

**ALL OR NONE; OR COMPROMISES REFUSED:
A SERMON WITH FIVE TEXTS
NO. 1830**

**A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, MARCH 29, 1885,
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,
ON NOVEMBER 25, 1883.**

I SHALL have five texts—one of them a good one, the other four bad. The first text is good. It is God's text.

“There shall not a hoof be left behind.”

Exodus 10:26.

That is God's text, and the whole sermon will illustrate it by exposing the compromises with which it was met.

The other four are Pharaoh's texts, or, if you like, the devil's, for that is exactly what the devil says to men. Exodus 8:25—“*Pharaoh called for Moses and for Aaron, and said, Go you, sacrifice to your God in the land.*” That is his first proposal. Then we find him saying, at the twenty-eighth verse, “*I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to the Lord your God in the wilderness; only you shall not go very far away.*” That is the second of his compromises. In the tenth chapter, at the eighth verse, you have the third. He said to them, “*Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that shall go?*” Adding, “*Go now, you that are men, and serve the Lord.*” And Pharaoh's fourth and last proposal is in the twenty-fourth verse of that same tenth chapter—“*Pharaoh called unto Moses, and said, 'Only let your flocks and your herds be stayed.'*”

Satan is very loath to give up his hold on men. He is quite as loath as Pharaoh, and he must be driven to it by force of arms, I mean by force of divine grace, before he will let God's people go. Having once got them under his power through the fall, through their sin, and through their hardness of heart, he will not lose his subjects if he can help it. But he will put forth all his craft, and all his strength, if possible to hold them in his accursed sway. Many of Satan's slaves altogether disregard the voice of God. For them there are no Sabbaths, no Bibles, and no religion. Practically they say, “Who is Jehovah that we should obey His voice?” Now, when God means to save men—when the eternal purpose so runs and the divine determination is to be accomplished, He soon puts an end to this. For some reason quite unknown to the man—it may be quite unguessed of by him—he feels uneasy, he is disturbed. He thinks one morning that he will go up to a place of worship, not that he cares much about it, but he thinks that he shall perhaps be a little easier there. He takes his Bible; he begins to read a chapter. A very striking passage comes before his eyes. He is not easier, for the text has fixed upon him. Like a barbed shaft it has stuck into his soul, and he cannot possibly draw it out again. He is more troubled than ever. He begins to inquire a little about the things of God, there is some respect now outwardly to religion, the man is considerably changed.

But do not imagine that the work is accomplished. Our blessed Master has to fight for every inch of ground which He wins in human hearts. With the matchless artillery of His love He drives the enemy back farther and farther, till at last He conquers, but it is often a long and slow process, and was He not possessed with infinite patience He would give it up. But where it is His resolve that a man shall come out of the world and shall be saved, that resolve must and will be carried into effect, and the man,

though he is only brought so far that he begins to think a little about divine truth and about eternal matters, will have to go a great deal farther than that.

You see him sitting under the word of God, and perhaps Satan says now, “Well, you are a fine fellow. You are beginning to occupy a seat Sunday after Sunday in the house of prayer. You have given up your evil habits to a large extent. You are quite a different man. Now you have done something very pleasing to God. You may rest content with this.” And it is a very sad thing when men do rest content with such a paltry hope as can have come out of poor performances like these. But still they will stop just there if they can, for Satan does not mind where he makes men halt so long as they will stay under the dominion of sin, and refuse to come to Christ.

Now the Lord begins to deal with the man perhaps in a way of affliction and trouble. His wife sickens, a child dies, he is himself unhealthy, he fears he is about to die, and his fancied righteousness evaporates before his eyes, and he thinks that now surely he must seek after something better. Then will Satan come in and say, “There is time enough yet. Do not be in too much of a hurry.”

If the Lord drives a man from that by the solemn movements of the Spirit upon his soul, then the devil will say to him, “How do you know that this is all true?” And he has not to go far before he finds infidels to help his unbelief. I am sorry to say that he can find them in the pulpit pretty plentifully, preaching their infidelities as “advanced thought,” and so poor souls get bewildered, and scarcely know their right hand from their left, and they begin again to relapse into a condition of indifference, and remain where they were.

