of all good in the sight of God. Then they called what I sought after “imputed nonsense,” and that my extreme poverty was my own fault; they feared I had become lazy; that I had not been diligent enough to do my part. They said, “God had done his part in salvation, and now I must do my part, to be saved.” These were the terms of the salvation sold in their market. O ye dealers in creature righteousness, and conditional salvation, how hast thou helped him that is without power? how sayest thou the arm that hath no strength? I thought I would try some other market, to see if I could not find that which my soul sought after. I found also as I wandered in search of food, that my needs multiplied, and my desires increased. I wanted food, I even craved a little wine, which I thought would cheer my fainting heart. I arrived in due season at another fair, and began to spread forth my desires. I told them I was poor and weak, that I felt I had not power to think a good thought. I found I was despised in their eyes. I was a wonder unto many. They told me that God helped those who helped themselves. What hope then was there for the helpless; for one like me! I asked them had they any wine of God’s electing love? I told them I thought a drink of that would ease my heart of its heavy load. I found they could not supply me. They told me they did not keep such wine; they had no customers for it. They advised me never to taste a drop of such wine, for it was poisonous, damnable doctrine, and ought not to be proclaimed for sale in any market. I furthermore learned from their talk, that there was at one time in the days of their forefather, a market when; this special line of goods could be found; but there were so few buyers, that by this time it must have become extinct for want of customers; and if it still existed, it must be a very small affair. They declared that the wares in that old market led people to licentiousness. I inquired what doctrine it could be, that would have such awful effects upon those who imbibed it? They answered, predestination, election, imputed righteousness, unconditional salvation. The market that sold such things encouraged mendicancy and idleness. There was no need of people in these days, and living in a christian land, being so poor, if they would only, use the means of grace, they could have religion any time. I turned away disheartened, and as I journeyed, I saw one coming toward me who, when he drew near, said, “Friend, why look ye so sadly to-day?” To him I told the story of my woes. He told me I had been going to the wrong market, He then gave me a wonderful description of this place; that the Lord had established it for the poor; that he had provisioned it with all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and that the clothing I needed, and the wine I craved to have a sip of, could be found only in Zion. That to the poor, the gospel was preached by all the criers in this glorious market. The criers, or heralds, he told me, were the prophets, and apostles, and ministers of Christ, and that constantly in the gospel of the grace of God, the cry is heard, “he, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” While he thus spake to me, my heart was all aglow with fervent longings to be there. I said, Is it far to Zion! He smiled and said, I think it is not far off from you. “The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thy heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above,) or, who

shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it! The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” Such a gracious power came over me that before I was aware, I was at this new covenant market, asking and receiving, seeking and finding, knocking, and finding the treasures of grace opened to me. O, what a miracle of grace I am. I have had a taste of the wine of Jehovah’s everlasting, electing love. “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels.” But farewell for the present, kind friends, I will away home to my friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for me, and hath had compassion upon me.

