

## MEDITATION ON GOD

### NO. 2690

A SERMON  
 INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1900  
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*“My meditation of him shall be sweet.”*  
*Psalm 104:34*

DAVID, certainly, was not a melancholy man. Eminent as he was for his piety and for his religion, he was equally eminent for his joyfulness and gladness of heart. Read the verse that precedes my text, “I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the LORD.”

It has often been insinuated, if it has not been openly said, that the contemplation of divine things has a tendency to depress the spirits. Religion, many thoughtful persons have supposed, does not become the young, it checks the ardor of their youthful blood. It may be very well for men with grey heads, who need something to comfort and solace them as they descend the hill of life into the grave, it may be well enough for those who are in poverty and deep trial, but that it is at all congruous with the condition of a healthy, able-bodied, successful, and happy man, is generally said to be out of the question.

Now, there is no greater lie than this. No man is so happy but he would be happier still if he had true religion. The man with a fullness of earthly pleasures, whose barns are full of corn, and whose presses burst with new wine, would not lose any part of his happiness, had he the grace of God in his heart, rather, that joy would add sweetness to all his prosperity, it would strain off many of the bitter dregs from his cup, it would purify his heart, and freshen his tastes for delights, and show him how to extract more honey from the honeycomb.

Religion is a thing that can make the most melancholy joyful, at the same time that it can make the joyous ones more joyful still. It can make the gloomy bright, as it gives the oil of joy in the place of mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Moreover, it can light up the face that is joyous with a heavenly gladness, it can make the eye sparkle with tenfold more brilliance, and happy as the man may be, he shall find that there is sweeter nectar than he has ever drunk before, if he comes to the fountain of atoning mercy, if he knows that his name is registered in the book of everlasting life.

Temporal mercies will then have the charm of redemption to enhance them. They will be no longer to him as shadowy phantoms which dance for a transient hour in the sunbeam. He will account them more precious because they are given to him, as it were, in some codicils of the divine testament, which has promise of the life that now is, as well as of that which is to come. While goodness and mercy follow him all the days of his life, he will stretch forth his grateful anticipations to the future, when he shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever. He will be able to say, as the psalmist does here, “I will sing unto the LORD as long as I live: I will sing praise to my God while I have my being. My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

Taking those last few words as the motto of our discourse, I shall speak, first, concerning *a very profitable exercise*—“meditation,” secondly, concerning *a very precious subject*, “My meditation of *him*, and thirdly, concerning *a very blessed result*, “My meditation of him shall be *sweet*.”

**I.** First, here is A VERY PROFITABLE EXERCISE—“*meditation*.”

Meditation is a word that more than half of you, I fear, do not know how to spell. You know how to repeat the letters of the word, but I mean to say, you cannot spell it in the reality of life. You do not

occupy yourselves with any meditation. What do many of you who are merchants know concerning this matter? You rise up in the morning just in time to take your accustomed seat in the omnibus, you hasten to your counting house for your letters, and there you continue all day long, for business when you are busy, or for gossip when business is dull, and at night you go home too tired and jaded for the wholesome recreation of your minds.

Week by week, month by month, and year by year, it is still with you one everlasting grind, grind, grind. You have no time for meditation, and you reckon, perhaps, that if you were to set apart half an hour in the day to ponder the weighty matters of eternity, it would be to you a clear loss of time. It is very wise of you to economize your minutes, but I suppose that, if half an hour in a day could earn you a hundred pounds, you would not say that you could not afford it, because you know how to estimate pecuniary profit.

Now, if you equally knew how to count the great profit of meditation, you would deem it a positive gain to yourselves to spend some time therein, for meditation is most profitable to the spirit, it is an extremely healthful and excellent occupation. Far from being wasted time, it is a judicious employment of time.

Do not imagine that the meditative man is necessarily lazy, contrariwise, he lays the best foundation for useful works. He is not the best student who reads the most books, but he who meditates the most upon them, he shall not learn most of divinity who hears the greatest number of sermons, but he who meditates the most devoutly upon what he does hear, nor shall he be so profound a scholar who takes down ponderous volumes one after the other, as he who, reading little by little, precept upon precept, and line upon line, digests what he reads, and assimilates each sentiment to his heart by meditation—receiving the word first into his understanding, and afterwards receiving the spirit of it into his own soul. Meditation is thus a very excellent employment. Let me for a few minutes tell you some of its uses.

