

Our Pilgrimage and His Rest

*Notes of Lectures*

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# Chapter 2

**The Garden of Herbs and the Cared-for Land**

*Psalm 84*

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W. T. Turpin

hands, and to wash them by His word from everything that would unfit us morally for His presence in glory, and for communion with Himself in that bright scene into which He has entered, so that there may be nothing between us and Him, and in order that we may come simply, and put our heads where He delights to have them. Remember this, there are no favorite children in God's family. There are no *special* ones who have that place above or beyond others. Remember that it is open to all, and there is room enough for all. The bosom of Jesus, the heart of Christ, the affections of Christ, are toward all His children, and there is not a single one that is shut out from placing his or her head where John rested his. The Lord give us, beloved friends, in this day of unquiet and activity, and when it is *quantity* instead of *quality* that is in men's minds, the Lord give us to think of what would suit the heart of Christ, of what would suit the affections of Christ, and the Lord give us to rise to the dignity of our calling, and to taste the sweetness of being allowed to minister to them after our little measure, and to be kept, it may be in a solitary path and in a shady place, to be kept with this one simple thought in our soul -- my joy is to minister to the affections, and desires, and yearnings, and longings of that heart that spent itself for me!

The Lord add His blessing to His own word, supplying what is deficient, and forgiving what has been said amiss, if He sees it so, for His Son's sake.

## Chapter 2: *The Garden of Herbs and the Cared-for Land* Psalm 84

There are two great subjects, beloved brethren, that I desire to speak about, as the Lord may help me at this time, namely, the heavenly dwelling-place, and the earthly pilgrimage.

Now one of the peculiar features of Christianity, or rather of a Christian, is, that he combines the experiences which are connected with both of these during the term of his natural life here upon the earth; whereas with a Jew, with an Israelite, they are learned separately. That is, he had the experiences of the wilderness at one particular time in his history, and he had the experiences of the land at another. The experiences which flowed from both of these did not go on at the same moment of his natural life on earth, but they do with us. And that is the reason why it is important to have both of these in their true place; because, observe, the tendency with us all is to be narrower than the thoughts of God in everything. I believe that is the natural proclivity of our hearts, to be taken up with something *less* than God has given us. It is the case with regard to every truth, no matter which, and hence it is (if I may be allowed to say it), that we have our pet truths, and our pet doctrines; whereas, if we were really walking with God, we should have nothing less than *everything* that God has been pleased to give. We should find that all had a place, and was suited to us in our circumstances. But mark this, we would have them *in the order of importance in which they stand in His mind*. I believe it is a wonderful thing to have the truth of God

*as a whole*, and to value it as such, and at the same time to give it the order of importance in our hearts that it has in His thoughts.

Now, I will speak for a little, first of all, of what is unquestionably the lower side of the truth (if you can call one truth lower than another), and that is, the earthly pilgrimage. I repeat it, if you can call one truth lower than another; I am not sure that it is correct so to speak. But I speak of it for a moment as a truth which is certainly better grasped and better understood than the other. Now turn to Deut. 8, which brings this side of our subject prominently forward. The verses (2-5) in that chapter present the history of the pilgrimage, what I have called the earthly pilgrimage; the passage through the world, which has become a wilderness to me. The moment that I have been won over *to God* and to His truth, I am in the wilderness, and I have a pilgrimage as my journey. This is our proper history, and our proper pathway through these poor scenes. There are two things in that chapter I should like to point out to you. From v. 2 to 5, He brings out these two great facts, that the history of the wilderness was a necessary one to us, and (I say it with reverence) a necessary one to God. Now, we all own, every Christian owns, we cannot deny, that it is necessary to *us*; but I am not sure, beloved, whether we see, or have received the comfort in our hearts of seeing, that it was necessary to *God*; that it afforded Him an occasion which His heart looked and longed for, in the very circumstances in which we find ourselves in this world.

