

A GREATER THAN SOLOMON

NO. 1600

A SERMON
DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 6, 1881,
BY C. H. SPURGEON,
AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

*“Behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”
Luke 11:31.*

OUR first thought is that no mere man would have said this concerning himself unless he had been altogether eaten up with vanity, for Solomon was, among the Jews, the very ideal of greatness and wisdom. It would be an instance of the utmost self-conceit if any mere man were to say of himself—“A greater than Solomon is here.” Any person who was really greater and wiser than Solomon would be the last man to claim such pre-eminence. A wise man would never think it; a prudent man would never say it! The Lord Jesus Christ, if we regard Him as a mere *man*, would never have uttered such an expression, for a more modest, self-forgetting man was never found in our entire race. View it on the supposition that the Christ of Nazareth was a mere man, and I say that His whole conduct was totally different from the spirit which would have suggested an utterance like this—“A greater than Solomon is here.” When men compare themselves with one another it is not wise, and Christ was wise—it is not humble—and Christ was humble. He would not have spoken thus if there had not been cause and reason in His infinitely glorious nature. It was because the divinity within Him must speak out. For God to say that He is greater than all His creatures is no boast, for what are they in His sight? All worlds are but sparks from the anvil of His omnipotence! Space, time, eternity—all these are as *nothing* before Him, and for Him to compare or even to contrast Himself with one of His own creatures is supreme *condescension*, let Him word the comparison how He may!

It was the divine within our Lord which made Him say and not even then with a view to exalt Himself, but with a view to point the moral that He was trying to bring before the people—“A greater than Solomon is here.” He did as good as say, “The queen of the south came from a distance to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but *you* refuse to hear Me. She gave attention to a *man*, but you will not regard your *God*. You will not listen to the incarnate deity who tells you words of infinite, infallible wisdom.” Our Lord Jesus is aiming at His hearers' good and where the motive is so disinterested there remains no room for criticism. He tells them that He is greater than Solomon to convince them of the greatness of their crime in refusing to listen to the messages of love with which His lips were loaded. Foreigners come from afar to Solomon but, I, says Jesus, have come to your door and brought infinite wisdom into your very gates, and yet you refuse Me. Therefore the queen of the south shall rise up in judgment against you, for, in rejecting Me, you reject a greater than Solomon.

The second thought that comes to one's mind is this—notice the self-consciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knows *who* He is and *what* He is, and He is not lowly in spirit because He is ignorant of His own greatness. He was meek and lowly in heart—“*Servus servorum*,” as the Latins were known to call Him, “*Servant of servants*,” but all the while He knew that He was *Rex Regum*, or King of Kings. He takes a towel and He washes His disciples' feet and all the while He knows that He is their Master and their Lord. He associates with publicans, and harlots and dwells with the common people—and all the while He knows that He is the only-begotten of the Father! He sits as a child in the temple listening to and asking questions of the rabbis. He stands among His disciples as though He were one of them, conversing with the ignorant and foolish of the day, seeking their good—and He knows that He is not one of them—He knows that He has nothing to learn from them. He knows that He is able to teach senators and to instruct kings and philosophers, for He is greater than Solomon. He wears a peasant's garb and has nowhere to lay His head and He knows that whatever the lowliness of His condition, He is greater than Solomon! He lets us perceive that He knows it, that all may understand the love which

brought Him down so low. It is grand humility on Christ's part that He condescends to be our servant, our Savior—when He is so great that the greatest of men are as nothing before Him!

“He counted it not robbery to be equal with God.” Mark that. And yet “He made Himself of no reputation.” Some people do not know their own worth, and so when they stoop to a lowly office it is no stoop to their minds, for they do not know their own abilities. They do not know to what they are equal. But Christ *did* know—He knew all about His own deity, His own wisdom and greatness as man. I admire, therefore, the clear understanding which sparkles in His deep humiliation like a gem in a dark mine. He is not one who stoops down according to the old rhyme—

“As needs be must who cannot sit upright,”

but He is one who comes down wittingly from His throne of glory, marking each step and fully estimating the descent which He is making. The cost of our redemption was known to Him and He endured the cross, despising the shame. Watts well sings—

*“This was compassion like a God,
That when the Savior knew
The price of pardon was His blood,
His pity never withdrew.”*