Blessed be God, if He means to save such, He will, by push of pike, and point of bayonet, carry the day. They shall not rest where they are. The right hand of the Lord is stretched out still, and He will make the Pharaoh of evil yet know that Jehovah is stronger than he. Grace is mightier than nature and the eternal purpose surer of fulfillment than all the resolves of case-hardened consciences, and so at last it comes to this—that the man is driven to yield to God, and when he is driven to that point Satan comes in again with his compromises.

We are going to speak about these four compromises tonight. The first compromise is found in the eighth chapter at the twenty-fifth verse.

“Sacrifice to your God in the land.”

“Yes,” says the devil, “you must be a Christian; that is evident. You cannot hold out any longer, for you are too uneasy in your sins. You will have to be a Christian.” “But,” he says, “stay in the world, and be a Christian. Remain where you are. ‘Sacrifice to your God *in the land,*’” by which he sometimes means this, live in sin, and be a believer. Trust yourself with Christ, and then indulge yourself in whatsoever your heart desires. Do you not know that he is a Savior of sinners? Therefore stay in your sin, and yet trust in Him. Oh, I charge you, by the living God, never be duped by such a treacherous lie as this, for it is not possible that you can find any rest or salvation while you live in sin. My dear hearers, Christ came to save us *from* our sins, but not *in* our sins. He has built a hospital of mercy into which He receives the worst possible cases. All are welcome, but He does not receive them that they may continue to be sick, but that He may heal them, and make sound men of them. When the Lord Jesus Christ takes hold upon a thief, the man is a thief no longer, his inmost heart becomes honest. When the Lord meets with the harlot, He blots out her iniquity, and she is affected with deep repentance for her crimes, and turns unto her Savior, desiring from that time on to walk in purity all her days. It is impossible that you should serve God and yet continue to indulge in known sin. What a fool that man is who thinks that he may drink and be a Christian, that he may cheat in his business and be a Christian, that he may act like the ungodly world in all respects, and yet be a Christian! It cannot be. Mark Anthony yoked two lions together, and drove them through the streets of Rome, but he could never have yoked together the lion of the pit and the lion of the tribe of Judah. There is a deadly hate between these two. The principle of good, if it is yielded to, will destroy the mastery of evil. There cannot be a compromise between them. No man can serve two *masters*. He may serve two, but not two when each determines to be master. Satan will be master if he can, and Christ will be master, and therefore you cannot serve the two. It must be one or the

other. If you are to have your sin forgiven you, you must leave your sin. Remember that voice which came to Master John Bunyan when he was playing tip cat on Elstow Green on Sunday morning. He thought that he heard a voice say, "Will you leave your sins and go to heaven, or will you have your sins and go to hell?" That problem is proposed to you if you are unconverted and undecided. But as to the idea of keeping your sins and going to heaven, shut that out of the question, for it must not, cannot, and shall not be, it is a compromise proposed by Satan, but the Lord will not have it.

Yes, but then Satan, retreating a little, says, "Well, now, of course I did not mean that you were not to give up your grosser sins, but I mean to tell you of something better. Love the world, and live with worldlings, and find your company and your joy among them, and yet be a Christian. Surely you are not going to throw up everybody, are you? You know you must not be singular. You must not make yourself an oddity altogether. You have many merry companions of yours, keep to them. They do not, perhaps, do you much good. Well, you must not be too particular, and precise." So he says, "Continue in the world, and be a Christian." Shall I tell you God's word about that? "If any man loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him." That is short, though not sweet. A man says, "Well, I shall be a Christian, but I shall find my chief pleasure and my amusement where the world finds it." Will you? "I shall be a Christian, but I shall hold with the hare and run with the hounds. I shall be with the church on Sunday, but nobody shall know that I am not the best worldling on the week-day. Can I not put my hymn book in one pocket and a pack of cards in the other, and so go to heaven and keep friends with the world?" No, it is not possible. "Let My people go, that they may serve Me," is God's word. Not, "Let them stay in the land, and still serve you and serve Me too." It cannot be. "Know you not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" That text is another sharp, drawn sword cutting to the quick, and there are professors who ought to feel it go to their very hearts, for they are trying all that they possibly can to go as near as ever they can to the borderline, and yet to keep up a hope. What would you think of a man who went as near as he could to burning his house down, just to try how much fire it would stand? Or of one who cut himself with a knife, to see how deep he could go without mortally wounding himself? Or of another, who experimented as to how large a quantity of poison he could take? Why, these are extreme follies, but not as great as that of a man who tries how much sin he may indulge in, and yet be saved. I pray you do not attempt such perilous experiments. "Come you out from among them; be you separate, and touch not the unclean thing." Shun with horror Satan's old compromise, dream not that you can love the world, and yet have the love of the Father in you.

