

JERICHO CAPTURED

NO. 629

A SERMON
PREACHED AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON,
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ON BEHALF OF THE BAPTIST IRISH SOCIETY.

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into your hands Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. And you shall compass the city, all you men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shall you do six days.”
Joshua 6:2, 3.

I SEE many ministering brothers here. I think I shall follow the example of Martin Luther who observes that he frequently saw in the church at Wittenberg sundry learned doctors, and there usually sat Dr. Justus Jonas and others, of whom he said were infinitely greater and more wise than himself. “But,” said Martin, “I do not, therefore, alter my style of preaching—I do not preach to them, but I preach to those peasants who come in from the country, and to the citizens of Wittenberg, for then I am quite certain that if they can understand me, Dr. Justus Jonas and the learned divines can understand me too, if they like.” I shall, moreover, adopt what is said to have been Mr. Wesley’s exhortation to his preachers, namely, aim low. “There is more likelihood,” he says, “of hitting the men than when you fire high.” I may also frankly confess I am reduced to that precept by necessity since I have no capabilities of firing high, and must therefore shoot low. We shall take our text now, and try, if we can, to get something out of it which may be applicable to the present position of our Society, and see if we cannot draw some words and thoughts from it, which may strengthen, encourage, and nerve us for future action in this good work of God.

The Irish Society has to do with one of the citadels of Romanism, and it strikes me that there is a very evident parallel between our efforts and the work which Israel had to do against this city of Jericho. Jericho was a *strongly defended city* and *shut up*, so that none went in or came out. And Romanism seems to have accomplished this admirably. It shuts up its disciples so that they are scarcely accessible, and converts from it are few and far between. None, I was about to say, go in—very few, indeed, from us—and there are very few who ever come out again. Jericho was the *frontier* city. That being captured, the conquest of the rest of Canaan would be comparatively easy. And Popery is very much the frontier city, the Jericho of our warfare—it stands in the way of the evangelization of the world; it is the great impediment to the spread of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Let Jericho fall and Canaan may weep and howl, for her day has come. And let Rome be subdued—let Romanism be conquered and the world shall soon be at the feet of that Jesus whom it once despised. We are attacking, I think, in the Irish Society, a Jericho indeed, and we have been long at it; but it has been a very weary task, and the brothers have sometimes been apt to cry, “Let it be given up.” I will speak of this on the first, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth—perhaps on the sixth day of the week, to cry to these brethren—“Courage, go on still with your rams’ horns, bear your testimony, and carry the ark of the Lord round about this city, for the Lord has delivered it unto your hands; only be obedient and courageous, and abide His time, for your victory is absolutely sure.”

I shall divide what I may have to say this evening into these three parts. It strikes me that the narrative before us teaches us that God would have His people *work*, and *wait*, and *win*. And this is what we have to do today as they had of old.

I. First of all, God would have His people WORK.

A little upon that. We preach the doctrines of grace, and the doctrines of grace are always the best soil in which to grow good works. We daily insist upon it that works do not make a man live, but we equally insist upon it that spiritual life continually manifests itself by holy deeds. The soldiers of God’s army, after they had crossed the Jordan, were not to lie still in luxurious ease till Jericho’s walls should

crumble down by slow degrees; and though God determined to send Jericho to sudden destruction, yet His people were not to sit still upon some neighboring knoll, and expect the catastrophe—they were to labor, and Jericho would fall as the result of their toil. Their work is to consist of a daily procession; they are to go in cavalcade round about the wall; the priests are to exercise their functions. The ark must be carried upon men's shoulders; the men of war are to be there to defend the ark, to clear the way, and to follow also in the rear, to guard it against any sudden attack or any eruption from the city. They are to march thus the whole of the six days—not one day without its parade—not one day without obedience to the great Captain of the host. So, brethren, must it be with us. We are to win the world for Christ; this is our high ambition, and it shall be in Christ's name our grand attainment. But it must be by work, by testimony-bearing, by the preaching of the gospel, by continual prayer, by encompassing the city, perpetually serving God, and walking in the path of obedience.