Brethren, if our Savior, Himself, said that He was greater than Solomon, you and I must fully *believe* it, enthusiastically *admit* it, and prepare to *proclaim* it! If others will not acknowledge it, let us be the more prompt to confess it. If He Himself had to say, before they would acknowledge it, “A greater than Solomon is here,” let it not be necessary that the saying should be repeated, but let us all confess that He is, indeed, greater than Solomon! Let us go home with this resolve in our minds, that we will speak greater things of Christ than we have done! That we will try to love Him more, serve Him better and make Him in our own estimation and in the world's, greater than He has ever been. Oh for a glorious high throne to set Him on and a crown of stars to place upon His head! Oh to bring nations to His feet! I know my words cannot honor Him according to His merits—I wish they could. I am quite sure to fail in my own judgment when telling out His excellence. Indeed, I grow less and less satisfied with my thoughts and language concerning Him. He is too glorious for my feeble language to describe Him. If I could speak with the tongues of men and of angels, I could not speak worthily of Him. If I could borrow all the harmonies of heaven and enlist every harp and song of the glorified, yet were not the music sweet enough for His praises! Our glorious Redeemer is ever-blessed—let us bless Him! He is to be extolled above the highest heavens—let us sound forth His praises! Oh for a well-tuned harp! May the Spirit of God help both heart and lips to extol Him at this hour!

First, then, we shall try to draw a parallel between Jesus and Solomon. Secondly, we will break away from all comparisons and show where there cannot be any parallel between Christ and Solomon at all.

I. First, then, BETWEEN CHRIST AND SOLOMON there are some points of likeness. When the Savior Himself gives us a comparison, it is a clear proof that a likeness was originally intended by the Holy Spirit, and therefore we may say without hesitation that Solomon was meant to be a *type* of Christ. I am not going into detail, nor am I about to refine upon small matters, but I shall give you five points in which Solomon was conspicuously like Christ, and in which our Lord was greater than Solomon. O for help in the great task before me!

And, first, in wisdom. Whenever you talked about Solomon to a Jew, his eyes began to flash with exultation. His blood leaped in his veins with national pride. Solomon—that name brought to mind the proudest time of David's dynasty, the age of gold! Solomon, the magnificent, why, surely, his name crowns Jewish history with glory and the brightest beam of that glory is his wisdom! In the east, and I think I may say in the west, it still remains a proverb, “To be as wise as Solomon.” No modern philosopher or learned monarch has ever divided the fame of the Son of David, whose name abides as the synonym of wisdom. Of no man since could it be said as of him, “And all the kings of the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, that God had put in his heart.” He intermeddled with all knowledge and was a master in all sciences. He was a naturalist—“And he spoke of trees, from the cedar trees that are in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springs out of the wall. He spoke, also, of beasts and of fowl and of creeping things and of fishes.” He was an engineer and architect, for he wrote, “I made great works. I built houses. I planted vineyards—I made gardens and orchards and I planted trees in

them of all kind of fruits. I made pools of water, to water the wood that brings forth trees.” He was one who understood the science of government—politician of the highest order. He was everything; in fact God gave Him wisdom and largeness of heart, says the Scripture, like the sand of the sea. “And Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt, for he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol. And his fame was in all nations round about.”

Yes, but our Savior knows infinitely more than Solomon! I want you, tonight, to come to Him just as the Queen of Sheba came to Solomon, only for weightier reasons. You do not need to learn anything concerning architecture or navigation, agriculture or anatomy. You only need to know how you shall be built up a spiritual house and how you shall cross those dangerous seas which lie between this land and the Celestial City! Well, you may come to Jesus and He will teach you all that you need to know, for all wisdom is in Christ! Our divine Savior knows things past and present and future—the secrets of God are with Him. He knows the inmost heart of God, for no one knows the Father except the Son, and He to whom the Son shall reveal Him. To Him it is given to take the book of prophetic decree and loose the seven seals! Come, then, to Christ Jesus if you want to know the mind of God, for it is written that He “is made unto us wisdom.” Solomon might have wisdom, but he could not *be* wisdom to others. Christ Jesus is that to the fullest! In the multifarious knowledge which He possesses—the universal knowledge which is stored up in Him—there is enough for your guidance and instruction even to the end of life, however intricate and overshadowed your path may be.