When the enemy cannot get on with that, he draws back a little, and cries, "That is very proper; you are hearing very faithful teaching this time, but listen to me! You can live for yourself, and be a Christian. Do not go out into worldly company, but enjoy yourself at home. You see you want to have your own soul saved. Well, live for *that*." This is only a subtler and uglier form of selfishness. It is nothing better. "Look," says Satan, "I do not ask you to be degenerate with your money, be miserly with it; be very thrifty. Everybody will pat you on the back and say, 'He is taking care of number one, and he is doing the right thing.' Come, now, and make a good thing of religion. Believe in Jesus Christ, of course, in order that you yourself may be saved, and then live all the rest of your life trying to hear sermons that will feed you, and read books that will comfort you, and become a great man among religious folks." Hateful advice! Do you not know, dear friends, that, the very essence of Christianity is for a man to deny himself? Self can never properly be the end-all and be-all of a man's existence. Self is to religion, in fact, nothing but the flesh in a pretended spiritual form. If a man lives to himself, he is under the dominion of an evil spirit just as much as if he went out into open sin. So you must come out of that. Selfishness will not do. You must love the Lord with all your heart, and you must love your fellow men. There must be obedience to that command that you "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself," or else there is no coming out into safety. Thus the first compromise will not hold at all.

Pushed back from the first compromise, Pharaoh proposes a second, and this is found in the twenty-eighth verse of the eighth chapter—

“Only you shall not go very far away.”

Satan says, “Yes, I see your conscience tells you that you must come out from the world, and come out from sin, but do not go very far away, for you may want to come back again. In the first place, do not make it public. Do not join a church. Be like a rat behind the paneling; never come out except it is at night to get a mouthful of food. Do not commit yourself by being baptized, and joining the church, do not go as very far as that. Just try, if you can, and save yourself from the wrath to come by secret religion, but do not let anyone know it. There really cannot be any need of actually saying, ‘I am a Christian.’” My friend, this is the very depth of Satan. When a soldier goes to the barracks, if he is a child of God he may say, “I shall not kneel down to pray because they might throw a boot at me, as they generally do in the barracks. I can keep my religion to myself.” That man is wrong. But if he boldly says, “I will fly my flag. I am a Christian, and I will never yield that point, come what may,” he will stand. The beginning of yielding is like the letting out of water, no man knows to what a flood it will come. This is what Satan would have with some of you that you may fall by little and little. Therefore defeat him, come out boldly. Take up your cross, and follow Jesus. “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”

The tempter also says, “Do not be so very precise and exact. The Puritan saints—well, people point the finger at them. You need not be quite so particular.” By which he means this—that you may sin as much as you like so long as you do not violate propriety and that, after all, you are not to obey God thoroughly, but only to obey Him when it pleases you. This is flat rebellion against God. This will never do.

