

“BEAUTIFUL FOREVER”

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**A SERMON
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DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*“He will beautify the meek with salvation.”
Psalm 149:4*

I FIND that the text bears other interpretations. I will mention two of them. It might be read—and I think correctly—“He will beautify the afflicted with deliverance.” Let me speak about that meaning first of all, for it is worth retaining. God’s own people are frequently made to mourn. Their Lord takes pleasure in them, but yet, for their good He often sends them grief. At times they are distressed and their enemies appear to triumph over them. They are brought into sore straits, and burdened and surrounded with difficulties, but though “many are the afflictions of the righteous,” “the LORD delivereth him out of them all. He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.”

The day will come, dear friend, when your cheeks, all fouled with weeping, shall be washed and made fair to look upon. Your eyes may be weary with waiting and watching, and red with weeping, but that weeping shall endure only for a night. “Joy cometh in the morning,” as surely as the morning comes after the night.

Bear your sorrows bravely, for they are appointed of your Heavenly Father in supreme wisdom. Bear them joyfully, for they will bring forth to you the peaceable fruits of righteousness. You shall not be losers by your trials, you shall be gainers, and when your face has been washed by the rolling billows of the briny wave, you shall lift up your head and your countenance shall seem more beautiful than if it had not been thus submerged.

You shall come up from your sorrows, like the sheep from the washing in the days of the shearing. You shall be made white as snow through these very trials which now so sorely distress you. Wherefore, I say, anticipate the joys of the future and let not the grief of the present quite swallow you up. Think not so much of the stormy sea that you traverse today as of the sunny shore upon which you soon shall stand, never to be tempest-tossed again.

There may be at this moment but a step between you and heaven—you cannot tell how soon you may get away from all that worries you—you do not know how near you have come to the gate of pearl. Oh, did you know it—did you know that within a month your hands shall strike the harps of joy and wave the palm branches of victory, and the pure white raiment shall be about you, and the immortal crown shall deck your brow—did you but know all this, you would very patiently plod on through the few weeks of trial that would remain to you here!

Remember that you are going home and that your home of bliss is eternal. Wherefore, comfort one another with the words of our text as they are thus rendered—“He shall beautify the afflicted with deliverance.” You shall come again rejoicing, for “the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.”

Another rendering of our text which also seems to be accurate, is this—“He will beautify the meek with victory.” This is a very wonderful expression. In this world, as a rule, it is not the meek who appear to get the victory—they are trodden on and trodden down, and a meek-spirited man is often much despised among his fellow men.

Hence, when Moses writes of himself, “The man Moses was very meek,” I do not see the least reason why he should not have written it, though many think it would have been impossible. But indeed, in that age and now also, it is not self-praise but rather self-humiliation to confess that you are meek. When a man is not willing to go to war when others clamor for it, when the sacred honor of this dignified country needs that we dip our spears in blood, it is with a sneer that a man is called “white-livered and meek.”

And if he, himself, were to say, “Yes, I am meek,” there would be no pride in that confession, for the most of men would count that he was confessing to a weakness. Therefore I think that Moses might deliberately write, “The man Moses was very meek,” for nobody would accord him any honor for such a declaration in that age and not very much, even, in this age, for men have not yet come to value meekness as God values it, but still look upon it as a kind of cowardice.

They like a man who goes about the world with his fist always doubled ready to knock down everybody who dares to think that the braggart is not the king of all his fellows. They admire the great hero who will not have anything said or done against his superlative dignity and although that pride is earthly, sensual, devilish, yet there are many who admire it, and when it goes by the name of “British pluck,” then, probably, “a mean-spirited man” is the mildest appellation that they give to one who is really meek.

Now, the Lord, seeing that those who are truly meek would have to battle for it, and would be scouted, and even cast out by their fellows, has given them this gracious promise, that, “He will beautify the meek with victory.” The victory of the man who gives a kiss for a blow is not the thing desired by most men today, but the Lord will beautify the meek with victory.

The turning of the cheek, instead of rendering rafting for railing, does not appear to give the promise of victory, but the promise is true, “He will beautify the meek with victory.” In the day when our King’s white horse shall be brought forth from its stable and the meekest of all men, clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, shall ride forth at the head of the heavenly armies, the meek of the earth shall follow Him on their white horses, too, for that shall be the true triumph which JEHOVAH the King of kings shall give to them at the last.

Inasmuch as they have little victory set to their account among their fellow men, they shall have it in that day when angels, and principalities, and powers shall look down with delight upon the conquest accorded to gentleness—and sing and clap their hands with holy exultation. Wherefore, beloved, bear and forbear, be gentle and lowly still, remembering this blessed promise, “He will beautify the meek with victory.”

But now, taking the text as it stands in the Authorized Version, “He will beautify the meek with salvation,” there is a pretty thought which comes to me out of the position of my text, “JEHOVAH taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation.” You remember that Jacob had twelve sons and he had a measure of love to all his offspring, so “the LORD takes pleasure in his people.”