Solomon proved his wisdom, in part, by his remarkable inventions. We cannot tell what Solomon did *not* know. At any rate, no man knows, at this present moment, how those huge stones which have lately been discovered—which were the basis of the ascent by which Solomon went up to the house of the Lord—were ever put into their places. Many of the stones of Solomon’s masonry are so enormous that scarcely could any modern machinery move them! And without the slightest cement they are put together so exactly that the blade of a knife could not be inserted between them! It is marvelous how the thing was done. How such great stones were brought from their original bed in the quarry—how the whole building of the temple was executed—nobody knows. The castings in brass and silver are scarcely less remarkable. No doubt many inventions have passed away from the knowledge of modern times, inventions as remarkable as those of our own age. We are a set of savages that are beginning to learn something, but Solomon knew and invented things which we shall, perhaps, rediscover in 500 years time. By vehement exertion this boastful 19th Century, wretched century as it is, will crawl towards the wisdom which Solomon possessed ages ago!

Yet is Jesus greater than Solomon! As for inventions, Solomon is no inventor at all compared with Him who said, “Deliver him from going down into the pit, for I have found a ransom.” O Savior, did You find out the way of our salvation? Did You bring into the world and carry out and execute the way by which hell should be closed, and heaven, once barred, should be set wide open? Then, indeed, are You wiser than Solomon! You are the deviser of salvation, the architect of the Church, the author and finisher of our faith! Solomon has left us some very valuable books—the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the matchless Song. But, oh, the words of Solomon fall far short of the words of Jesus Christ, for *they* are spirit and life! The power of the words of Jesus is infinitely greater than all the deep sayings of the Sage. Proverbial wisdom cannot match His sayings, nor can “The Preacher” rival His sermons! Even the divine Song, itself, would remain without a meaning—an allegory never to be explained—if it were not that Christ, Himself, is the sum and substance of it! Solomon may sing of Christ, but Christ is the substance of the song! He is greater than Solomon in His teachings, for His wisdom is from above, and leads men up to heaven! Blessed are they that sit at His feet!

Again, Solomon showed his wisdom in difficult judgments. You know how he settled the question between the two women concerning the child—many other puzzles Solomon solved and many other knots Solomon was able to untie. He was a great ruler and governor—a man wise in politics, in social economy and in commerce—wise in all human respects. But a greater than Solomon is present where Christ is! There is no difficulty which Christ cannot remove, no knot which He cannot untie, and no question which He cannot answer. You may bring your hard questions to Him, and He will answer them! And if you have any difficulty on your heart tonight, do but resort to the Lord Jesus Christ in

prayer and search His Word, and you shall hear a voice as from the sacred oracle which shall lead you in the path of safety. My point at this time, especially as we are coming to the Communion Table, is this—I want you that love the Lord Jesus Christ to believe in His infinite wisdom and come to Him for direction. I fear that when you are in trouble, you half suppose that the great keeper of Israel must have made a mistake. You get into such an intricate path that you say, “Surely my Shepherd has not guided me right.” Never think so! When you are poor and needy, still say, “This, my poverty, was ordained by a greater than Solomon.” What if you seem to be deprived of every comfort and you are brought into a strange and solitary way where you find no city to dwell in? Yet a guide is near, and that guide is not foolish—a greater than Solomon is here!

I think I look, tonight, into a great furnace. It is so fierce that I cannot bear to gaze into its terrible blaze for fear my eyes should utterly fail me and lose the power of sight through the glare of that tremendous flame. I turn aside, for the fury of its flame overpowers me. But when I am strengthened to look again, I see ingots of silver refining in the white heat and I note that the heat is tempered to the last degree of nicety. I watch the process to the end and I say, as I behold those ingots brought out all clear and pure, refined from all dross and ready for the heavenly treasury, “Behold, a greater than Solomon was in that furnace work!” So you will find it, O sufferer! Infinite wisdom is in your lot. Come, poor c, do not begin to interfere with your Savior’s better judgment, but let Him order all things. Do not let your little, “Know,” ever rise up against the great knowledge of your dear Redeemer! Think of this when you wade in deep waters and comfortably whisper to yourself—“A greater than Solomon is here.”