First, I think meditation furnishes the mind somewhat with rest. *It is the couch of the soul.* The time that a man spends in necessary rest, he never reckons to be wasted, because he is refreshing and renovating himself for further exertion. Meditation, then, is the rest of the spirit. “Oh!” says one, “I must have rest. Here have I have been fagging and toiling incessantly for months, I must have a day’s excursion, I must do this thing, and the other.”

Yes, and such recreation, in its proper place, is desirable, we ought to have seasons of innocent recreation, but at the same time, if many of us knew how to spend a little time daily in the calm repose of contemplative retirement, we should find ourselves less exhausted by the wear and tear of our worldly duties. To meditate, would be to us a salutary recreation, and instead of running ourselves out of breath, and laboring till a respite is compulsory, we should spread our intervals of ease and refreshing over the whole year, and secure a small portion every day, by turning aside from the bustling crowd to meditate upon whatever subject we wish to occupy the most honorable place in our mind.

Just as a change of posture relieves the weariness of the body, a change of thoughts will prevent your spirits becoming languid. Sit down in a silent chamber at eventide, throw the window up, and look at God’s bright stars, and count those eyes of heaven, or if you like it better, pause in the noontide heat, and look down upon the busy crowd in the streets, and count the men like so many ants, upon the anthill of this world, or if you care not to look about you, sit down and look within yourself, count the pulses of your own heart, and examine the emotions of your own breast.

At times, ’tis well to muse upon heaven, or if you are a man loving to revel in the prophetic future, turn over the mystic page, and study the sacred visions recorded in the Book of Daniel, or the Book of Revelation. As you do enter these hallowed intricacies, and do meditate upon these impressive symbols, you will rise up from your study mightily refreshed. You will find it like a couch to your mind.

Again, meditation is *the machine in which the raw material of knowledge is converted to the best uses.* Let me compare it to a winepress. By reading, and research, and study, we gather the grapes, but it is by meditation that we press out the juice of those grapes, and obtain the wine. How is it that many men who read very much know very little? The reason is they read tome upon tome, and stow away

knowledge with lumbering confusion inside their heads, till they have laid so much weight on their brain that it cannot work. Instead of putting facts into the press of meditation, and fermenting them till they can draw out right inferences, they leave them to rot and perish. They extract none of the sweet juice of wisdom from the precious fruits of the vine.

I like, when I have read a book for about half an hour, to walk awhile and think it over. I shut up the volume, and say, "Now, Mr. Author, you have made your speech, let me think over what you have said. A little meditation will enable me to distinguish between what I knew before and the fresh subject you have communicated to me—between your facts and your opinions—between your arguments and those I should make from the same premises."

Animals, after they have eaten, lie down and ruminate, they first crop the grass, and afterwards digest it. So, meditation is the rumination of the soul, thereby we get that nutriment which feeds and supports the mind.

When you have gathered flowers in the field or garden, you arrange them in proper order, and bind them together with the string of memory, but take heed that you do not put them into the water of meditation, else they will soon fade, and be fit only for the dunghill. When you have gathered pearls from the sea, recollect that you will have gathered with them many worthless shells, and much mud, therefore, sort them in your memory, and only keep those that are worth preserving. You must also open the oyster to extract the pearl, and polish it to make it appear more beautiful. You may not string it in the necklace of your mind, until it has been rubbed and garnished by meditation.

Thus, you see that we need meditation to make use of what we have discovered. As it is the rest of the soul, so it is, at the same time, the means of making the best use of what the soul has acquired.

Again, *meditation is to the soul what oil was to the body of the wrestlers*. When those old athletes went out to wrestle, they always took care before they went, to oil themselves well, to make their joints supple and fit for their task. Now, meditation makes the soul supple—makes it so that it can use things when they come into the mind.

Who are the men that can go into a controversy, and get the mastery? Why, the men who meditate when they are alone. Who are the men that can preach? Not those who gad about, and never commune with their own hearts alone, but those who think earnestly as well when no one is near them as when there is a crowd around them. Who are the authors to write your books, and keep up the constant supply of literature? They are meditative men. They keep their bones supple and their limbs fit for exercise by continually bathing themselves in the oil of meditation. How important, therefore, is meditation as a mental exercise, to have our minds in constant readiness for any service!

I have thus pointed out to you that meditation is in itself useful to every man. But you did not come here to listen to a merely moral essay, you came to hear something about the Gospel of God, and what I have said already is but an introduction to what I have to say concerning the great necessity of meditation in religion. As meditation is good for the mind, even upon worldly topics and natural science, *much more is it useful when we come to spiritual learning*.