Let us look at this work a little in connection with this narrative. You will observe that the work to be done by Israel was *universal*. There was a place for each one to occupy. The men of arms were to go round the city, and with them the priests were to march. Both the ecclesiastical and the military *castes* shall be represented here. They must neither of them sit still. It is an ill day for God's Church when we conceive that some few are to fight the Lord's battles, and that the rest of us may look on and criticize or applaud. You are, all of you, my brethren, called to serve God. You recognize this in your creed. You know yourselves to be priests, and you hate the lie which lifts some men into a priesthood, and puts the rest down as, "the laity," as though they were nothing better than stones. You feel that you are all called to bear the vessels of the Lord—that you are a "royal priesthood, a peculiar people," that you are all set apart for the service of God. But while this is our creed, I am afraid it is not our practice. How many take their seats in the pew, and when they have once made themselves comfortable, consider that their work is entirely wrapped up in listening to sermons or perhaps fumbling in their pockets for a solitary coin on collection occasions for the missionary society? It may be now and then—*now and then*—assisting in some enterprise of usefulness, but this only as an exception to the rule. We shall never see the church become strong and mighty till every single member of the church shall realize his responsibility. We must *all* encompass this city. Observe, when the Lord fed the multitude, He did not take *some* of the five loaves, or *one* of the fishes, but He took *all* the loaves, though they were barley, and both the fishes, though they were small; and He took care to break all, and to divide all among the people. Nothing of a stock-in-hand was kept in the larder, nothing was laid by, but all was used, and then, by the multiplying power of God, there was sufficient food for all. And so we must rummage the larder, we must bring out the barley cakes, we must bring forth the fishes—all must be devoted to the Master's cause; and in the use, ability will be multiplied; in the exercise, divine grace will be increased, and we shall yet be sufficient for the world's needs.

It has been said, and I think a little calculation will show you that it is correct, that if God were to enable the Christians in this huge city of ours to feel their responsibility, and if every individual Christian were made the means of the conversion of one other—starting with 50,000 Christians in London, (and let us hope there are as many believers as that—for it is a very small proportion of the professing multitude)—then, considering that there are three million souls in London, six years would be sufficient for the conversion of the whole by the simple agency of each disciple bringing in one of the stray sheep. This does not seem as if it were an impossible thing. Only divine grace is needed from on high. We must plead with God to bring down the blessing; and when the blessing comes on each man's labor, there certainly is no hindrance in the matter of time, or in the matter of exertion—for, with God's blessing—the conversion of a soul is not a matter that requires us to relinquish business, or that compels us to give up all our time to it. Some five minutes have been, by divine grace, a sufficient length of time, and half-a-dozen words have proven enough. Courage, my brethren; vast as the work is, if we all go to it, with God's blessing, it will be speedily accomplished. Our police served us all with a notice the other day, when the snow was on the ground, that we were each one to sweep before our own doors. It was very right that the passenger should go along the footpath without being smothered with the mud and snow commingled. Now what an expense it would have been to clean the streets of London by any other process! It would be difficult for a contractor to undertake it by the year, since he would scarcely know how

often he would be called to work. How could an army of men be kept ready to do the work which comes in so strange a fashion—sometimes but once in the year, and sometimes 50 times; but each man sweeps before his own door, and then it is all done early in the morning, and you walk the streets in comfort! Oh that we could but feel that we are to sweep before our own door! Oh that every man would build the dilapidated wall of Jerusalem before his own house! And when this is done, then shall God send victory to His hosts; but I fear it will not be till then. God would have His people work universally.

But next, He would have them work in His own *appointed way*. They are not to go in a scramble—in a boyish race round Jericho; there must be the soldiers in their troops, the priests in their array, and then again, the men of war to bring up the rear. God would have His people work according to His revealed will. We must be very tender and jealous here. Whatever may be the opinions about the alteration of the constitution of our missions, I do trust that we shall, all of us, when we come together, recognize the authority of God, and feel that we can only expect to have His guidance, His help, His blessing, when we walk according to the path which He has marked for us. If I go upon a tour, I do not expect to see certain sights which have been guaranteed to me by my friend, unless I agree to follow the little chart which he has mapped out for me. I cannot expect to have that sublime view of the Alps, if I refuse to climb a certain spot and stand there and view the glacier and the snow peak glittering in the sun. And I cannot expect to have God's blessing in my ministry and in the Sunday school class unless I keep to, "It is written," and in all things have a tender conscience, and am jealous of myself lest I err. How much more, then, in this greater work in which the whole Church is engaged! My brethren, let us see to it that in all things we compass this city of Jericho according to the divine order, for only so may we expect to see her walls come crumbling down.