I have not time to enlarge, and therefore I would have you notice, next, that our Lord Jesus Christ is greater than Solomon in wealth. This was one of the things for which Solomon was noted. He had great treasures—he “made gold to be as stones, and as for silver it was little accounted of,” so rich did he become! He had multitudes of servants. I think He had 60,000 hewers in the mountains hewing out stones and wood, so numerous were the workmen he employed. His court was magnificent to the last degree. When you read of the food that was prepared to feed the court and of the stately way in which everything was arranged from the stables of the horses upwards to the ivory throne, you feel, like the queen of Sheba, utterly astonished, and say, “The half was not told me!” But, oh, when you consider all the wealth of Solomon, what poor stuff it is compared with the riches that are treasured up in Christ Jesus! Beloved, He who died upon the cross and was indebted to a friend for a grave—He who was stripped, even, to the last rag before He died—He who possessed no wealth but that of sorrow and sympathy, yet had about Him the power to make many rich and He has made multitudes rich—rich to all the intents of everlasting bliss! And, therefore, He must be rich Himself! Is He not rich who enriches millions? Why, our Lord Jesus Christ, even by a word, comforted those that were bowed down. When He stretched out His hand He healed the sick with a touch! There was a wealth about His every movement!

He was a full man; full of all that man could desire to be full of! And now, seeing that He has died and risen again, there is in Him a wealth of *pardon*ing love, a wealth of *saving* power, a wealth of *intercessory* might before the Father’s throne—a wealth of all things by which He enriches the sons of men and shall enrich them to all eternity! I want this truth of God to come home to you! I want you to recognize the riches of Christ, you that are His people and, in addition, to remember the truth of our hymn—

**“Since Christ is rich can I be poor?
What can I need besides?”**

I wish we could learn to reckon what we are by what Christ is. An old man said, “I am very old. I have lost my only son. I am penniless, and worst of all, I am blind. But,” he added, “This does not matter, for *Christ* is not infirm! Christ is not aged! Christ has all riches, and He is not blind! And Christ is *mine* and I have all things in Him.” Could you not get hold of that somehow, brothers and sisters? Will not the Holy Spirit teach you the art of appropriating the Lord Jesus and all that He is and has? If Christ is your representative, why then, you are rich in Him! Go to Him to be enriched! Suppose I were to meet a woman and I knew her husband to be a very wealthy man and that he loved her very much? And suppose she were to say to me, “I am dreadfully poor. I do not know where to get raiment and food?” “Oh,” I would think, “this woman is out of her mind! If she has such a husband, surely she has only to go to him for all that she needs! And what if nothing is invested in her name? It is in *his* name and they are *one* and he will deny her nothing.” I would say to her, “My good woman, you must not talk in that fash-

ion, or I will tell your husband on you.” Well, I think that I shall have to say the same to you who are so very poor and cast down and yet are married to Jesus Christ! I shall have to tell your Husband on you, that you bring such complaints against Him, for all things are yours, for you are Christ’s and Christ is God’s! I say to you, “lift up the hands that hang down and confirm the feeble knees”—use the knees of prayer and the hands of faith, and your estate will well content you. Do not think that you are married to Rehoboam who will beat you with scorpions, for you are joined to a greater than Solomon! Do not fancy that your heavenly Bridegroom is a beggar—all the wealth of eternity and infinity is His—how can you say that you are poor while all that He has is yours?

Now thirdly, but very briefly. There was one point about Solomon in which every Israelite rejoiced, namely, that he was the prince of peace. His name signifies peace. His father, David, was a great warrior, but Solomon had not to carry on war. His power was such that no one dared to venture upon a conflict with so great and potent a monarch. Every man throughout Israel sat under his vine and fig tree and no man was afraid. No trumpet of invader was heard in the land. Those were halcyon days for Israel when Solomon reigned! Ah, but in that matter, too, a greater than Solomon is here—for Solomon could not give his subjects peace of *mind*. He could not bestow upon them rest of *heart*. He could not ease them of their burden of *guilt*, or draw the arrow of conviction from their breast and heal its smart. But I preach to you tonight that blessed Man of Sorrows who has worked out our redemption and who is greater than Solomon in His peace-giving power! Oh, come and trust Him! Then shall your “peace be as a river and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.” Am I addressing one of God’s people who is sorely troubled, tumbled up and down in his thoughts? Brother or sister, do not think that you must wait a week or two before you can recover your peace! You can become restful in a *moment*, for, “He *is* our peace”—even Jesus, Himself, and He alone! And, oh, if you will but take Him at once, laying hold upon Him by the hands of faith as your Savior, this man shall be your peace even when the Assyrian shall come into the land!