The best and most saintly of men have been men of meditation. Isaac went out into the fields at eventide to meditate. David says, "I will meditate in thy statutes." Paul, who himself meditated continually on all that related to the Gospel, writing to Timothy concerning the important things needful in a good minister of Jesus Christ, says, "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all."

To the Christian, meditation is most essential. I would almost question the being of a Christian, and I should positively deny his wellbeing, who lived habitually without meditation. Meditation and prayer are twin sisters, and both of them appear to me equally necessary to Christian life. I think meditation must exist where there is prayer, and prayer is sure to exist where there is meditation.

My brethren, there is nothing more wanting to make Christians grow in grace nowadays, than meditation. Most of you are painfully negligent in this matter. You remind me of a sermon that one of my quaint old friends in the country once preached from the text, "The slothful man roasteth not that

which he took in hunting.” He told us that many people, who would hunt for a sermon, were too lazy to roast it by meditation. They knew not how to put the jack of memory through it, and then to twist it round by meditation before the fire of piety, and so to cook it, and make it fit for their soul’s food.

So is it with many of you, after you have caught the sermon, you allow it to run away. How often do you through lack of meditation, miss the entire purpose for which the discourse was designed! Unless you meditate upon the truths we declare unto you, you will gather little sweetness, you will acquire little profit, and certainly, you will be in no wise established therein to your edification. Can you get the honey from the comb until you press it? You may be refreshed while you listen to the sermon, but it is the meditation afterwards which extracts the honey, and gets the best and most luscious savor therefrom.

Let me tell you that *there ought to be special times for meditation*. I think every man should set apart a portion of each day for this gracious exercise. A Christian will ever be in a lean state if he has no time for sacred musings before his God. Those men who know most of God are such as meditate most upon Him. Those who realize most experientially the doctrines of grace are those who meditate and soar beyond the reach of all sublunary things. I think we shall never have much advancement in our churches until the members thereof begin to accept habitually the counsel, “Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee;” or that other, “Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.”

Till the din and noise of business somewhat abate, and we give ourselves to calmer thought, and in the solemn silence of the mind find at once our heaven and our God, we must expect to have regiments of dwarfs, and only here and there a giant. Giant minds cannot be nourished by mere casual hearing, gigantic souls must have meditation to support them. Would you be strong? Would you be mighty? Would you be valiant for the Lord, and useful in His cause? Take care that you follow the occupation of the psalmist David, and meditate. This is a very happy and profitable exercise.

**II.** Now, secondly, let us consider A VERY PRECIOUS SUBJECT, “My meditation of *him* shall be sweet.”

Christian! you need no greater inducement to excite you than the subject here proposed, “My meditation of him shall be sweet.” To whom does that word “him” refer? I suppose it may refer to all the three Persons of the glorious Trinity, “My meditation upon JEHOVAH shall be sweet.” And verily, if you sit down to *meditate upon God the Father*, and muse upon His sovereign, immutable, unchangeable love toward His elect people—if you think of God the Father as the great Author and Originator of the plan of salvation—if you think of Him as the mighty Being who, by two immutable things, wherein it is impossible for Him to lie, has given us strong consolation who have fled for refuge to Christ Jesus—if you look to Him as the Giver of His only begotten Son, and who, for the sake of that Son, His best gift, will, with Him also, freely give us all things—if you consider Him as having ratified the covenant, and pledged Himself ultimately to complete all His stipulations, in the gathering in of every chosen, ransomed soul, you will perceive that there is enough to engross your meditation forever, even were your attention limited to the manifestation of the Father’s love.

Or if you choose to do so, you may *meditate upon God the Holy Spirit*. Consider His marvelous operations on your own heart—how He quickened it when you were dead in trespasses and sins—how He brought you nigh to Jesus when you were a lost sheep, wandering far from the fold—how He called you, with such a mighty efficacy that you could not resist His voice—how He drew you with the bands of love which would not let you go. If you think how often He has helped you in the hour of peril—how frequently He has comforted you with His promises in times of distress and trouble, and if you remember that, like holy oil, He will always supply your lamp, and until life’s latest hour He will always replenish you with His influences, proving Himself still your Teacher and your Guide till you get up yonder, where you shall see your Savior face to face, in the blessed presence of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost—in such great truth you may well find a vast and indeed, an infinite subject for your meditation.