Now, with reference to *us* for a moment; there are two great things that are learned in the pilgrimage, in the wilderness, in our wilderness history, two things that are not natural to us, namely, *dependence* and *subjection*. Now dependence and subjection are two qualities that never belonged to any man naturally. On the contrary, what pertains to man in nature is *independence* and *insubjection*. These are the two great features that mark fallen man as such; they came in in the garden of Eden, they were as early as that. But when we are brought to God, and have a nature suitable to God, the features, the characteristics, the special salient qualities, of the new man, are *dependence* and *subjection*; and the circumstances through which we pass in this world are occasions whereby this subjection and dependence are tested, exercised, and brought into play, and that too by means of the difficulties, trials, and temptations of the way. Hence the blessedness of having the wilderness, and its ups and downs, and all the contingencies which happen to us as we pass along through it. If the heart is really exercised before God, and if we are walking in the power of the new man, energized by the Holy Ghost, every circumstance, every part of our history, trials, pressures, difficulties, griefs, the straits that we are brought into, afford us an opportunity for exercising dependence and subjection.

Now, allow me to call your attention to it, because it is exceedingly blessed -- these two features came out most wonderfully in the history of Him who condescended to become a man; you see them in the perfect man, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, if you remember (you can look at it at your leisure), in Luke 4, (I allude to the history of the temptation in the wilderness), the very first feature which was presented by

Him to Satan in that temptation, was this, I stand fast as a *dependent* man. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." And mark this, He quotes this very Deut. 8 which we are considering tonight. I believe He does so purposely. I believe the Lord had a distinct object and a special reason in quoting from that scripture, namely, because that scripture recounts the history of Israel's wanderings through the wilderness, the purpose in God's heart being to teach them dependence and subjection. He presents the picture of it in His own Son, the perfect man. And I understand that as casting an immense light upon another scripture which sometimes presents a difficulty, namely, "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matt. 2:15). What is the meaning of that? Have you ever thought of it? The meaning of that scripture, as I take it, is this, that that blessed One recommenced in His own person the moral history of Israel. Israel, as the people of God, broke down in their trial, in every circumstance in which they were placed; they failed in the wilderness, they failed in the land, and afterwards they failed in successive administrations of God. Wherever they were placed, they failed. Well, He recommences in His own person the history morally of the nation, and in every position in which they failed, He was perfect. He was perfect in the wilderness, perfectly dependent, perfectly subject, and, I need not say, perfect all through. But it is exceedingly blessed to see that God presents *in* a man One who was very man as well as very God, perfect man. He presents *in* His person the characteristic features that belong truly to a man before God. He shows them out in Jesus. You must never forget that side of it. Christ showed out in this world what God was towards man, but He was in His own person the very exemplification of what man ought to have been to God, and was not.

There was the manifestation of God to man, but there was also the expression of what a perfect man before God ought to be. And here is the very first feature of it, namely, dependence. And that is the good of straits and difficulties, beloved friends, herein is the blessedness of trial. If you are dependent, they become a matter of exercise with your heart. That is the reason why so many of the saints of God do not know what this dependence is, they have never been in a strait. I pity the person that has never been in a strait. I know it will come, beloved friends, it will surely come! I know the moment will come, because God is too true to us, and to the thoughts of His own heart about us, not to give us an opportunity of knowing the blessedness of having no one but the living God. Here is the good of it, to be brought into this position that I see none before me but the living God. And what a moment that is for each one, I have got no one but the living God! God becomes known to my soul in a way I never knew Him before, now I have tasted what it is to have my dependence exercised. I will tell you what to me it seems like. You have seen, perhaps, a mountain ash growing upon the side of the hill. The more the winds and storms blow upon that little tiny tree, feebly planted on the hillside, if it has got true, genuine roots, the deeper those roots stick. The tempest really strikes the root of that plant deeper down into the soil. That is the blessedness of it. Observe, I am speaking now of where the heart is truly exercised before God, I speak now of one who is walking with