There is one running and leaping as an hart, and praising the Lord. He must be wondrously satisfied with what he has bought, to be dancing with all his might before this concourse of buyers. he, friend! what makes your heart so happy, and why use your feet so merrily? It is before the God of electing love that hath chosen me that I danced. I was a poor, lame sinner, a miserable cripple, but see in the new covenant I have obtained, without money and without price, new legs to stand upon, to walk and run and dance with. From the time of my spiritual birth, I could never stand alone. With staves and crutches I have tried to hobble along, but with these new covenant feet, I am sure I can stand; yea, I can run through a troop, and leap over a wall. The Lord maketh my feet like hinds’ feet, and setteth me upon my high places. When first I was awakened by the Spirit, to the knowledge of my lameness, I felt within me great longings to walk in the commandments of the Lord, to walk in holiness and uprightness. Yes, I had my heart set upon journeying upward, and heavenward; to dwell with, and worship forever, the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy. I said, I will arise and walk righteously unto the Lord in heaven; but to my discomfort, I found my legs were not equal to such walking. I tried, but could not take a right step. I was continually going astray from the way of holiness. I mourned over my transgressions, and with my heart still set upon walking righteously, I began inquiring whether there was not something that would support the lame to walk with equal steps. I hobbled off to the markets to see what I could find to buy that would be an assistance to me. Have you, dear brethren, had any experience in buying in the market of antichrist! Well what Boaz said unto Ruth is applicable, “Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens. Let thine eyes be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them.” Go not to buy in any other market, for if you do, you will be woefully disappointed with your purchases. Rogues and cheats, transformed as ministers of righteousness, with sleight and cunning craftiness, deceive the simple. They do a rushing business, and crowds of carnal religionists may be seen laden with the merchandise of these fairs. Flaunting their gaudy tinsel apparel in the faces of the needy, how proud they are in their fine feathers, while they say in their hearts to sighing, destitute sinners, “Stand by thyself; come not near to me, for I am holier than thou.” Others can be seen displaying their title deeds, in which they affirm they are made members of Christ, children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. They tell how their godfathers, and godmothers, bought these title deeds for them, when they were sprinkled in their infancy. Others by severe penances are there purchasing titles to the inheritance of the saints in light. But O, dear brethren, it is all a dreadful lie. These deeds, thus obtained, are counterfeits, and never will give any one possession of eternal life and glory. Only in the new covenant can eternal bliss

be found by the poor. Thou, Lord, hast been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy, in his distress. Blessed be the Lord! In this market, without money, and without price, we taste the sure mercies of David. I see I have digressed a little from my story. I told in these markets how badly crippled my legs were, and inquired what they had to sell, that could assist me on my way to heaven. I told them that with my infirmities I could never accomplish the journey, for my feet were continually straying from the right way, and at the end of each day I found I had made no progress; yea, worse, I felt I was farther off from holiness and heaven than when I set out to walk right before the Lord. They recommended me to buy a staff upon which I could stay myself, and if I would hold on to the staff faithfully to the end, I should be saved. They called the staff “helping the Lord,” and to warrant its efficacy. They cited the Scripture, “Come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.” – Judges v. 23. I have since found out that there is a vast difference between “the help of the Lord,” and their perverse “helping the Lord.” I told them I would try their staff, and see what progress I could make. But I was sadly cheated. I learned afterwards that I had got nothing else than the staff of Egypt, and that no Israelite ever found it anything better than a “vain help.” – Lam. iv. 17. When I came to lean upon “my helping the Lord” in salvation, I found it a broken reed; it pierced my hand, and I had a terrible fall every time I tried to lean my sinful self upon these broken reeds. My shoulder was rent, and my loins were at a stand. – Ezek. xxix. 6, 7. Bruised and disheartened, I felt in my crippled condition, I could no mere have confidence in such a staff. I told this at the markets. They recommended me to try a horse, if I could not walk; why a cripple might ride on horseback. Their horses have many names, but I am informed they are all brought out of Egypt. I tried a number of them, and yet made no progress. I was told I must have my wits about me, and not to be so easily discouraged; that I could then ride to heaven. They gave me such assistance as they were able, to mount a horse called “taking God at his word, and laying hold of the promises,” but I was soon confounded; my hands were too weak to grasp the promises, though I longed to do so. I could not believe they belonged to me. When my puny hands reached forth to embrace them, they came short; my arms seemed to be withered by the thought that I should be stealing, to take to my sinful self, the precious promises that belong to God’s elect. All the horses that I tried, stumbled, and I was thrown to the earth, or else I was such a poor, unskillful rider that I could not retain my seat upon their backs. Ah, these Egyptian’s horses are vain things for safety; salvation is of the Lord! But these traffickers in horseflesh declared their horses were all right, but that I was too fearful, and made a poor rider. Still I could yet be accommodated in their market. How would I like to ride in a chariot? Then they thought I should be safe, and make my journey pleasantly to eternal happiness. Their chariots were many, but one they had very commodious, which they asserted was large enough to convey all the human race. They called it the universal fatherhood of God; everybody was a child of God. It was also called universal salvation, for they declared Christ died for all mankind, and God ultimately would save every one. I thought I would take a ride in this chariot, and take my chances with the rest of my fellow creatures. I must say I had some misgivings before I crawled into this chariot. Off we started, but I had scarcely a moment’s comfort. The road was rough for such a chariot. As the wheels of Pharaoh’s chariots drave heavily, and were wrenched off when they assayed to pass through the Red Sea, so I found amidst the judgments of God, such a chariot made slow headway. Soon among the rocks we were. This rock gave universal salvation a terrible shock: “I lay down my life for the sheep.” Christ is the head of the church, and he is the Savior of the body; he loved the church, and gave himself for it. – Ephes. v. 23-27. And when the chariot was dashed upon the rock of Jehovah’s eternal election, and the predestination of the elect unto the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ

unto himself, according to the good pleasure, of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved. – Ephes. i. 4-6. The chariot was overthrown and wrecked, for thus saith the Lord, “I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee, and I will destroy thy chariots.” – Micah v. 10. “I will overthrow the chariots, and them that ride in them.” – Hag. ii. 22. There I was overthrown in the wilderness; my knees were so feeble that my heart was fearful I should never be aide to get out of such a, wilderness of iniquity. I concluded that the chariots, horses and staves, of Egypt, were all alike, no good to save me. Ah, friends, there I must have perished, for my first Adam legs would never have brought me forth. I looked at the rock of God’s eternal election of his people in Christ Jesus, that had completely wrecked my chariot. Strange as it may appear, though I was helpless, and in pain, and in the dust of the wilderness, I fell in love with the rock, and longed to clasp it in my arms. Glory be to the God of grace! There came a messenger unto me, one among a thousand, to shew unto me how I could walk uprightly before the Holy One of Israel (that is, with these new covenant legs.) The messenger of the covenant said, “Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense; he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped: then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.” Then to my longing soul I found this market with all its matchless stores of grace spread before me. I was here. I cried, O give me feet to walk in the highway, the way of holiness. Then I heard in my heart the good news of the covenant, “I will strengthen them in the Lord, and they shall walk up and down in his name, saith the Lord.” I leaped for joy, and found to my soul’s sweet astonishment, that I had new legs. Not the old, weak, crippled legs of the flesh mended up, but new legs. I had a new standing. It was revealed to me, my affection was set upon it, I believed it with all my heart, that the Lord had given to me, that I had a standing in Christ Jesus, whose legs are like pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold. The Son of God stood for his people; he walked in spotless obedience from the beginning to the end of all the commands of the holy law of God. In Adam, in my flesh under the law, I was continually sinning, ever transgressing, I could not stand, I could not walk uprightly before the Lord. But Christ Jesus came forth in the fullness of time, and was made of a woman, made under the law. He came forth as a bridegroom to run a race. How beautiful are his feet! All his steps were right and lovely, and well pleasing unto God his father. He never transgressed, he never stepped aside; he finished his course in righteousness, in sufferings, and in the shedding of his blood for the remission of the sins of his people, and rose again from the dead for their justification, and entered into heaven for us. He stood for me, a vile transgressor, and I stand in him by faith. He walked righteously for me, and I walk in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of his righteousness, even of his only. He entered glory for me, and I have access into this grace, and stand in the merits of the dear Son of God before the throne, holy, unblamable and unreprouvable in the sight of our Father in heaven. Here my heart rests, to this my soul’s affections cling. Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. By faith in the Lamb I now stand; in him I walk. Looking unto Jesus, I can run, and not grow weary, walk, and not faint. With these new covenant legs, I can tread down my enemies, my sins as the mire, of the streets. Yes, I hope to bruise Satan under my feet shortly. Blessed Son of God, thou art the Lord our righteousness. Thou wast made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in thee. In thee I shall hold on my way. Thy righteousness and atoning blood are the highway, and though a fool, I shall not err therein. Made free from

sin, redeemed from the curse, in justification of life among the ransomed of the Lord, I hope to stand with the Lamb upon Mount Sion.