But tonight, I prefer rather to confine this word “him” to *the person of our adorable Savior*, “My meditation of him shall be sweet.” Ah! if it be possible that the meditation upon one Person of the Trinity can excel the meditation upon another, it is meditation upon Jesus Christ—

*“Till God in human flesh I see,  
My thoughts no comfort find;  
The holy, just, and sacred Three  
Are terrors to my mind.*

*But if Immanuel’s face appears,  
My hope, my joy begins;  
His name forbids my slavish fear,  
His grace forgives my sins.”*

You precious Jesus! what can be a sweeter theme for me to think of than Your exalted being—to conceive of You as the Son of God, who, with the golden compasses, struck out a circle from space, and fashioned this round world? To think of You as the God who holds this mighty orb upon Your shoulders, You who are the King of glory, before whom angels bow in lowliest homage, and yet to consider You as likewise bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh—

*“In ties of blood with sinners one;”—*

to conceive of You as the Son of Mary, born of a virgin, made flesh like ordinary men, clothed in garments of humanity like mortals of our feeble race; to picture You in all Your suffering life, to trace You in all Your passion, to view You in the agony of Gethsemane, enduring the bloody sweat, the sore amazement; and then to follow You to the pavement, Gabbatha, and thence up the steep side of Calvary, bearing the cross, braving the shame, when Your soul was made an offering for my sins, when You did die the reconciling death ‘midst horrors still to all but God unknown. Verily, here is a meditation for my soul, which must be “sweet” forever. I might, like the psalmist, say, “My heart is inditing a good matter,” the marginal reading is, “it boileth, or bubbleth up, while I speak of the things which I have made touching the King: my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.”

Christ! “My meditation of him shall be sweet.” Consider Christ in any way you please, and your meditation of Him will be sweet. Jesus may be compared to some of those lenses you have perhaps seen, which you may take up, and hold in one way, and you see one light, you hold them in another way, and you see another light, and whichever way you turn them, you will always see some precious sparkling of light, and some new colors starting up to your view. Ah! take Jesus for the theme of your meditation, sit down and consider Him, think of His relation to your own soul, and you will never get to the end of that one subject.

Think of His eternal relationship to you, recollect that the saints were from all condemnation free, in union with the Lamb, before the world was made. Think of your everlasting union with the person of JEHOVAH-JESUS before this planet was sent rolling through space, and recollect how your guilty soul was accounted spotless and clean even before you fell, and after that dire lapse, before you were restored, justification was imputed to you in the person of Jesus Christ. Think of your known and manifest relationship to Him since you have been called by His grace. Think how He has become your Brother, how His heart has beaten in sympathy with yours, how He has kissed you with the kisses of His mouth, and His love has been to you sweeter than wine.

Look back upon some happy, sunny spots in your history, where Jesus has whispered, “I am yours,” and you have said, “My Beloved is mine.” Think of some choice moments, when an angel has stooped from heaven, and taken you up on his wings, and carried you aloft, to sit in heavenly places where Jesus sits, that you might commune with Him.

Or think, if it shall better please you, of some pensive moments, when you have had what Paul sets so much store by—fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. Think of seasons when the sweat has rolled from your brow, almost as it did from that of Jesus—yet not the sweat of blood—when you have knelt down, and felt that you could die with Christ, even as you had risen with Him. And then, when you have exhausted that portion of the subject, think of your relationship to Christ which is to be developed in heaven. Imagine the hour to have come when you shall—

*“Greet the blood-besprinkled band,  
On the eternal shore;”*

and for ever range the—

*“Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood,  
Array’d in living green.”*

Picture to your mind that moment, when Jesus Christ shall salute you as “more than a conqueror,” and put a golden crown upon your head, more glittering than the stars. And think of that transporting hour when you will take that crown from off your brow, and climbing the steps of Jesus’ throne, you shall put it on His head, and crown Him once more Lord of your soul, as well as “Lord of all.” Ah! if you come and tell me you have no subjects for meditation, I will answer—Surely you have not tried to meditate, or you would say with the psalmist, “My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

Suppose you have done thinking of your Savior as He is specially related to you, consider Him next, as He is related to the wide world. Recollect what Jesus said to Nicodemus, “God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved,” and undoubtedly, He will one day save the world, for He who redeemed it by price and by power, will restore it, and renew it from the effects of the fall.

Oh, think of Jesus in this relationship as the Repairer of the breach, the Restorer of paths to dwell in! He will come again to our earth one day, and when He comes, He will find this world still defaced with the old curse upon it—the primeval curse of Eden. He will find plague, and pestilence, and war here still, but when He comes, He will bid men beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, war shall be obliterated from among the sciences, He shall give the Word, and there shall be a great company that will publish it, and “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.”