God. The effect of straits on one who is *not* walking with God is, that the straits intervene between the soul and God, and then there is a collapse spiritually. That is the effect of it. It is exactly what is recorded in Num. 13 and 14, namely, when the children of Israel were on the point of entering the land, they got their difficulties between them and God, and what was the result? They lost the sense of subjection. "And they said one to another, Let us make us a captain, and let us return unto Egypt." They murmured and wept, and were insubject. But when the heart is really exercised, when the soul is really walking with its eye upon God, the effect of straits is, that God becomes known in a peculiar way, and there is a secret, oh, how can one speak of it! there is a secret understanding between you and God, known to none else. Did you ever know what it was to have such a secret? I believe that is what the apostle meant when he said (Phil. 4), "*My* God shall supply all your need." He does not say, "*Your* God." Why? No doubt He was the God of the Philippians just as much as of Paul, but it was because he was speaking of God as he knew Him *for himself*. It is quite true that Jesus said, "*My* God and your God"; but if I am speaking of God as I *know* Him for myself, I can say, There are secrets between God and me. "*My* God shall supply all your need." Now that is the good of the wilderness, that is one of the blessed effects of our pilgrimage through it, and there we find straits which exercise our dependence on the living God.

Well now, let us look at the other lesson it teaches for a moment, namely, subjection. This is blessedly presented in Christ's history as well. If you remember that magnificent Matt. 11:

At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes (Matt. 11:25).

Then we have, I believe, the most wonderful utterance that you have recorded in the whole of the word of God: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." What wondrous words from His lips, the Eternal Son of the Father! Consider; what is the history of that chapter? Why, beloved friends, simply this -- everything in His outward circumstances was a complete desolation to His heart. John doubted Him, the cities where His mightiest works were done had not repented, Israel were like children, they were piped to, and did not dance; they were mourned to, and did not lament; Capernaum, exalted to heaven, should be cast down to hell. "*In that hour*"; when there was not a solitary star to light up the darkness of things around, what was it that His heart found its solace in? Was it not this? In being perfectly subject to His Father's will. "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." He retreats, He retires, into the subjection, the perfect subjection, of a perfect man, and finds His satisfaction there.

And God presents all this in a man! As surely as He presented what genuine dependence was in a man, so He presents what true subjection is in a man. And think of the wonderful grace of presenting it in a man! It is not merely that we have the revelation of it as suited to God, but it was manifested in the person, ways, walk, and circumstances of that blessed One -- God manifest in the flesh. He came down

here into this world -- oh, let us never forget it -- not only to tell out to our poor hearts what was in the heart of God about us, but to manifest, both before God and men, what a perfect man ought to be before God, and in these two great features and characteristics, namely, dependence and subjection.

Now, you will note this little word in Deut. 7:

Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these *forty* years.

Think of it for a moment. It cost Israel their forty years' pilgrimage. Forty years they wandered through the wilderness, and they were not subject or dependent. Have you learned the lesson? Have not we gone, some of us, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy, perhaps eighty, years, and the lesson is not learned yet! Now, observe this -- Christ *began* His history with it as a man, herein is the difference between Him and us. We require the forty, fifty, sixty, or eighty years, as the case may be, and we are not perfected in it. He *starts* with it. He commences with it, the perfect man, God over all, blessed for evermore: let not our hearts lose the sense of this, who He was that condescended to become as truly man as He was truly God, perfect in the very things that we break down in. It is blessed to get it before our hearts. I feel what a cheer it is to one's poor heart to turn away from all else, and look at Him. The distance is no doubt immeasurably great between Him and us, and hence it is an immense comfort to the heart to see that God has found in a man, His own Eternal Son, all that His heart longed for; and though we have failed to present it to God, God has had it in perfection manifested in Christ. His God and His Father found in that blessed One, in all the perfection of His path, everything that the heart of God desired to find in a man; and that blessed One, in all His perfectness, in His perfect dependence and subjection, is set before us as the pattern, the simple pattern, of what, through His grace, and by His Spirit, God would have us to be. I am not speaking now of the *power* by which it is accomplished, but of the *fact*. The Lord give us to use the wilderness for that purpose, not merely as the place where we get our difficulties met, and our trials smoothed and softened, but as the very school where God, in the infinite riches of His grace, is perfecting His own creation in us; and wondrously blessed it is to apprehend that it is His creation that God is carrying on in us, and that He can make the untoward circumstances -- the thorns, briars, griefs, pains, and pressures of the way -- accomplish His own blessed purpose in us, for His own name's sake. It is an immense thing when our hearts are imbued with the sense of it by the Spirit of God.