There is no peace like the peace which Jesus gives—it is like a river—deep, profound, renewed, always flowing, overflowing, increasing and widening into an ocean of bliss. “The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your heart and mind, through Jesus Christ.” Oh, come to Him! Come to Him at this moment! Do not remain an hour away from your Noah, or rest, for with Him in the ark, your weary wings shall be tired no longer! You shall be safe and restful the moment you return to Him! The fruit of the Spirit is JOY. I want you to get that joy and to enter into this peace! Blessed combination, joy and peace! Peace, peace—there is music in the very word! Get it from Him who is the Word and whose voice can still a storm into a calm! A greater than Solomon is here to give you that peace! Beat the sword of your inward warfare into the plow-share of holy service. No longer sound an alarm, but blow the trumpet of peace in this the day of peace.

A fourth thing for which Solomon was noted was his great works. Solomon built the temple which was one of the Seven Wonders of the World in its time. A very marvelous building it must have been, but I will not stop to describe it, for time fails us. In addition to this he erected for himself palaces, constructed fortifications and made aqueducts and great pools to bring streams from the mountains to the various towns. He also founded Palmyra and Baalbec—those cities of the desert—to facilitate his commerce with India, Arabia and other remote regions. He was a marvelous man! Earth has not seen his like. And yet a greater than Solomon is here, for Christ has brought the living water from the throne of God right down to thirsty men, being Himself the eternal aqueduct through which the heavenly current streams! Christ has built fortresses and munitions of defense behind which His children stand secure against the wrath of hell! And He has founded and is daily finishing a wondrous temple, His church, of which His people are the living stones, fashioned, polished, rendered beautiful—a temple which God, Himself, shall inhabit, for He “dwells not in temples made with hands, that is to say, of this building”—but He dwells in a temple which He, Himself, does build, of which Christ is architect and builder, foundation, and chief cornerstone! And Jesus builds for eternity, an *everlasting* temple and, when all visible things pass away and the very ruins of Solomon’s temple and Solomon’s aqueduct are scarcely to be discerned, what a sight will be seen in that New Jerusalem!

The 12 courses of its foundations are of precious stones! Its walls dressed with rare diamonds! Its streets are paved with gold and its glory surpasses that of the sun! I am but talking figures, poor figures,

too, for the glory of the City of God is *spiritual* and where shall I find words with which to depict it? There, where the Lamb, Himself, is the light and the Lord God, Himself, does dwell there—the whole edifice, the entire New Jerusalem—shall be to the praise and the glory of His grace who gave Jesus Christ to be the builder of the house of His glory, of which I hope we shall form a part forever and ever! Now, if Christ does such great works, I want you to come to Him that He may work in you the work of God! That is the point. Come and trust Him at once! Trust Him to build you up. Come and trust Him to bring the living water to your lips. Come and trust Him to make you a temple of the living God! Come, dear child of God, if you have great works to do, come and ask for the power of Christ with which to perform them! Come, you that would leave some memorial to the honor of the divine name—come to Him to teach and strengthen you! He is the wise master builder—come and be workers together with Christ. Baptize your weakness into His infinite strength and you shall be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. God help you to do it!

Once more I draw the parallel upon the fifth point and I have done with it. Solomon was great as to dominion. The kingdom of the Jews was never anything like the size before or after that Solomon made it. It appears to have extended from the river of Egypt right across the wilderness far up to the Persian Gulf. We can scarcely tell how far Solomon's dominions reached. They are said to have been "from sea to sea and from the river even unto the ends of the earth." By one mode or another, he managed to bring various kings into subjection to him and he was the greatest monarch that ever swayed the scepter of Judah. But it is now all gone. Poor, feeble Rehoboam, dropped from his foolish hands the reins his father held. The kingdom was torn in pieces, the tributary princes found their liberty and the palmy days of Israel were over. On the contrary, our Lord Jesus Christ, at this moment has dominion over all things! God has set Him over all the works of His hands. Yes, shout it out among the heathen that the Lord reigns! The feet that were nailed to the tree are set upon the necks of His enemies! The hands that bore the nails sway, at this moment, the scepter of all worlds—Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords! Hallelujah! Let universal sovereignty be ascribed to the Son of Man—to Him who was "despised and rejected of men, a Man of Sorrows and acquainted with grief." Tell all, you saints, for your own comfort! The Lord reigns! Let the earth rejoice! Let the multitude of the isles be glad! Everything that happens in providence is still under His sway, and the time is coming when a moral and spiritual kingdom will be set up by Him which shall encompass the whole world!