But there was one among his children whom Jacob loved better than all the rest, and that was Joseph—and how did he show his love to Joseph? It was not in a fashion that you and I would follow, but according to the Oriental method it was the correct one. Because he loved him above the rest of his sons, he adorned him with a coat of many colors.

Now read the text in that sense, “He will beautify the meek with salvation.” They shall have the coat of many colors, they shall be beautified with salvation, because, out of all the Lord’s people, He takes most pleasure in those who are of a meek and quiet spirit. These are most like Jesus, and inasmuch as the Father delights best in the Well-beloved, He delights also in those who are most like Him. He sees in them the image of the Only-Begotten and He takes special pleasure in them, and beautifies them with salvation.

I shall try to speak, first, concerning the *character to be aimed at*, that is, meekness. Secondly, of the *favor to be enjoyed*—“He will beautify the meek with salvation.” And thirdly, if we have time, we shall

think of the *good results to be expected*—the advantages which come out of being beautified with salvation.

I. First, then, let us think of THE CHARACTER TO BE AIMED AT. Who are these meek people? Who are those whom God will beautify with salvation?

I am afraid we are not all meek, perhaps not all who are God’s people have yet learned to be meek and lowly. But this is what they all ought to be and therefore let us hold up the perfect law of the Lord to you that you may look into it, until by looking in it you shall be transformed into the image you desire to reach.

What is this meekness? I should say, first, with respect to our relation towards God, meekness means *entire submission to the divine will*. The meek, whom God will beautify with salvation, are a people who do not quarrel with God. They have left off that pernicious habit. They do not find fault with God’s teaching. What they read in God’s Word they are willing to believe without asking any questions. They see there much that is mysterious, but if God conceals the meaning of it, they believe that it is to His glory to have it concealed, and they do not attempt to pry within the veil.

There is much in God’s Word that is difficult—they are not sorry for that, for there is so much more room for the exercise of their faith. They do not expect to be as God—he who could fully understand God must be himself a god. These meek people are satisfied to be the children of God. And as the children of a man do not expect to understand all that their father says, but are willing to believe very much which they cannot comprehend, so is it with the children of God who are meek and teachable. They open their hearts for the Lord to write His truth thereon and they do not say, “We cannot receive this,” or, “We cannot accept that.” It is written, “All thy children shall be taught of the LORD,” and it is so in a very special sense with God’s meek children—they submit themselves to His teaching.

They submit themselves to God’s chastening as well as to His teaching. If He scourges them, that scourging is no more pleasant to them than it is to others, but they do not resist the rod, but ask that it may be sanctified to them and they prepare themselves to endure all the will of God. There are some nominally Christian people who quarrel a great deal with God—some who have lost friends and they have never forgiven the Lord for taking them away—some who have become poor and they have a standing grudge against the Most High because He has dealt with them as He has done.

This kind of conduct brings no good to anybody and it often causes increased suffering. The more the ox kicks against the goad, the deeper is the sharp point driven into its flesh. Our sorrows are multiplied tenfold by our rebellions. If we were not only resigned, but actually acquiescent to the divine will, we should not smart nearly as much as we do. This, then, I take it, is part of what it is to be meek—to be perfectly submissive to divine teaching and to divine chastening.

If a man is truly meek, he yields himself up to all the influences of the Spirit of God. You know that, if you see a cork out in the river, if there be but a tiny ripple, it moves. If there is only a breath of wind, it goes up and down at once. But if some great ship is lying there, it does not stir, it keeps quite still. I daresay you think, “I want to be just as responsive to the divine will as that cork upon the surface of the stream is to every movement of the water. I wish to be as the feather that is wafted by the breath of God whichever way He pleases. Oh, that He did but will anything, and that I did it at once! Oh, that He did but speak, ay, oh, that before He spoke, I might catch the very glance of His eye and do what He desires!”

His promise is, “I will guide thee with mine eye,” and He says, “Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.” Oh, to be so meek as to feel at once the motion of the Spirit of God upon the soul—and to yield oneself to it, as the plastic clay that can be molded into any shape by the potter’s fingers! The Lord make us such—for these are the people whom He will beautify with His salvation!

I have spoken of meekness towards God, but those who are truly meek are also *gentle towards their fellow men*. I wish that all Christians had this character and that they might not be rough, overbearing, proud, and intimidating as some are. There are some who seem to think that nobody would esteem them

if they did not kick everybody as they went along. They seem to fancy that all other people as well as themselves are made of iron and that their power will not be known unless they dash themselves against all who come near them.

But it should not be so among the children of God. Oh, that we might learn that holy courtesy which is one of the true marks of a Christian! Oh, that we might have a tender regard for other people’s feelings, because we have a fellow-feeling with them, and that we might pass through the world, not anxious to be noticed, but rather to be unnoticed, not desirous to be great, but willing to be little, eager rather to wash the saints’ feet than to have them crown our heads, desirous not so much to be ministered unto as to minister, for true greatness lies in the sacrifice of self for the good of others!