Having spoken of that, let me refer for a moment to another, and, to me, a more blessed object than our need of the wilderness. You remember I said that *God* wanted it. There is no question whatever about the fact that *we* need it. But then (I say it with reverence) *God* wants it -- *God* needs it. You say, What do you mean? In what sense can it be that God needs the wilderness for us? It sounds a very strange thing in our ears. I say His affections claim this wilderness as our path, that therein they may attest their reality. Do you say, how? I will tell you, beloved friends. Because it is the only place that gives Him scope to *exercise* the unchanging love and affections of His bosom. That is the reason why He wants it. When we

come to speak of it presently, I will point it out more fully; but you know that in *heaven* we shall have neither care, nor sorrow, nor tears, nor pressure, nor pain, nor trial. All these things belong to this scene, and they are necessary to the blessed God to display Himself. It is a wonderful thing to occupy thought: divine power waiting on human weakness; human misery arresting divine compassion and divine tenderness: truly, such a world is the very scope wherein God displays the tenderness and care of His heart for His poor tried saints. He draws near to them, He comforts them, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you." Do you not think that while the apostle Paul had a sense of the power of God, that God had a special delight, and Christ a special delight, in drawing near to him, and saying, "Fear not, Paul?" I am bold to say tonight, that if that circumstance in the apostle's history had been wanting, there would have been some other created by the blessed God, not only on Paul's account, but to show how Christ could draw near to His servant. He would not have been without an opportunity of sustaining the heart of a faithful disciple who was standing fast for Him, and suffering for His name.

That is what I mean by saying that all those circumstances give Him an occasion to come near to us. Think of it, beloved friends. But let us be clear about this point: these things are not the *spring* of His actions. God has not a motive -- let me say it decidedly tonight; there is not a motive in the heart of God that has not its spring in Himself. He does not get His motives from *us*. He finds the occasion to manifest His mercy. He finds in our misery the suited time to display the tenderness of His heart; in our sorrows He seeks to unfold His comforts; in our difficulties He displays His inscrutable wisdom, that can carry us through: but the motives are all in His own heart. What a blessed thing to know that -- that God has His affections, and in His heart the motives for everything that He does. All the springs -- every one of them -- are in God Himself; but in the circumstances in which we are placed is revealed what was in His heart already. Oh, the blessedness of this! Oh, the infinite grace that can stoop so low! Have your hearts the sense of that this evening, beloved friends? Am I speaking to any one in sorrow, or trial, or temptation? The blessed resources of God wait upon your circumstances! Oh, if our hearts could only get the sense of that! If our hearts could only get the sense that He waits upon us, and that it delights His heart to draw near to us, and to minister, not according to what we think, but according to the infinite wisdom and deep affection of His own heart, because it is His own heart that guides His hand!

This I know, I do not understand His ways always, where I might and ought, and I see this on every hand, that there is nothing which makes people practically infidels more than judging of God by His ways; multitudes in the world at the present time are caught and stung by infidelity. It is a growing monster. I know those who have lost their balance through it. They have looked at their circumstances, at the ways they were led in, and they knew enough of God not to separate their ways from Him -- that is, they did not believe in the horrible doctrine that things happen by chance; but they judged of God by His *ways* with them, and the consequence is they have lost their spiritual balance, they have made shipwreck of faith. He has not made known His ways after that fashion, but I delight

to tell you what He has made known. There is not a secret chamber of His heart that He has not manifested -- not one! I say it with reverence, yet with confidence, there is not a single chamber in the heart of the blessed God that He has not opened; the beloved Son has manifested all the Father's affections. I know His *heart*, and what a blessed thing it is for us when we can fall back on that!