Jesus Christ shall come! Christians, be you ever watching and waiting for the second coming of your Lord Jesus Christ, and whilst you wait, meditate upon that coming. Think, O my soul, of that august day, when you shall see Him with all His glorious train, coming to call the world to judgment, and to avenge Himself upon His enemies! Think of all His triumphs when Satan shall be bound, death shall be crushed, and hell shall be conquered, and when He shall be saluted as the universal Monarch, “God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.” “My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

I believe that, even when we get to heaven, we shall want no subject for meditation there, except Jesus Christ. There will be little else we shall want of heaven besides Jesus Christ. He will be our bread, our food, our beauty, and our glorious dress. The atmosphere of heaven will be Christ, everything in heaven will be Christlike, yea, Christ is the heaven of His people. To be in Christ, and to be with Christ, is the essence of heaven—

*“Not all the harps above  
Can make a heavenly place,  
Should Christ His residence remove,  
Or but conceal His face.”*

**III.** Let me proceed to point out A VERY BLESSED RESULT, “My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

This depends very much upon the character of the one who meditates. I know some persons, who come into chapel, and who are very glad when they hear the minister pronounce the benediction, and dismiss the assembly, they are very glad when all is over, and they would far rather hear the parting doxology than the text. As for a meditation on Christ, instead of saying it is sweet they would say it is very dry. If they happen to hear an anecdote or a tale, they do not mind remembering that, but a meditation which should be entirely on Christ, would be dry enough to them, and they would be glad to hear it brought to a close.

Ah! that is because of the taste you have in your mouth. There is something wrong about your palate. You have your mouth out of taste through eating some of the world’s poor dainties, you have some of the powder of the apples of Sodom hanging on your lips, and that spoils the glorious flavor of your meditation on Jesus, in fact, it prevents your meditating on Christ at all. It is only a hearing of the meditation with your ears, not a receiving it with your hearts, but here the psalmist says, “My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

What a mercy, dear friends, that there is something sweet in this world for us! We need it, I am sure, for *as for most other things in the world, they are very, very bitter*. Go through the great laboratory of this world, and how many will be the cases that you will see marked bitter! There are perhaps more aloes put in our cup than any other ingredient. We have to take a great quantity of bitters in the course of our lives. What a mercy it is, then, that there is one thing that is sweet! “My meditation of *him* shall be sweet,” so sweet, beloved, that all the other bitters are quite swallowed up in its sweetness.

Have I not seen the widow when her husband has been called away, and he who was her strength, the stay and sustenance of her life, has been laid in the grave—have I not seen her hold up her hands and say, “Ah! though he is gone, still my Maker is my Husband, ‘The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away,’ blessed be His holy name”? What was the reason of her patient submission to the will of God? Because she had a sweet meditation to neutralize the bitterness of her reflections.

And do I not remember even now, seeing a man whose property had been washed away by the tide, and whose lands had been swallowed up, and become quicksands, instead of being any longer profitable to him? Beggared and bankrupt, with streaming eyes, he held up his hands, and repeated Habakkuk’s words, “Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.” Was it not because his meditation on Christ was so sweet, that it absorbed the bitterness of his trouble?

And oh! how many, when they have come to the dark waters of death, have found that surely their bitterness was past, for they perceived that death was swallowed up in victory, through their meditation upon Jesus Christ!

Now, if any of you have come here with your mouths out of taste, through affliction and trouble, if you have been saying with Jeremiah, “He hath filled me with bitterness, he hath made me drunken with wormwood. He hath also broken my teeth with gravel stones, he hath covered me with ashes,” take a little of this choice cordial, I can assure you that it is sweet, *Lacrymae Christi*, it is called. If you will take these tears of Jesus, and put them in your mouth, they will take away all the unpleasant flavor that is already there.

Or again, I bid you take this meditation upon Christ as a piece of scented stuff that was perfumed in heaven. It matters not what you have in your house, this shall make it redolent of Paradise—shall make it smell like those breezes that once blew through Eden’s garden, wafting the odor of flowers. Ah! there is nothing that can so console your spirits, and relieve all your distresses and troubles, as the feeling that now you can meditate on the person of Jesus Christ. “My meditation of him shall be sweet.”

But my dear hearers, shall I dismiss you without asking you whether you have ever had a true meditation upon our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? I do not like to preach a sermon without pressing it

home to the consciences of my hearers. I never like to bring you out a sword, and show it to you and say, "There is a sword, and it is sharp," I always like to make you feel that it is sharp by cutting you with it. Would to God that the sword of the Spirit might penetrate many of your hearts now! When I see so many gathered together on a weeknight, I am astonished. When I came to London, I did not fancy there would be half such a company on the Sabbath, much less on a weekday.