It does not look like it, does it? All these centuries have passed away and little progress has been made. Ah, but He comes—and when He comes, or *before* He comes He shall overturn, overturn, overturn—for it is His right and God will give it to Him. And, as surely as God lives, unto Him shall every man bow the knee, "and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Do not be afraid! Do not measure difficulties, much less tremble at them! What is faith made for but to believe that which seems impossible? To expect universal dominion for Christ when everything goes well is but the expectation of reason! But to expect it when everything goes ill is the triumph of Abrahamic confidence! Look upon the Great Mountain and say, "Who are you, O Great Mountain? Before the true Zerubbabel you shall become a plain." In the blackest midnight, when the ebony darkness stands thick and hard as granite before you, believe that at the mystic touch of Christ, the whole of it shall pass away—and at the brightness of His rising the eternal light shall dawn, never to be quenched! This is to act the part of a believer and I ask you to act that part and believe to the fullest in Christ the omnipotent! Why this stunted faith in an almighty arm? What a fidget we are in and what a worry seizes us if a little delay arises! Everything has to be done in the next 10 minutes or we count our Lord to be late! Is this part of wisdom? The Eternal has infinite leisure—who are we that we should hasten Him?—

*"His purposes will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour."*

A day is long to us, but a thousand years to Him are but as the twinkling of a star! Oh, rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him, for the time shall come when the God of Israel shall put to rout His adversaries and the Christ of the cross shall be the Christ of the crown! We shall one day hear it said; the great Shepherd reigns and His unsuffering kingdom now has come. Then rocks and hills and vales and islands of the sea shall all be vocal with the one song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor and glory and power and dominion and might forever and ever!"

Thus I have tried to draw the parallel, but I pray you to see the Lord Jesus for yourself and know whether I have spoken the truth about Him. You have heard the report. Now, like the queen of Sheba, go and see for yourself! Get to Christ! As to His dominion—come under His sway and acknowledge His scepter! Go and trust your King! Love your King! Praise your King! Delight in your King! How courtiers delight to be summoned to court! How glad they are to see the queen's face. How pleased they are if she gives them but a kindly word! Surely, their fortune is made, or at least their hopes are raised and their spirits lifted up. Shall we not sun ourselves in the presence of the blessed and only potentate? Let us come into the presence of our King tonight, or else let us sit here and weep! Let us come to His table to feed upon Him. Let us live on His word. Let us delight in His love and we shall surely say, "A greater than Solomon is here."

II. I shall not detain you longer than a minute or two while I remark that we must rise beyond all parallels if we would reach the height of this great argument, for BETWEEN CHRIST AND SOLOMON THERE IS MUCH MORE CONTRAST THAN COMPARISON—much more difference than likeness. In His nature, the Lord Jesus is greater than Solomon. Alas, poor Solomon! The strongest man that ever lived, namely Samson, was the weakest of men—and the wisest man that ever lived was, perhaps, the greatest—certainly the most conspicuous fool! How different is our Lord! There is no infirmity in Christ, no folly in the incarnate God. The backsliding of Solomon finds no parallel in Jesus, in whom the prince of this world found nothing, though he searched Him through and through.

Our Lord is greater than Solomon because He is not mere man. He is Man, *perfect* Man, Man to the utmost of manhood, sin excepted! But still, He is more and infinitely more, than man. "In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." He is God, Himself. "The Word was God." God dwells in Him and He, Himself, is God! As in nature He was infinitely superior to Solomon and not to be compared with him for a moment, so was He in character. Look at Christ and Solomon for a minute as to real greatness of character and you can hardly see Solomon with a microscope—while Christ rises grandly before you, growing every moment till He fills the whole horizon of your admiration! Principally let me note the point of self-sacrifice. Jesus lived entirely for other people. He had never a *thought* about Himself. Solomon was, to a great extent, wise unto himself, rich unto himself, strong unto himself, and you see in those great palaces and in all their arrangements that he seeks his own pleasure, honor and emolument. And, alas, that seeking of pleasure leads him into *sin*, and that sin into a still greater one! Solomon, wonderful as he is, only compels you to admire him for his greatness, but you cannot admire him for his *goodness*. You see nothing that makes you *love* him—you rather tremble before him than feel gladdened by him.