As to His ways, there may be clouds and darkness about them, I may not see the end from the beginning, and God may purposely keep it from me, but if I start with this fact -- there is nothing but love in that heart, nothing but infinite goodness in that bosom, "I know it, I believe it, I say it fearlessly, that God, the highest, mightiest, for ever loveth me." Then I am measuring His ways by His heart, and not His heart by His ways. I remember hearing of a person once who objected strongly to the truth of the gospel of the grace of God, and the only way by which a sinner can be brought to God. "Well," said this cavalier, "I do not understand that everlasting preaching of blood, blood, blood. What kind of a God must yours be? I hear you always talking of blood and death. What a God must such a God be!" What answer would you give to your own heart if that thought suggested itself to you? Now, it is well that our hearts should be *furnished* with a reply. Nothing makes a man secure against all the various storms and blasts of the devil that are sweeping this poor world, except thorough settlement in the truth of God. What answer, then, would you give to such a suggestion or thought as I have referred to? I will tell you the answer that was given. It was in the shape of another question, namely, "What was the relationship between the God whom you speak of in those terms, and the Victim whose blood you thus slight? What was the relationship between the Victim and the One who provided Him?" Oh, wondrous grace! the Victim was the Son of His bosom!

"Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!  
Thou maker of new morals to mankind!  
The grand morality is love of Thee.  
As wise as Socrates -- if such they were;  
Nor will they bate of that sublime renown --  
As wise as Socrates, might justly stand  
The definition of a modern fool."

Knowing God's love settles everything. It meets the sneer of the infidel on the one hand, and it steadies a poor feeble heart, that might be a little affected, on the other. Oh, consider it! He gave His only-begotten Son, His *own* Son, the Son of His affections, of His love, the Son that was ever in His bosom, and *is* in the bosom; and even when He was on the earth, we find it still "the only-begotten Son, who *is* in the bosom of the Father." He never left it. He was from eternity in the bosom of the Father. That Son God gave in the inscrutable, infinite, wonderful, nature of His love, to prove to you and me that He had a heart! Such is the way He proved it. He gave the object that was dearest to His own affections to prove to us that the devil had insinuated a lie into our hearts, in denying that God had any interest in His creatures. And, beloved friends, if we start with that, what a thing it is for us! Then we measure His ways by His affections. We know His love is perfect. Ah, I know well how that gilds trying circumstances. I know well, beloved friends, how that comforts the heart in days of sorrow,

in hours of difficulty, in moments of pressure. The soul can retreat into the one heart that is changeless, the unalterable, eternal, affection of the blessed God, who needs these very trials in which we are to manifest that He is everything to us that He delights to be. That is why He wants the wilderness, to show that He can come down to meet us, to sustain and comfort us here.

And, beloved friends, as I have before observed, it is not merely a question of His coming and meeting us in the circumstances where we are, but further still, there is nothing more blessed than to fall back upon a little word in Luke 12. "Your Father *knoweth*." He does not say, "Your Father will come in with help," or, "with sustenance." Both are true. But He throws their hearts upon His *knowledge*. "He *knoweth*." Is that enough for you? Is it enough for you in every circumstance that He *knows*, that your Father *knows*, that your Father has an eye that is never dim, an ear ever open, and an affection that never alters? "He *knows*." Is that blessed reality enough to keep you? Can you retire on that? "He *knows*." Wondrous blessedness it is! The Lord give our hearts, beloved friends, to get the abundant comfort and the full solace which may be reaped from our wilderness history, from the fact that it is necessary for us to be practiced in dependence and subjection on the one hand, and that it affords the blessed God an opportunity for the display of the affections of His heart to us on the other hand -- to show that He can feel for us in weakness and weariness, and that He will draw nigh to us. Who is there that can draw nigh to us in moments like these but God? Human sympathy is the expression of its own helplessness; surely I have often felt it. It is at best but the expression of its weakness; but when God draws near, how blessed! "The *Lord* stood by me," says the apostle; and in another place, "There stood by me this night the angel of God, *whose I am*, and whom I serve."