Then, again, remember they encompassed the city *daily*. So does God call His Church to *work daily*. It is very easy for us, in a moment of excitement, to accomplish a great work; and the most of Christian work now-a-days is, I fear, merely spasmodic. We build chapels by a series of fits, we pay off missionary society debts by stupendous efforts, and we relapse again into debt and difficulties. I am afraid that as a denomination, we are not fond of working too tryingly. We know the value of ourselves, of our time, and of our money, and we are not apt to wear ourselves out by any excessive exertion. We have never, I believe, at any period since the unhappy days of Munster, been accused of an excess of zeal; we are rather to be accused of quarreling about points on which we differ, than of excessive love of sticking to the practical business of fighting the devil, and winning the world to Christ. But we must come to this, for mark you, if we are to conquer the world, we must each of us have our daily work, and keep to it, as God shall give us grace. The wheel must revolve again, and again, and again—it is that perpetual motion of industry which produces wealth, and it must be the ceaseless energy of our zeal which shall produce spiritual conquest. We have sharpened our swords, and fleshed them well; the younger men among us have had a brush with the foe, and we are beginning to think that, like our sober sires, we may be quiet; but it must not be so—we must agitate for all the truth of God, for all the doctrines we hold dear, and for the peculiar truths of God we hold as a denomination. We must keep on fighting for Christ, and fighting for Christ every day. We must sleep in our armor. We must begin to feel that the sword cleaves to our hand, and cannot be separated from it. We must give ourselves so entirely to the work to which God has called us, that wherever we are, whatever we may be engaged in, men may take knowledge of us as to what is our work and calling. In this Irish Society, there must be no standing still, no ceasing of the trumpet, no withdrawing of so much as a single ram's horn! The testimony must still be kept up, the witness-bearing must become more constant; we must preach, and teach, and pray, and work, and live, and if necessary, die daily until this Jericho is stormed.

Nor have we exhausted the metaphors with which our text supplies us, for surely we may add that God would have His people work *in faith*. We are told by Paul that, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down." It seems to me, that was a grand spectacle when the first man went forward step by step, and all the rest followed, the priests too, all of them confident that they were doing the best thing to make Jericho's ramparts fall to the ground. "Why," the fool might have said, "you are doing *nothing!* You are not loosening a single stone!" And at the end of the fifth or sixth day, I suppose it was suggested by many, "What is the good of it all?" But at least the most of those, who encompassed the city, were men of

faith—or else it could not have been said, “By faith the walls of Jericho fell down.” “Yes,” they seemed to say, “She will come down! She will come down! She stands like a rock, she has not moved, there is not a beam loosened, nor a cord broken—not a house in ruins, nor a tent that has fallen—not a single stone that has crumbled from her battlements, but she *shall* come down!” And on they went with steady tramp, and though they saw no corpses blocking up their pathway, though their arms were not red with blood, though they heard no shriek of those who flee, and could utter no shout of victory—yet they were as confident as they were when the walls actually began to rock, and the dust and smoke went up to heaven—and the shrieks of the slain made glad their ears. We must encompass this city in full faith. Brothers, is the preaching of the gospel a power? If you think it is not, never try it again. Is the gospel mighty to save? Will the gospel come out victorious? If you have any doubt, slink back to your cowardly repose, and let the man whom God sends never doubt. If you have achieved no successes, if after 50 years your trumpet of jubilee was exceedingly small, if after 50 years it was something like a ram’s horn that had not been bored, and could not make any noise at all, yet still go on; your time for shouting has not yet come, but your time for compassing the city is always present. Get on with it, get on with it, and God will not permit you to end till you have won the victory!