HARK to those soul-ravishing strains! Such music must be divine. O, my companions, here is the secret. There sits one playing skillfully upon the harp, and in sweet, sacred, rapturous notes he sings the praises of our God. He must be of kin to the sweet psalmist of Israel, and that harp, no creature could build a harp to pour forth such heavenly strains. O, how soothing and gladdening are those harmonious sounds. Let us listen awhile, and then perhaps we may learn from his lips how he came into possession of such a harp. "O sing unto the Lord a new song; for he hath done marvelous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory. The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the heathen. He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, till the earth: make a loud noise, and rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the Lord with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets, and sound of cornet, make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the hills be joyful together before the Lord: for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity." Again he sings, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Sweet harper, what harp is this? How came it in your possession! Thy voice so sweet, and thy skill to play, are surely the gift of God. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound! This harp is the harp of God. – Rev. xv. 2. Other harps are not to be compared to it. I obtained it in this market of the covenant of grace, and my voice to sing, and skill to play, as you have said, are the gift of God. His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Once I could neither sing nor play. How could I, a vile sinner, sing, when I had neither voice nor harp! But now with my heart inditing a good matter concerning the King, I exclaim, O Lord, bring hither to me "the pleasant harp." "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth." I will relate to you the sacred mystery of the Lord's sovereign grace to me, a poor sinner. Once I could listen to, and be charmed with, any sounds, no matter how barbaric, but for God's eternal truth I had no ear. But when it pleased God to quicken me, and call me by his grace unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, I found I had new ears, circumcised ears, cut off from listening to errors, blasphemies, and doctrines of devils; ears which can only be delighted with the truth. The sounds I formerly heard, now no longer gave me pleasure, but grated upon my ears. I was heavy hearted because of my transgressions, and the felt displeasure of the holy God. I quaked under the apprehension of the wrath of the Lord. O beloved ones, it is far better through the Lord's mercy to fear and quake this side of hell, than under his wrath to quake in hell forever and ever. I was gloomy indeed. A neighbor of mine hailed me one day, and asked me what made me wear such a long face? I told him I was a sinner doomed I feared, by the just God to eternal damnation, and that the great day of God's wrath could not be far off. Come, said he, cheer up; there is no need to be so