“Well,” he says, “if you are to be so precise, yet do not be so desperately earnest. There are some of those friends down there at the Tabernacle who are always looking after the souls of others, and trying to proclaim Christ to everybody. You know they are a very dogmatic lot, and they are a great deal too pushing and fanatical. Do not go with them.” Just so. He means, stand and serve the Lord, because you dare not do any other, but never give Him your heart, never throw your soul into His cause. That is what Satan says, and do you think that such traitorous service will save you? If Moses had thought that going a little way into the wilderness would have saved Israel, he would have let them go a little way into the wilderness, and that would have been the end of it. But Moses knew that nothing would do for God’s Israel but to go clean away as far as ever they could, and put a deep Red Sea between them and Egypt. He knew that they were never to turn back again come what might, and so Moses pushed for a going forth to a distance, as I would in God’s name push for full committal to Christ with everybody who is tempted to a compromise.

“Oh, but,” Satan will say, “be earnest too. Yes, be earnest. Of course that is right enough, and be precise in all your actions, but do not be one of those people who are always praying in secret. You can keep an open religious profession going without much private praying, without heart-searching, without communion with God. These are tough things,” he says, “to keep up. You will find it difficult to maintain the inward life, and preserve a clean heart and a right spirit. Let these go by default, and attend to externals, and be busy and active, and that will do.” But it will not do, for unless the heart and soul are renewed by the Spirit of God, it little matters what your externals may be. You have failed before God unless your very soul is joined unto Him by a perpetual covenant that shall never be forgotten. What a blessing it is when a man can say—“I have done with these compromises, I do not want to serve God and win favor with the world. I do not want to go just a little way from the world. I pray God to divide me from the world by an everlasting divorce, just as it was with Paul when he said, ‘The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.’ From henceforth let no man trouble me; for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.” Happy man who has come right out under divine guidance to seek the eternal Canaan! His is the path of safety and acceptance, but they that temporize and parley with sin and Satan will find mischief come out of it.

Pushed back from that, the enemy suggests another compromise in the tenth chapter, at the eighth and eleventh verses—

“Go, serve the Lord your God: but who are they that

shall go? Go now, you that are men, and serve the Lord."

Yes, that is his next point. "Yes," he says, "we see what it has come to. You are driven at last to this—that you must be an out-and-out Christian, but, now," he says, "do not worry your wife with it; do not take it home." Or he says to the woman, "You are to follow Christ. I see you must. You seem driven to *that*, but never say anything to your husband about it." Was not that a pretty idea of Pharaoh's—that all the men were to go, and were to leave the women and children to be his slaves? And that is just the idea of Satan. "You have plenty to do to look after yourself, but your wife—well, leave her to her own ways. Your husband—leave him to his irreligion." Let us answer him thus—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." So said Joshua of old, and so let every man here say. Remember Paul's words to the Philippian jailer, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved, *and your house.*" Let us pray that we may have the whole house for Christ. Up to your measure of influence over your family, say within yourself, "My Lord, I will never rest until I see all my family brought to Your dear feet. Lord, save my wife: save my husband: save my father: save my brothers and sisters! Bring these out of bondage!" You cannot be a Christian unless that is your heartfelt desire. He that cares not for his own house is worse than a heathen and a publican.

And then the children. "Oh," Pharaoh says, "leave the children!" Do you not see he knew very well that, if they did that, they would themselves come back again? What man among us would go away into the wilderness, and leave his wife and children in slavery? Should we not want to come back to them? Should we not think that we heard their cries? Should we not want to look into their dear faces again? Leave them in slavery? Oh, that cannot be! And yet let me sorrowfully say that there are many professing Christians who seem as though they were themselves determined to be the Lord's, but their children should belong to Pharaoh and to the devil. For instance, the boy is getting of a certain age. Let him be sent to a foreign school, and preferably, a Roman Catholic school. Will that be useful to his religion? Yet if he should turn out a Papist, his foolish father will almost break his heart. It was all his own doing, was it not? Well, the girls, of course, they must go into society, of course, they must "go into society." And so everything is done to put them into places of danger, where they will not likely be converted, and where, in all probability, they will become merry, and vain, and light. Then a situation is looked for the boy. How often there is no question about the employer being a Christian! Is it a business that the lad can follow without injury to his morals? "No, it is a fine roaring trade, and it is a cutting house, where he will pick it up in a smart way. Let him go there." Yes, and if he goes to perdition? Alas, there are Christian men who do not think of that! The children of some professors are offered up to the Moloch of this world. We think it a horrible thing that the heathens should offer their children in sacrifice to idols, and yet many professors put their children where, according to all likelihood, they will be ruined. Do not let it be so. Do not let the devil entangle one of you in that compromise, but say, "No, no, no, my house, God helping me, shall be so conducted that I will not put temptation in my children's way. I will not lead them into the paths of sin. If they will go wrong, despite their father's exhortations and their mother's tears, why, they must, but, at any rate, I will be clear of their blood, for I will not put them into places where they would be led astray." I am sure there is a great deal of importance in this remark, and if it cuts anybody very closely, and he says, "I think you are very personal," that is exactly what I mean to be—the precise thing I am aiming at. I desire to put this thing before every individual Christian, that all may see the right and the wrong of it, and may resolve, "Our women and our children shall go with us to worship God. They as well as ourselves shall leave this Egypt, as far as God's grace can help us to accomplish it."