So let us notice once more under this head of work, they worked with *patience* and *courage*. God kept this people laboring in the presence of difficulty. They were compassing the city, taking their walks, but always with the formidable walls of Jericho close under their eyes. Surely they must have had these walls photographed on their eyes, and on their brains. “I shall know every stone in it,” says one. “Six times I have been round, no, 12 times, and the walls have not begun to rock—12 times! Seven is a perfect number, but we have gone beyond it, and yet the walls do not stir.” “Mark well her bulwarks, and count the towers on her.” These men were practical surveyors of Jericho; they could well understand the strength of the battlements, how many feet long the huge stones were at the corners, and how near the stars the loftiest towers were raised. They had the difficulty, I say, always before them, yet they kept on in simple faith, going round the city. Sometimes we get into the habit of shutting our eyes to difficulty; that will not do—Faith is not a fool. Faith does not shut her eyes to difficulty and then run headlong against a brick wall—never. Faith sees the difficulty, surveys it all, and then she says, “By my God will I leap over a wall.” And over the wall she goes! She never brings out the flaming accounts of, “signs of the times,” in her favor; she does not sit down, and say that evidently public sentiment is changing; she does not reckon upon any undercurrents that may be at work, which she is told by Mistress Gossip, really are doing great things, but she just looks at it, and does not mind how bad the thing is reported to be. If anybody can exaggerate the difficulty, faith is of the same noble mind as that famous warrior who, when told there were so many thousand soldiers against him, replied, “There are so many more to be killed.” Faith reckons—“So many more difficulties, so many more things to be overcome.” And even impossibilities she puts down as only so much burden to be cast upon Him, with whom nothing is impossible! She keeps Jericho’s walls before her. And I wish that we, dear friends, knew more than we do—the perfect hopelessness of our work of seeking to convert Ireland to the gospel—for there never was a task undertaken, I think, that had less hopefulness about it! I want you to be driven more and more to think, as far as the agency of man is concerned, that the thing is almost out of the category of the possible, and out of the category of the probable altogether! And when you can get to that point, and hear the voice, “Compass the city six days,” yet still have courage to go on, on, on—notwithstanding all the manifest difficulties—then, when God has taught you your nothingness, and brought you to feel that if victory is given, it is all His, and that divine omnipotence and sovereignty must wear the crown—then, I say, He will make the old rampart rock, and the harlot of the seven hills shall rue the day when Israel shouts, when her sons are slain, and God shall triumph right gloriously! God, however, would have His people work—that is the first point—we are agreed on that. Let us unite to carry it out.

“The sermon is not done” said one, when he came out of church—“It is all said, but it is not all done.” So let me close this head with saying that it is not *done*, it is only said. I have *said* that God would have His people work. Let us go and work. Let us begin tonight. If we have been lazy up to now—if there are any Issachars here like the strong ass crouching down between two burdens—just get up, Sir Issachar, and carry your burden! If there is any brother here who has been saying, “God will have

His own," let him mind what he is doing, or God will never have *him*, for God's own do not talk at that rate, and do not say that God's purposes are to be an excuse for man's indifference. Let him shake that off, for he cannot take such a plea as that before the judgment bar, he knows he cannot; therefore, do not let him try it here. Let us try and work well for God; you in your Sunday school classes, you in your preaching stations, you in your tract distributions, you here in England, you, my brethren, across the sea, and you in the Emerald Isle still compassing the city seven times.

II. We now come, in the second place, to consider that God would have His people WAIT.

The *delay* must have sorely tried the faith and patience of the Israelites. "Time flies," and time is very precious, these Israelites must have thought, "Why make us wait? If we have to tarry a long while before the walls of Jericho, why then, what a time it will take to conquer all the interior; and if we begin with a long delay, our enemies may gather courage, and before we have made our entrenchments behind which we may shield ourselves, the host will be upon us, and we shall be cut to pieces." It must have seemed to every merely thoughtful person in the camp of Israel, that it was imperative that the first city should be taken as speedily as possible, so that the people might be encouraged, and their enemies scattered; and it would give to those weary pilgrims some settled place to which they might retire with comfort, for they were, I suppose, still in their tents and longing for the time, when like the rest of the people of the land, they might dwell in their own houses. But they must keep quiet; and according to present appearances, they must remain so indefinitely. The people could not tell how long they were to tarry there. And just observe, my brethren, how very trying it must have been to them to wait. I do not know so much about the priests, for I am afraid priests are apt to be very contented with doing nothing, but not so with soldiers! There are a great many brothers who seem to be perfectly satisfied to rest at ease, but men of war do not generally seem to be of that temperament.