Oh, but look at Christ! He does not have a thought for Himself. He lives for others! How grandly magnificent He is in disinterested love. "He loved His church and gave Himself for it." He pours out His heart's blood for the good of men, and therefore dear friends, at this moment our blessed Lord is infinitely superior to Solomon in His influence. Solomon has little or no influence today. Even in his own time he never commanded the influence that Christ had in His deepest humiliation! I do not hear of any that were willing to die for Solomon—certainly nobody would do so now. But how perpetually is enthusiasm kindled in ten thousand breasts for Christ! They say that if there were stakes again in Smithfield we should not find men to burn on them for Christ. I tell you, it is not so! The Lord Jesus Christ has, at this moment, a remnant according to the election of His grace who would fling themselves into a pit of fire for Him—and rejoice to do it! "Who shall separate us?"—even us poor pigmies—"from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord?" "Oh," says one, "I do not think I could suffer martyrdom!" You are not yet called to do so, my brother, and God does not give you strength to do it before the need arises. But you will have strength enough if ever it comes your lot to die for Jesus. Did you hear of the martyr who the night before he was to be burnt, sat opposite the fire, and taking his shoes off, he held his feet close to the flame till he began to feel the burning of them? He drew them back and said, "I see God does not give me power to bear such suffering as I put upon myself, but I have, none the less, no doubt," he said, "that I shall very well stand the stake tomorrow morning, and burn quick to the death for Christ without starting back." And so he did, for he was noticed never to stir at all while the flames were consuming him.

There is a great deal of difference between your strength, today, and what your strength would be if you were called to some tremendous work or suffering. My Lord and Master let me tell you, wakes more enthusiasm in human breasts at this moment than any other name in the universe! Napoleon once said, "I founded a kingdom upon force and it will pass away. But Christ founded a kingdom upon love and it will last forever and ever." And so it will. Blot out the name of Christ from the hearts of His people? Strike the sun from the firmament and quench the stars! And when you have achieved that *easy* task, yet have you not *begun* to remove the glory of the indwelling Christ from the hearts of His people! Some of us delight to think that we bear in our body the marks of the Lord Jesus. "Where?" asks one. I answer, it is all over us. We have been buried into His name and we belong to Him in spirit, soul and body. That watermark which denotes that we are His can never be taken out of us! We are dead with Him, wherein we were buried with Him and are risen again with Him! And there is nothing at this moment that stirs our soul like the name of Jesus! Speak for yourselves! Is it not so? Have you never heard of one who lay dying, his mind wandering and his wife said to him, "My Dear, do you not know me?" He shook his head and they brought near his favorite child. "Do you not know me?" He shook his head. One whispered, "Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ?" and he said, "He is all my salvation and all my desire." Oh, blessed name! Blessed name!

Some years ago I was away from this place for a little rest, and I was thinking to myself, "Now I wonder whether I really respond to the power of the gospel as I should like to do? I will go and hear a sermon and see." I would like to sit down with you in the pews, sometimes, and hear somebody else preach—not everybody, mark you—for when I hear a good many, I want to be doing it myself. I get tired of them if they do not glow and burn. But that morning I thought I would drop into a place of worship such as there might be in the little town. A poor, plain man, a countryman, began preaching about Jesus Christ. He praised my Master in very humble language, but he praised Him most sincerely. Oh, and the tears began to flow. I soon laid the dust all round me where I sat, and I thought, "Bless the Lord! I do love Him!" It only needs somebody else to play the harp instead of me, and my soul is ready to dance to the heavenly tune! Only let the music be Christ's sweet, dear, precious name, and my heart leaps at the sound! Oh, my brothers and sisters, sound out the praises of Jesus Christ! Sound out that precious name! There is none like it under heaven to stir my heart! I hope you can all say the same. I know you can if you love Him, for all renewed hearts are enamored of the sweet Lord Jesus. "A greater than Solomon is here." Solomon has no power over your hearts, but Jesus has. His influence is infinitely greater; His power to bless is infinitely greater; and so let us magnify and adore Him with all our hearts.

Oh, that all loved Him! Alas that so many do not! What strange monsters! Why, if you do not love Christ, what are you? You hearts of stone, will you not break? If His dying love does not break them, what will? If you cannot see the beauties of Jesus, what *can* you see? You blind bats! O you that know not the music of His name, you are deaf! O you that do not rejoice in Him, you are dead! What are you, that you are spared through the pleading of His love, and yet do not love Him? God have mercy upon you, and bring you to delight yourselves in Christ and trust Him!

As for us who *do* trust Him, we mean to love Him and delight in Him more and more, world without end! Amen.

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