gloomy; get religion; go to the markets and buy a musical instrument, a cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery or dulcimer. The music of religion would cheer me up, and dispel my dark forebodings. I fell in with his advice, and attended various markets to get religion. I told in these markets that my former musical instruments were all out of tune, and that I could not tune them up again. I was so dissatisfied with them that I had cast them aside, for they did not harmonize with my condition. They expressed pleasure that I had become disappointed with mere worldly music; what I now needed, they told me, was some musical instrument of a religions strain, such as could be had in their holy religion. They told me I had come at an oportune time to get religion. Now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation; tomorrow may be too late, all the musical instruments may be sold out. So they coaxed me to buy that day. I might never have another chance; yea, some of them with threatenings urged me to buy their wares. They said I deserved to be doubly damned if I would not get religion – a musical instrument such as they were offering me. So the minstrels began to play upon their flutes, and sackbuts, psalteries and dulcimers, but I could not be charmed, indeed, my heart was made mere sad, and my heaviness increased. I asked what instruments they were playing, and who were the minstrels? I was answered, all these instruments are the doctrines of the blessed gospel, will you not accept them, and be saved? If you reject them you will be damned. The minstrels, they wished me to know, were no amateurs, but professionals, graduates from the royal academies of music, (ordinarily known as theological colleges,) where divine singing, and instrumental music, was taught, and that the services of these musicians, who had obtained their diplomas, could be had at prices ranging from say £500 and upwards per year. Tune after tune they played, but I could not tell what was piped or harped. I thought I should become crazy in listening to them. It was a tumult, a noise, confusion twice confounded. Ah, dear friends, it was error; it was not the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. Sometimes I thought I caught a sound that for an instant gained my ear, but before I could tell what was harped, it was drowned in discordant sounds, that made me dismal indeed. Many were well pleased at these musical festivals in the markets of antichrist, and buyers were many, who joined their voices, and danced to the music. But sing and play as they might, it was not the song of redeeming love. But how can I describe how their doctrines sounded in my ears! Can you imagine one mimicking a strain or two of the harps of God, amidst a tribe of bloodthirsty Indians, uttering their war whoops, and screech owls screeching, and a few laughing hyenas yielding their voices in chorus? Have you an ear for such music? No, beloved ones, I know you have not. So the players and harps of the “another gospel,” in comparison with the sweet, harmonious strains of the everlasting gospel of the grace of God, yield no better music to the circumcised ear, of the circumcised in heart. All the singing, and harping, in the markets of antichrist, is nothing but barbaric Ashdod. So distasteful was their music to the apostle Paul, that he was inspired of the Holy Spirit to say, “If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received, let him be accursed.” Thus saith the Lord, “With lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad.” – Ezek. xiii. 22. This new covenant market is the only place where the voice of the Beloved is heard. He says, “In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.” All the singers, and players on instruments, all the harps of God, are in Zion. – Psalm lxxxvii. 7. Every harp bought elsewhere is but a horrible counterfeit, a dismal mockery of the sweet, soothing, inspiring, uplifting, harmonious strains of the harps of God. Thou, O Lord, inhabitest the praises of Israel. “I will also praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O my God: unto thee will I sing with the harp, O thou Holy One of Israel. My lips shall greatly rejoice when I sing unto thee: and my soul, which thou hast redeemed.” O how my heart and mind were troubled by the wretched doctrines of men. But one day when on the verge of despair of ever hearing any

joyful sound for a disconsolate, perishing sinner, there came one where I was, having an harp, and when he sang and played, so wondrous were the strains, so in unison with my soul's needs, that my ears were captivated to drink in the harmonious song – the song of God's redeeming love. When it was noticed by the other minstrels, (who had been endeavoring to gain my assent to their doggerel jargon, which they falsely called the gospel of Christ,) that I was drawn away from them, they began to revile the harper and his harp. They said he was nothing but an ignorant, strolling minstrel, who ought to be suppressed as a nuisance. He had, they affirmed, no knowledge of the laws of music, how could he? He had no credentials, no diploma from any academy of music, (theological school) and all he could play was one or two old, worn out tunes, which it was not fit for the genteel ears of this enlightened age to listen to, such as election of grace before the foundation of the world, and predestination. They characterized his sayings upon the harp as horrible and damnable, and had it been in their power, I believe they would have burned in the fire both the harper and his harp. They made complaints against him, to the effect that he hindered people from getting religion; that they could not find as ready sale for their wares when he was around; a partial stagnation of trade was the result, and what was lamentable, some who had been good customers of theirs, left off buying their goods, and their faces were no mere lo be seen in their market-places. Then all with one voice about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana, of the Ephesians! – Acts xix. 34. But it mattered not; I was so drawn to this poor, despised harper, his voice was so sweet, so sublime, his harp gave forth such rapturous music, I wanted to hear him play and sing unceasingly. In his song he sang of God's eternal love in Christ Jesus, saying, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. Again I will build thee, and thou shall be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shall again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shall go forth in the dances of them that make merry." He sang how God loved his people when they were enemies, and dead in their sins. Then with such tender pathos, the voice and harp, told to my heart, the sufferings and death of the Son of God for the remission of sins of his body, the church. Yes, he harped and sang how the beloved Savior descended, bearing our sins, into the deep waters of affliction, how with strong crying and tears, he made intercession for the salvation of transgressors. How he was wounded, bruised and smitten, all for the redemption of his people. O, such unison I felt there was in my troubled, sin-stricken soul, with these sacred strains that poured forth the story of the Savior's sufferings in our behalf. My heart was melted to tears as I looked upon him whom I had pierced. I felt, O, Jesus knows all my sadness of heart, surely he could take compassion upon me. I was drawn to the Beloved, and I felt, I will pour out my sorrows into his bosom, and crave redemption and forgiveness of sins through his precious, sin-cleansing blood. Then in joyous, triumphant tones, he harped and sang Christ's victory over sin and the grave. Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept. He rose again for our justification. God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises. Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. I said, who can tell, then there may be hope in God's mercy even for me? And while thus captivated by the music of the harp of God, I found myself in this new covenant market. My longing heart cried out, Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross, O Christ, I cling. O give me, a, poor sinner, the harp, even thy truth. Let my soul be glad with the truth of the forgiveness of my sins through Emmanuel's blood. O that I may be glad in thy salvation, and rejoice with the gladness of thy nation. O, wondrous mystery of Jehovah's sovereign grace, the harp of God was given me. I felt I had it in my heart. Yes, the