When I was in the military prison at Dublin, I observed a form of punishment there. Men were carrying large shot. A man took up a large shot, and carried it to the end of the yard, and he afterwards had to pick that shot up and bring it back again. I said, "How is it that you do not let them take all the shot to that end, and pile them up there?" The officer said, "We used to do so, but it was no use, for when the fellows had piled them up, they felt they were doing something; but now we make them carry the shot from one end of the yard to the other, and then back again, and back again, and they feel they have to work hard and do nothing. That is always miserable work to a soldier." Many of our soldiers at Sebastopol made bitter complaints at not being led to battle. And you will often hear young military men say that they hate the inactivity of peace—they need to be doing something. Now these men of war were kept for six days marching round and round the city, and they must have felt themselves to have been doing very little all that week. That is what I feel with regard to this Irish Society, and there are many of us, too, who, if we speak plainly, must say that we think that we have done very little, sorry little; we remember two or three things that have been successes; and two or three things that have been a very long way from success. Sometimes we have complained that there have been asylums provided for brothers sent yonder, and we have wondered why such brothers were sent at all. We have said, "Well, if this do-nothing affair is to keep on much longer, we must get others who will do something; for at present we are in this position, 'What is John doing?' 'Nothing.' 'What is Tom doing?' 'Helping John.'" We need to see something done, and therefore, it is hard to wait; but we must check ourselves. Our vehemence should urge us to use all proper means, though it should never be of that sort which would make us relax our efforts because we do not immediately achieve all the success which we desire. My brothers in Christ Jesus, though as men of war we would rather come to close quarters, and see more done, yet as men of God, we must keep to our posts of duty and learn how to wait.

Besides this, what rendered the waiting so very galling was, (what must have struck their reason, if it did not assail their faith), the utter *desperateness of the case*. How could they hope to win that city by simply going round and round? "Give me a good ladder," says one, "a rope ladder, and a couple of good irons at the end of it! Just let me hear the clank upon the top stone, and I am your man to lead the 'forlorn hope,' and there are 50,000 of us to follow, and we will soon have Judah's standard waving on the top, and make the sons of Jericho know what the sons of Abraham can do." But no; they must just march around the place till they have compassed the city 12 times. And so, brethren, there are certain spirits apt

to say, “Could not we do more by adopting these methods, and such other expedients?” See how certain of our brethren of another denomination feel that if they can but get a golden ladder—if they get the assistance of the *regium donum*—in this way, Jericho’s walls may be scaled; and there is the temptation to look about us, and ask for some assistance over and above the power which lies in the simple gospel—but we must not do it. Away with our methods and state-crafts, and policies, and suggestions of the crafty and cunning, and all the wisdom of the worldly! God forbid that we should glory but in the cross of Christ! With the simplicity of children, let us still believe that our Father’s means are the best; and though as soldiers, we cannot understand it, yet as children let us believe it, and keep on compassing the city, for Jericho’s walls must fall—as sure as God is in heaven.

And I think there is another thing which must have made it difficult, and it is this, that most probably the citizens of Jericho *insulted* them from the walls. I should think they kept far enough off to be out of arrowshot—but yet it is just possible that if they could not hear the taunt, “What are these feeble Jews doing,” yet they must have seen the tokens of impudence and impertinence which came from over the wall. This, mark you, is very galling to men of arms. We feel our hands fumbling at the hilts of our swords when provoked by the taunts and jeers of our enemies. “What have you done,” they say, “you Protestants, and Methodists, and Presbyterians, against the invincible bulwarks of Rome? Your paper bullets—what have they accomplished against the iron walls of Babylon?” We can hear their jeers. We know the sound of revelry and mirth. But what of this? Though, again, I say, as soldiers we might grow courageous, and dash rashly to the fight, or retire from it because there is nothing to be earned but dishonor—yet, as Christians, we will do what seems absurd to reason—but what is ever justifiable to faith. We will keep on in God’s own style; we will fight His battles by His methods, and we doubt not that though it does seem a strange, mad thing—to attempt to drive out the priests from Ireland by the simple proclamation of the truth of God—yet the day shall come when wisdom shall be justified of all her children.