The Lord give us, by His Spirit, to taste the sweetness of these exercises as we pass along through this weary land, exercised in full dependence upon Him, and in the conscious sense that it is necessary to His heart to meet us, and to display the affections that are there!

Let us now look at the other side of the truth for a moment, that which I said was not so well understood, namely, the heavenly dwelling-place. I believe that the heavenly dwelling-place as a present thing known to the soul, is far less apprehended than the pilgrimage I have been dwelling on. I know many who understand the first, but who have not the least conception of the second. We ought to know both. The Lord give us to abound in both.

Now the exercises that I have already spoken of will be nothing to your heart if you do not know what I am going to set before you. I must ask you to turn to Deut. 11, because there you have the divine description of the land, the dwelling-place, and its character. Observe those verses for a moment in ch. 11, and you will see the contrasts (I particularly call your attention to it). He contrasts Egypt with the land. This world is to us both Egypt and the wilderness; it is Egypt in its moral character, it is the wilderness in its experimental character. Look at v. 10 for an instant. "For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye

came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but the land whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven. A land which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.” What does that mean? I believe the first part of this passage points to the fact that everything you have in the wilderness has trouble connected with it. There is no such thing in this world as a day without clouds. Take, for instance, seed-sowing, or harvest; there is trouble connected with both. The farmer will tell you he has trouble with his crops in every stage and season. He has trouble before he prepares the ground, he has trouble in sowing the seed, and abundance of anxiety and care before harvest comes. It was doubly so in Egypt, because I believe what the Spirit of God alludes to when He speaks of their watering the land with their feet, is this -- that the only source from whence ancient Egypt derived its fruitfulness was the Nile. It was necessary to construct channels for the river, when it overflowed its banks, to run into and irrigate the soil. This was done with the foot. But what trouble and labor all that entailed! This, therefore, you see, is the first contrast between this scene and that blessed place of which I hope to speak more particularly. Right well many of our hearts here know what sorrow’s night is. I am satisfied I am not speaking to a single saint of God within these walls this evening that is not certified in his heart that there is nothing, even the very best thing in this world, that has not trouble connected with it. I care not what it is, be it the costliest treasure your heart delights in here, trouble lies at its root. Take the relationships of life, are they not exposed to trouble, trouble, trouble? “Enlarge them,” as was once said, “and you only make a wider target for death to shoot at.” Ah, that is all. No matter what it is you possess in this world, the costliest jewel of your heart, the very best thing, there is no immunity in regard to it from the common lot of men in a world where death and sorrow both find their natural home. Hence, this is the first contrast. The second is like unto it, namely, that in the best thing here there is a deficiency, a lack, there is scarceness. Therefore He says (ch. 8), speaking of the land, “A land wherein thou shalt eat bread *without scarceness*, thou shalt not *lack* anything in it.” First of all, then, there is trouble with reference to the best things in this world, and secondly, even the best thing is deficient. It is like John 2, the wedding feast, and the wine out! There is no such thing as absence of scarceness, it is all want here.

These are the two great contrasts, beloved brethren. Have not our hearts proved them? Now let me tell you what I regard as a mournful thing. Whilst I admit that hundreds of saints of God freely and fully own that there is trouble and sorrow and difficulty connected with the best thing here, yet they do not know that this of itself will *not* wean the heart from this scene. I see those who are left like a tree that was blasted by lightning, from its remotest stems to its very roots. I have seen those who are without a solitary green spot; there they are in that state, *but they are not satisfied elsewhere*. They are scorched by the fire of trial here, but the heart is not invigorated elsewhere. I believe that God works both ways with us. He rolls in death on us here as to our circumstances and as to our history; He makes this very scene where our hearts