Now the devil is getting pushed into a corner. Here is the man's whole house to go right for God, and the man gives himself up to be a Christian out and out. What now? "Well," says the enemy, in the twenty-fourth verse of that tenth chapter—

Go you, serve the Lord; only let your flocks and your herds be stayed."

Just so. What does Moses say to that? "You must give us also sacrifices and burnt-offerings that we may sacrifice unto Jehovah our God. Our cattle also shall go with us; *there shall not a hoof be left behind;* for

thereof must we take to serve the Lord our God; and we know not with what we must serve the Lord until we come there.” This was the divine policy of “No surrender,” and I plead for it with you. Satan says, “Do not use your property for God. Do not use your talents and your abilities; especially do not use your money for the Lord Jesus. Keep that for yourself. You will want it one of these days, perhaps. Keep it for your own enjoyment. Live to God in other things, but, as to that, live to yourself.” Now, a genuine Christian says, “When I gave myself to the Lord I gave Him everything I had. From the crown of my head to the sole of my feet I am the Lord’s. He bids me provide things honest in the sight of all men, and care for my household, and so I shall, but yet I am not my own, for I am bought with a price, and therefore it becomes me to feel that everything I have, or ever shall have, is a dedicated thing, and belongs unto the Lord, that I may use it as His steward, not as if it were mine, but at His discretion, and at His bidding. I cannot leave my substance to be the devil’s. That must come with me, and must be all my Lord’s, for His it is, even as I am.” The Christian takes the line which Moses indicated, “I do not know what I may be required to give. I know that I am to sacrifice unto the Lord my God, but I do not know how much. I cannot tell what may be the needs of the poor, the needs of the church, the needs of Christ’s church all over the land. I do not know, but this I know, that all that I have stands at the surrender point. If my Redeemer wants it, He shall have it. If Satan wants it he shall not have a penny of it. If there is anything that is asked of me that will not contribute to good morals—that will not contribute to the promotion of that which is right in the sight of God—I withhold it. But if there is anything that is for Christ’s glory and for the good of men, then, as the Lord shall help me, it shall be given freely, and not be begrudged as if it were a tax. It shall be my joy and my delight to devote all that I am, and all that I have, to Him who bought me with His precious blood.”

Now, brothers and sisters, you that profess to be Christians, come, stand right square out, and acknowledge yourselves wholly and altogether the Lord’s—

*“Tis done! the great transaction’s done;
I am my Lord’s, and He is mine.”*

“My house is His, and my all is His. Whether I live or die—whether I work or suffer, all that I am, and all that I have, shall be forever my Lord’s.” This is to enter into peace, this indeed is to be clean delivered from the power of Satan, this is to be the Lord’s free man, and what remains but with joyful footsteps to go onward toward Canaan, shod with shoes of iron and brass, fed with heavenly bread, guarded by the Lord Himself, guided by His fiery-cloudy pillar, enjoying all things in Him, and finding Him in all things? This is to be a Christian of the true order. The Lord make you so by faith in His dear Son! Amen and Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—SELECTIONS FROM THE EIGHTH AND TENTH CHAPTERS OF EXODUS.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—645, 656, 658.

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