Now, brethren, we know that God has His reasons for making us wait. It is *for His own glory*, we doubt not. We know that all things work together for good, and we believe it will be ultimately *for our profit*. When I have read some masterly tragic poem, and verse after verse has dwelt upon the horrible portion of the tale, did I wish it shortened? Would I have had the author leave out one of those dark verses? Not I! It is true when the poem ended with a shout of victory, and with the tramp of martial men through the city—when they returned in triumph, our heart leaped; we rejoiced when we came to that last stanza, but we wished the poem not shortened; we never wanted to have any of those verses blotted out. God is writing a great poem of human history, the subject is the victory of His truth, the destruction of anti-Christ. Let the history be long. Who wants it shortened? Who wants a brief story on so exceedingly interesting a subject as this, from so great an Author? No, let it drag on what some may call its weary length—we are sure that when we come to read it, as God will write it, we shall wish the story longer! We will not complain of its extent, for the result is we shall see more of God, and learn more of His mind. You want the millennium to come tomorrow, do you? May you get it, but I think it is probable you will not. I do not know how history appears to you who profess to understand it, but it does not read to me like a thing which is going to end just yet. I have always been told about the “signs of the times.” There always were such speculations—in 1766 and 1666—but the times of the end did not come, and I think they will not come now. It strikes me that we shall have something more elaborate than has ever come from the divine pen, and we may have to go not only through another canto, but through several more books before we shall come to the end of the story. One reason why I think the world’s present state will not wind up for the present is because all the “prophets” say it will, and they have always been a lying generation, from the first even to the last. I mean the prophets who make the business profitable—who only use Scripture as the Norwood Gypsy uses the cards—who shuffle texts to foretell fortunes for nations and men. We shall go on many a day yet. We may have to wait for another century, yes, another 20 centuries, perhaps, we cannot tell. But our business is still to remember that it shall be, after all, for our eternal benefit, and for God’s everlasting glory to keep on—to wait, wait, wait till we grow well-near weary, but the victory comes as surely, after all, as though it came at first.

While we are waiting, however, I think it is well to take a little comfort from what we *are* doing. We are waiting—that is the posture of this Irish Society; but we may console ourselves in it, as the men who were compassing Jericho might have done. “Well,” they could say, “we have not taken Jericho, but there is Rahab who has believed—there are a few saved—you can almost count them on your fingers, but they are very precious, and they are of the kind which should be esteemed very valuable.” There is Rahab, her name is illustrious, and her story, when it is told, has made many another Rahab seek and find a Savior. Not altogether without result was that attack on Jericho; and you have not lost your money, you who have subscribed to our Irish Society. There has been many a sinner saved, and many can tell of eternal love that has sought out with eyes of patience eternity’s choice jewels. They can tell of divine sovereignty that has made its crown to glisten and glitter forever with those precious things when found. You have had Rahab, yes, and you have had some who God has made useful to others. I can bear witness that there have come from Ireland some of the most earnest young men upon whom my eyes ever rested—good men and true—who love their Lord and Master, and whose highest delight is to speak well of His name. You may wait patiently on that reflection.

Moreover, the men of arms may say, “We do not take the city, it is true, but yet we keep our ground.” If we were to leave Jericho, we would be giving up our foothold in Canaan. And if we forsake Ireland, we might relinquish all hope of the Papacy falling; but we keep our foothold, at least we take our stand on the Rock; we have taken legal possession of the land, and though little, it is like the handful which William the Conqueror took up when he said, “I have taken the possession of England hereby.” And though you may amalgamate the management of this Society with another, you will not give up the distinctive aim and object of the Society, which is to keep a corner at least of the Emerald Isle for God and for His Christ.

And then, again, they can say, “We are bearing testimony.” Every man who looks over the wall of Jericho can see the ark of the Covenant. He can see the troopers of God with their swords upon their thighs; they see what they never saw before! Oh, worshippers of idols, you see today the ark of the true God borne round your walls! Oh you who bow to Baal, and adore Ashtaroah, the gods of wood and stone, the true God, the Mighty One, Jehovah, is come out against you, and the trumpets sound defiance to your power, while the warriors of God shout for your overthrow! You are bearing testimony against the sin of Ireland. If you do not succeed, the time has not yet come for the shaking off the dust of your feet, though meanwhile, you must preach the gospel for a testimony against them.