But wherefore have you come, my brethren? "What went ye out for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" What have you come out to see? A prophet? Nay, but I say that you have come to see something more than a prophet, you have come to see and hear somewhat of Jesus Christ, our Savior and our Lord. How many of you meditate on Christ?

Christian men and women, do not many of you live below your privileges? Are you not living without having choice moments of communion with your Savior? I think, if you had a free pass to heaven's palace, you would use it very often, if you might go there whenever you liked, and hold communion with some person whom you dearly loved, you would often be found there. But here is your blessed Lord Jesus, the King of heaven, and He gives you that which can admit you to intimate communion with Him, and yet you live without meditating upon His work, meditating upon His person, meditating upon His offices, and meditating upon His glory.

Christian men and women! I ask myself, and I ask you, is it not time we should begin to live nearer to God? What is to become of our churches? I do not know what to think of Christendom at large. As I travel through the country, and go here and there, I see the churches in a most deplorable state. True, the Gospel is preached in most places of worship, but it is preached as it might be by humblebees in pitchers—always with the same monotonous sound, and little or no good is done.

I fear that the fault lies in the pews as well as in the pulpits. If hearers are meditative, preachers must be meditative. It is very true that water does not run uphill, but when you hearers begin to meditate, and pray over the Word, your ministers will realize that you have gone beyond them, and they will themselves meditate, and give you the Gospel just as it comes fresh from their hearts, and it will be food for your souls.

And for the rest of you—you who have never meditated on Jesus Christ—what do you think will become of you when the bitterness of death's agony shall be in your mouth? When you taste death, how do you hope to destroy its ill flavor? Yet "that last, that bitterest cup which mortal man can taste" is but a dire foretaste of what is to follow. The first drops are bad enough, when you sip here the beginning of remorse on account of sin, but that future cup in hell—that terrible mixture which God deals out to the lost in the pit—what will you do when you have to drink that? What will you do when it will be your sad meditation that you rejected Jesus, that you despised His Gospel, that you scoffed at His Word? What will you do in that dread extremity?

You worldly business men, will your ledgers afford you a sweet meditation in hell? Ungodly lawyer, will it be sweet for you to meditate on your deeds and documents when you go there? Laboring man, will it be a sweet meditation to you to think that your wages were spent in drunkenness, or your Sabbaths profaned, and your soul neglected? And you, mere professor, will it be a sweet meditation to you to sit down, and think of your hypocrisy? And ah! you carnally minded men, who are indulging the flesh, pampering the appetite, and not serving the Lord, whose god is your belly, and whose glory is in your shame, will your career furnish a sweet meditation to you at the last?

Be assured of this, my hearers, your sins must be your meditation then, if Christ is not your meditation now. O wicked men! wicked men! let me say my closing word to you, and to all who know not God. I will give you a subject for your meditation tonight, it shall be a parable.

A certain tyrant sent for one of his subjects, and said to him, "What is your employment?" He answered, "I am a blacksmith." "Then go home," said he, "and make me a chain of such a length." He went home, it occupied him several months, and he had no wages all the while he was making the chain, only the trouble and pains of making it. Then he brought it to the monarch, who said, "Go back, and make it twice as long." He gave him nothing to do it with, but sent him away. Again he worked on, and



made it twice as long. He brought it up again, and the monarch said, "Go and make it longer still." Each time he brought it, there was nothing but the command to make it longer, and when he brought it up at last, the monarch said to his servants, "Take it, and bind him hand and foot with it, and cast him into a furnace of fire." There were his wages for making the chain.

Here is a lesson which will afford you a subject for meditation tonight, you who are servants of the devil. Your master is telling you to make a chain, some of you have been fifty years welding the links of that chain, and he says, "Go and make it longer still." Next Sunday morning, you will open that shop of yours, and put another link on, next Sunday night, you will be drunk, and put another link on, next Monday, you will do a dishonest action, and so you will keep on adding fresh links to the chain, and when you have lived twenty more years, the devil will say, "Add more links still!"

And then, at last, his command will be, "Take him, and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into a furnace of fire." "For the wages of sin is death." There is a subject for your meditation. I do not think it will be sweet, but if God makes it profitable, it will do you good. You must have strong medicines sometimes, when your disease is bad. God apply this message to your hearts! Amen.

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