would fain strike their roots, too hard for us; He makes it to be the corrective of itself. But mark this, whilst He does that on the one side, He holds out an intensely attractive object on the other; and when both these things go together, the heart weaned because it has found an object outside the place where we are, and death being upon the very best thing in it; I say both these things work blessedly, wonderfully, together. I mean that when we have an object outside this world of want and desolation, and, at the same time that we are in the desolation, our hearts are kept from looking at anything but the object outside that satisfies us. I understand the apostle to mean that when he said, “Death worketh in us, but life in you”; that is, the effect of death working in *him* here, was that there was the manifestation of life going out towards *them*. There were the two things. Never let us forget that a person may die, or have everything blasted around him for his own sake; or he may die and have everything withered for Christ’s sake. There is a vast difference there. I do not believe that knowing we have everything in Christ will secure us against the blast of death here; but if our hearts are found in this heavenly dwelling-place, with an object that is ineffably precious beyond everything here, *then* God subjects us to trial here for *his* sake, for *Christ’s* sake, for the *Gospel’s* sake, in order that He may exhibit in us and to others, what He has done, and can do for us: and what He can be to us. This is a higher order of trial that I am speaking of, namely, that we die to *exhibit* the good of what is in heaven, in place of dying to *find out* the fading nature of everything on earth. Oh, how great is the difference! Many are obliged to die in order to *find out* the excellency of that spot where death never enters; but on the other hand, they may begin with that spot first, and come down here into this scene to display it, to be the specimen to which God can point, the canvas as it were on which He can paint the blessedness of that place, on which His eye continuously rests.

Look at this other point a moment, where He contrasts the wilderness and the land. He says (chap. 11), “The land . . . is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven.” It is supplied from its own sources. It is {sic, Is it} not dependent upon anything that is here; its springs are in itself. “It drinketh water of the rain of heaven. The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even to the end of the year.” I ask you tonight, What is the spot where God’s eyes are always detained? Where is it? It is not the one spot where Jesus is? I know no other place upon which His eye rests always save that. That, then, is the place He gives you and me for our home. He gives it to us to be the dwelling-place of our hearts; the land that he careth for is the spot that detains His own affections.

Now, meditate on that for a moment. Think of the blessed condition of that into which He brings us rest -- in the very sphere where *His* affections have found their perfect delight, and where *His* eye rests with eternal complacency. “The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it.” Oh, beloved friends, think of what it is to taste it now in any little measure, be it ever so feeble! I grant it is very poor and feeble with us all. May the Lord, by His Spirit, awaken a desire in our hearts to taste it *now*, to taste the blessedness of living there *now*; and of living in it, not merely as a *refuge* from the storm and trials, but as a *home*; to know the joys of *home*! There is a great

difference between a shelter and a home. A shelter is not necessarily a home. You can readily perceive a *shelter* is a place into which you run and hide from the storm, but you may come out again when the storm is past. *Home* is the place where your affections are detained; and if Christ is *only a shelter* to you, you will not of necessity abide there. And hence the feebleness of presenting Christ only as a shelter. It does not secure the permanent abiding of the heart with Him; but if He is a *home*, if there are the joys of home, the delights of home, the comforts of home, the fellowship of home, the affections of home, then I say, let me tarry there, that is the dwelling-place; that is where I am furnished, where I am satisfied, where I am comforted. I have to go through this world in all its varied scenes, yet *there* is my home.

“High in the Father’s house above  
My mansion is prepared;  
There is the home, the rest I love,  
And there my bright reward.

With Him I love, in spotless white,  
In glory I shall shine;  
His blissful presence my delight,  
His love and glory mine.”