And one thing more, I think the men at arms felt, “We are on the spot when anything does occur.” As they went round the wall, they said, “It stands strong and stern, but it will yield, and then we are all ready when the breach is made.” You do not know what God may have in store for Ireland, or for any nation. According to the law which seems to regulate human society, there comes, every now and then, a great change. Who would have dreamed of the convulsions of 1848, that thrones would have been so unsettled, and that crowns would fall from monarchs’ heads? Such convulsions may come again. No, unless the course of nature is changed, *must* come. Then, we are ready; we stand watching for the gap. O God, in Your eternal providence be pleased now, even now, to send a convenient season, but if not, we will have the men ready when Your appointed time shall come. It was a grand thing when the earthquake came to shake the prison of Philippi, that there should be a Paul and a Silas there ready to preach the sermon to the trembling jailor and his household. And so when the earthquake comes to Ireland, as it will come, we shall have a Paul and a Silas there. We may have many such, I trust; the more the better, and all ready to stand up with, “Thus says the Lord!” Why what cannot God do? Has not He lately given you an installment of what He can accomplish in the revival which seemed to shake the north of Ireland? It is true it occurred in a part where Romanism is less strong—but the same power which can move the stolidity of Protestantism can stir the fiery zeal of what is genuine religion in its way—I mean genuine, though mistaken, because like Paul, they think they do God service. The hearty spirit of the Irishman with his popery may certainly be reached by divine omnipotence, as well as the soul of the Irishman of the north with his much colder creed. Let us have hope and go on compassing the city, not changing anything that is right, and not neglecting that which is according to Scripture, but waiting till the time shall come.

Now upon this, I think I shall say no more, except again to ask friends practically to carry it out. Let us try and wait—wait patiently—not wait idly, but continue your subscriptions, continue your prayers, continue your interest in the Society, for God would have you wait.

III. And, thirdly, God would have His people WIN.

I shall not say much about this. We will postpone that till the time when it occurs, and then we shall not need to have any sermons about it, but can all come together, and hold a meeting to praise and bless God. Only let us say that if the analogy is carried out according to the siege of Jericho, the victory is very *sure*, and when it comes forth, very *complete*. Nothing could be more so. It *may* be very *sudden* also, and it *will* be very glorious. But *we* shall get nothing by it, for when Jericho fell, nobody gained anything except to offer it unto the Lord; so we have to persevere in unselfish service, just toiling on for the Master, remembering that when success comes, it will be all His—every single atom of it—the glory will be to Him, and not to us, and He will take care to send the success in such a manner that nobody shall be able to say, “Glory be to the Irish Society.” Nobody shall be able to say, “Well done, Baptist denomination.” No single minister or evangelist shall be able to say, “Well done, myself.” The one shout that shall go up to heaven will be, “Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigns!”

I have thus spoken for the Society. I was asked to preach for it, and I am obliged, I think, to preach with a text that bears somewhat on the subject. I observe many sermons that are preached for Societies might just as well be preached any other day of the week before any other assembly on any other occasion. I do not know that is exactly what is needed, so if we have not dived deep into the doctrines of everlasting love, if we have not taken you to the Savior’s cross, and offered you the invitations of the gospel, if we have not done this, and 50,000 other things, there is a time for every purpose under heaven; and to everyone there is a season, and if we can keep the constituency of this Society working and waiting, and make it in this way to come to be among the winning, we shall rejoice exceedingly!

Brethren, let us begin to carry out the sermon now by our contributions; let us begin to do so by our prayers; let us act out the spirit of it by trying to tell others what the gospel is. Be this the motto of us all—

*“Now will I tell sinners round,
What a dear Savior I have found;
Point them to the redeeming blood,
And cry, ‘Behold the way to God.’”*

Yet I dare not sit down till I say to every soul here, and especially to you who cannot take an interest in God’s work because you are not saved—remember, we do not ask you to save and look after the souls of Irishmen. Your own soul must be the first concern; and the way of salvation is simply this—“Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” He it is who stands in the gap, and makes an atonement for sin. Take Christ to be your atonement, your justifier, your salvation, and your all; and believing in Him you are saved. This is your duty and must not be postponed any longer. You must begin the work at home. Enlist on the side of Israel by following Israel’s leader. Our heavenly Joshua is the Son of God, believe on Him and you shall find salvation through His blood, and acceptance before God through Christ. Then go out to be the means of saving others, and God speed you through His blessed Spirit. Amen.

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