truth of Christ's gospel was in my heart, and with the spirit and understanding I sang surprising grace. To my hands of faith and love, given me in the covenant of grace, the harp of truth gave forth divine and glorious music. With the voice of truth, I sang together with the watchmen upon the walls of Zion, for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. O, no harp can yield such melody as the harp of God. Oft to my soul in the night seasons, the truth pours me forth a song, as when a holy solemnity is kept, and gladness of heart is mine; as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty One of Israel. – Isaiah xxx. 29. "Redeeming love has been my theme, and shall be till I die." O, my companions, how blessed it is to hear the harpers having the harps of God, harping upon their harps. There are no interjections of warwhoops, screech owls or hyenas, but all is heavenly harmony. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other," justice and grace, love and holiness, are all in sweet accord, in the song of salvation, while all through the song the blissful notes resound, "Glory to God in the highest."

Here comes one with a covering over his mouth. I should say he has had his mouth in the dust. Hark, he cries, "Unclean, unclean! Woe is me, for I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips." A leper. There he approaches to buy, kneeling down he worships, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean." See, beloved, Jesus is moved with compassion; he puts forth his hand, and touches him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." His leprosy is departed, and he is cleansed. Happy man!

There is a soldier in the market with armor on, and weapons of war. He looks as brave as a lion. Ho, my brave one, to what army dost thou belong! What battles have you fought! I see you have still your armor on, and your sword girt upon your thigh. I reckon mere fighting is yet in store for you. I am a soldier of Jesus Christ; under his banner I fight the good fight of faith. Having on such armor, and with such weapons, provided by the King in the new covenant, with all the army of the Lord of Hosts, who is mighty in battle, I stand invincible, and share with my fellow soldiers the comforting confidence of faith, that we shall be mere than conquerors through him that loved us. Could you favor us with an account of some of the battles in which you have fought? I am sure you would find us interested listeners. How came you to take up the life of a soldier, and belong to the royal army? O, it is all a mystery of God's electing grace, who hath chosen me to be a soldier. The Captain of our salvation, by his gracious and valiant deeds in my behalf, has so attached me to his person, that I say to the affairs of my mortal life, Entangle me not, for my heart is set upon pleasing him who hath chosen me to be a soldier. For his honor I will light, and may his grace be my sufficiency, that I may ever be valiant for the truth upon earth. Thou art very courageous. Is your courage always in such good trim? Ah, your question stirs up painful recollections. I have before now been so full of the wounds of the enemy, so ground down in the mire under the feet of the foe, that my heart has sickened to despair of ever being able to stand upon my feet again. Why soldier, I thought you said awhile ago that with your armor on, and weapons in your hand, and instructed by the King himself how to fight, that you were invincible. That is the truth, but to my shame I confess it, I have been willful, neglectful of the regulations of the army. Sometimes after a hard day's light, I have scanned the field. The slain through Jesus' blood lay strewed all around me; not a foe that breathed, could I see. I have said they are extinct; they will rise no more. If any remain, they have retreated into the caves and dens of the earth, and will never dare show their faces again after yesterday's battle; now I have the rest of victory. Then a thought has entered my mind that I could lay aside my harness. This is forbidden by the King. O, it is a wonder to me that I have not been