Let me give you an illustration of it. Many of you have been in the mining districts, and you have seen how and where the miners earn their daily bread. They go to their mine and work in the morning, and there they toil and labor all the day long; but their home is not down there. Their work, their exercise, is there, but not their rest. There is a quiet spot that each man has, which is consecrated in each heart, under the name of “home,” and he goes forth from thence day by day to fill his allotted niche in the labor of life; and unto that you and I are also called. We are appointed to pass through this world with all the blessed consciousness in our hearts that we *have* a home. I know it may be said, But we are going on to it; true, yet this does not in the least invalidate the other. I know we shall be there in body by-and-by; but the Lord gives us to have it in faith *now*, as the sphere where our hearts rest. It is this likewise which will impart a *character* to us. Be assured, if we walk through this present world with the blessed air of that goodly place about us, it surely imparts a *character*. A person who has found a home and rest for the heart in heaven is as easily recognized as a person who has not. Activity will not procure it for you. There is no use in deceiving ourselves about it: we may toil and labor all the day long, and be most energetic, but that does not ensure any rest for your heart. Your activity is restless, your service is restless, your work is restless. Everything that you do is colored by what you yourself are. Be assured that being in the company of Christ, makes you like Christ. The company you are in, the associations that you live in, tell themselves out in everything to which you put your hand.

If you have not the rest of *home*, and quiet of heart, you may be over-laborious and active, but it is restless. Is has the stamp upon it of un-quiet and unrest. God looks at this present moment for a heart so satisfied, restful, and quiet -- because it has found an anchoring ground, a solid certainty, in the One on whom His own eye rests with ineffable delight -- He looks for those who can go forth here like the sun out of his chamber,

and like a strong man refreshed with wine to run his course.

The Lord teach us to possess that place, and to be in the company of His Christ now!

One word further, because the question may arise, and very properly, What occupies us there? That is a very important question. Is there any occupation there? Is there aught to engross, absorb the soul there? Most surely there is. May I ask you to turn to Deut. 26? I believe in that chapter the *first-fruits*, the *place* and the *priest* are all typical of Christ. Christ is the great anti-type of all these things. It is Christ then who occupies me. It is Christ who engages, Christ who absorbs, Christ who rivets my affections, Christ who commands my powers, my tongue, everything. Everything connected with that place is connected with Him, and it is upon Him that my eye adoringly rests, and it is with Him my heart is everlastingly occupied -- what blessedness! what glory!

But remember, you cannot be engaged with Him until you get there. Mark those words -- “It shall be when thou art *come in* unto the land.” Then it is you are occupied with the One who has brought you there; not with your blessing, but with the blesser -- with Himself, who has won this place for you with His affections, with His Person. When you have come in and possessed the land, and when you have dwelt in it, when it is the home of your heart, the One that has made it so to you is the one that engrosses you in it.

There is a scripture in the NT to which I would desire to refer: you remember that beautiful chapter Col. 3. In ch. 2 the Apostle throws us out of *man*, and in ch. 3 he puts us in association with the last Adam risen from the dead. You must be somewhere. You are out of man in ch. 2; you have died with Christ. If His death has thus closed all my history as connected with the first Adam, where am I? Surely in association with Christ risen. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above.”

Beloved friends, it is more blessed to see that the apostle does not define what “those things” are. He does not tell you. It is the *Person* that gives them character. It is the *Person* of which they are the surroundings which makes them objects of acquisition. If you say to a heart that is set on Christ, “Christ is there,” that answers every question. It is the fact of His presence that secures everything, and explains everything for the devoted one. There is no need to go into details if it is *Christ* your heart is looking out for, because He it is who makes your heart at home amid such things.

The Lord, by His Spirit, give us to excel in both these exercises; may we know what it is to find this rest, this blessed, wonderful rest, in this heavenly dwelling-place, where, as He says, “The sparrow hath found a house, and the swallow a nest for herself, where she may lay her young.” I take those two birds to be symbols exactly of what our poor hearts are naturally. The sparrow is a worthless bird; it is valueless because it is so plentiful. “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?” says the blessed Lord. The swallow is a type of ceaseless activity and unrest; but both sparrow and swallow have found a home. Where? “Thine altars, O Lord of hosts; my King and my God.” Then mark this, “Blessed are they that  *dwell* in thy house, they will be *still* praising thee.” They are