court-martialed, and cast adrift from the ranks. One thing has saved me from eternal disgrace, that is the everlasting, redeeming love of the Captain of our salvation, who is engaged, according to the everlasting covenant, by the promise and oath of Jehovah, to bring all the army through every conflict and battle, to eternal glory. Having put off my armor to enjoy the sweet repose of victory over temptations and accusations, and the fiery darts of the enemy, carelessness, instead of watchfulness, has taken possession of me. The enemy having spied out my defenseless condition with sudden onslaught, has come upon me, and before I could put on my armor, and grasp the weapons of our warfare, I have been smitten and cast down, by the treacherous, lurking foe. I will tell you my story of how I came to be a soldier. Formerly I was quite friendly with those whom I now count my enemies – the world, the flesh and the devil, and false doctrine. I was so deluded that I thought these foes my friends. But in the time appointed by our heavenly Father, the Holy Spirit quickened my soul into divine life, and gave me eyes to see they were my deadly foes; that all the time I had been making friends with them, they had been bent upon my everlasting ruin, and aimed by their seductions to accomplish my final overthrow. O, blessed be the Lord our God! Satan and sin were unmasked; I saw them in their true colors, and from that moment I hated my sins, though they surrounded me. I scarcely know how to describe my feelings to you. I was amazed, I was in fear, I felt, O, what a fool I have been, and then a divine fury came upon me, and in my heart I proclaimed war, and instantly engaged in conflict with my enemies. I will trample them in my fury, nor will I cease fighting while a single foe remains. I was determined to make an end of my sins. I hated the whole array of mine iniquities, which as an host environed me. I strove for the mastery, and for a little while thought I was on the gaining ground, but to my amazement, and discomfiture, from the hidden recesses of my vile heart, enemies came forth in troops: evil imaginations, sinful emotions and thoughts, and though I fought against them, I received many a stab. I was sorely wounded, and sometimes down I fell, and felt my sins have their feet upon my neck. I should have perished but for the glorious mystery that my life is hid with Christ in God, and no enemy can touch it. Ah, I did not know in those days, that my life is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God, so I feared I should one day perish by the hand of Saul. But in that lightning fury I renewed the battle every day, but with no success. I was smitten and discomfited daily by my sinfulness. One day when my strength was waning, and the tight looked hopeless, new foes appeared, and made overtures to me to give up the fight, and renew the league of friendship with the world, the flesh and the devil, and spend the rest of my days enjoying myself as I had formerly done, in the vanities of the flesh. I looked the enemy over, my sins, and all the pleasures they held out to me; but so contemptibly ugly, so hateful did they all appear, I said, No! I cannot, I will not take you to my bosom again; I want none of your friendship; if I can but get upon my feet again, I will fight you all to the bitter end. But O, I was no mere successful in subduing my enemies than before. Creature strength, and carnal weapons, are of little avail in this light. When ready to perish in my wounds upon the battle field, there came one bringing good news. He told me of Jesus, the Lord of glory, the Lord of Hosts, mighty in battle, who gives power to the faint, so that out of weakness they become strong, and wax valiant in the light, and turn to flight the armies of the alien. He told me of this market, or armory of the new covenant, and that only when incased in divine armor, and with weapons that are mighty through God, could poor sinners withstand their adversaries, and gain the victory. My longing sold fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us in the gospel. I came in my heart's longings to the armory of the covenant ordered in all things and sure, saying, "O that I could be ranked in the ranks of the redeemed of the Lord, and have such armor given me to put on, such as in the gospel I saw they had on, then triumphant I should be over my cruel foes." While yet

lying in my wounds and helplessness, I felt to enter, by the revelation of the Holy Spirit experimentally, the portals of the new covenant, and my sin smitten, wounded soul, cried unto him that is mighty to save, Jesus, the Captain of our salvation, "Plead my cause, O Lord, with them that strive with me: fight against them that fight against me. Take hold of shield and buckler, and stand up for mine help. Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against them that persecute me. Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." He heard my voice out of his holy temple, and my cry came before him, even into his ears. By faith I beheld him stand before me. He was my ward, my defense, my shield, my salvation. I looked to the cross, and saw his goings forth as the Captain of our salvation. Mine enemies, my transgressions, yea, Satan and death, he vanquished. The right hand of the Lord was glorious in power. By his sufferings and blood he made an end of sin, as in a winepress he crushed all my foes, and trampled them in divine fury. He held the field against all the adversaries of his body, the church, and when he bowed his head and died, not one sin remained; all the iniquities of his people were extinct. Then lie arose from the dead in holy, triumphant joy, and said even to me, "I am thy salvation." I have loved thee, thou art mine. I have redeemed thee from all iniquity. I have chosen thee to be a soldier. He brought me to his armory in Zion, and provided me with all the things needful for the war. I do not engage in this warfare at my own charges, but my armor, and weapons, and sustenance, the Lord of Hosts provides, without money, and without price. There is the King's trumpeter. Hark what he has to say, for by inspiration of the Lord our God he sounds the trumpet. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against, powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able, to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand, therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds; that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." There, my friends, that proclamation describes a soldier of the cross of Christ. How he is equipped; who are the adversaries; and how he is to conduct himself in the conflict. Temptations, and the accusations of the devil, fleshly lusts, and unbelief, and all doctrines of men and devils, and every thought that exalts itself against the knowledge of Christ, are the enemies of the children of God, and hard wrestling, and valiant lighting, is necessary to come off the victor. "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the; world," is the word of the Captain of our salvation.

"In every conflict he sustains,
In every victory he gains.
In every counsel of his will,
He is precious to his people still."

All is well in every battle, when we attend to the order of the battle. We soldiers are not at liberty to take the direction of the fight in our own hands; nothing but disaster is the result whenever this is attempted. This I know to my cost. But I will not detain you longer with an account of the battles that I have fought under the standard of Christ, should we meet

again, the Lord willing, I will relate to you some of the scenes of conflict that the Lord our God has brought me through.

Coming empty, and going away full of good things. This new covenant market is a wondrous place. The poor and needy are ever coming. Blessed be the Lord of this covenant. He regards the cry of the destitute, and none are turned empty away. One is buying a little of the sincere milk of the word, that she may grow thereby. Others are asking for wine, and oil, and honey, such as the gospel yields. Grace to help in time of need, another is asking for. There a poor, perishing one craves a morsel of the passover Lamb for sinners slain. If is given him; he sits down beneath the shadow of the apple tree, and eats it with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. He sighs, I am a wretched sinner, an unworthy one to partake of such food (bitter herbs I should say.) But as he eats, the glow of health and youth returns, and lights up his countenance, and in love and praise to the Lord he sings, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." Well, my companions, it is but a glimpse we have had of this place; come often and buy for yourselves, without money and without price. As for myself, I find with my manifold infirmities and needs, it is not wisdom for me to be far away. I love to be within a moment's reach of the abundance of grace in Christ Jesus. I have to come daily for bread and water, without which I should languish and die. I care not to wander off (even out of curiosity,) to see what wares the other markets are selling. My soul has no relish for their dainty meats. O, Babylon, with all the abundance of thy delicacies, thou art not to be compared to Zion. My soul is abundantly satisfied! with the goodness of the Lord. The provisions of the new covenant are all my salvation, and all my desire. It hath pleased our heavenly Father that in Jesus, our covenant Head, all fullness should dwell, and of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. There is nothing outside of this new covenant market, of any advantage or value to those who fear the Lord. Hark! there still in the gospel sounds forth the cry, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price."

Elder Frederick W. Keene
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