Remember how our Lord said to His disciples, “Whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant”? This is always the rule in the church of Christ—God makes it to be so, though it seems not according to the usual bent of human nature. The Lord takes great delight in those who are of such a meek, and quiet, and humble, and lowly disposition.

These meek people bear, and forbear, and forgive, even though they have just cause for resentment. For a man to be good-tempered when he is never provoked is no great credit to him. It has been said that the devil himself is good-tempered when he is pleased—and I daresay he is. But for a man who is much provoked, for one who is foully slandered, for one who wishes to do good, but who is misrepresented in all that he does—for such a man to still feel, “It really does not matter. I shall not take any notice of it. I wish I had not even observed it. It is for me to be just as kind as ever I was to those who are most ungrateful—in fact, to heap coals of fire upon the head of him who does me injury, and to do the more good to those from whom I receive the most ill”—this is the way to go through the world feeling that you will not take offense at anything that people say or do. It takes two to make a quarrel and if I will not quarrel with you, then you cannot quarrel with me. Blessed are these peacemakers who keep the peace themselves by readily forgiving the wrong done to them by others.

They also are meek who can continue to love with much perseverance. To love the unlovely—this is the love which the Spirit of God works in our hearts. To love those who are not only unlovely, but actually unloving, and who return evil for our good and cursing for our blessing—this is to be indeed a child of God.

Now, my brethren, I have shown you who the meek are towards God, and towards men. Will you judge whether you deserve that title? Such people are also *lowly in themselves*. “Oh!” says one, “I will try to be meek.” No, my friend, do not try to be meek, because he who *is* meek is meek without trying. I do not know anything that is more nauseous than the attempt some people make to be very amiable. Their pride pokes out at every corner and though they try to be very gentle, there is no real gentleness in them, and consequently, it cannot come out of them.

Dear friend, will you learn this lesson? You are a poor sinner—therefore, be thou meek. You may well forgive others, for you have good cause to ask others to forgive you. You may well be patient with those who provoke you, for you have often provoked your God, yet He has been wondrously patient with you. You may well put up with affronts from your fellows, for who are you, after all? If you have a right idea of yourself, you are so little and so inconsiderable, that whoever affronts you, affronts a mere nobody—so it does not matter. Whoever treads on you does but tread upon the dust, for you are dust—so who shall blame him?

“You are setting us hard lessons,” says one. I know that I am. And unless the Lord shall teach you, you will never learn them. It takes a long time to put out the fierce fires of pride—and when you think you have really become meek and lowly in heart, it is sadly surprising how, with a little breath, the ashes begin to glow—and soon the old fires are burning up again.

Some people say, “You know, it is a natural pride,” as if its being a natural pride made it any the better. Oh, that God would tread out the last spark of it, so that we might obey that blessed command of our Lord, “Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

II. Having described the truly meek people, now let us consider, in the second place, THE FAVOR TO BE ENJOYED BY THEM. God says that “He will beautify the meek with salvation.”

It is a circumstance worthy of your notice that there are mentioned in Scripture three men whose faces shone. I do not recollect more than three. The first was Moses, the man who was very meek, and you remember how it is recorded that his face shone so that he had to put a veil over it. God had beautified that meek man.

Another of the meek ones was Stephen, whose dying prayer for his murderers proves how meek and forgiving he was. It is written of him that when he was accused before the council, they “saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.” This was the second meek man. And the third was—but you long ago anticipated me—and wondered that I did not mention Him first. Not only did His face shine, but His whole person shone and His garments were whiter than any fuller could make them—that was our blessed Lord, who could truly say, “I am meek and lowly in heart.”

See, then, how God puts the beauty of His own brightness upon meek men. Not upon great men, not upon those who profess to be great, not upon hectoring and hard-hearted men. I do not think that even Elias, great as he was, ever had that beauty upon him. And John the Baptist, though the greatest in the former dispensation, had not that beauty upon him.

There is a certain sublimity of roughness about the two Elijahs, but the meek have the beauty of the Lord our God upon them. That very softness and what some men think the weakness of their character, is the background upon which God throws His brightness, so that they become beautiful in His sight. “He will beautify the meek with salvation.”

What is this beauty that God puts upon the meek? O dear friends, there are some of you who would like to be beautiful—“beautiful forever,” I have no doubt. There have been silly women who have been trapped with those words as an advertisement—but my advertisement is a true one. Here is the way to be beautiful forever—“He will beautify the meek with salvation.”

The Lord beautifies the meek, I think, in this way—He puts into them a *peace of mind* which fiery spirits never have—and which quick spirits do not know. They are not easily ruffled or disturbed. They have, as others have, much to annoy them, but they are so put into Christ that they cannot be put out. They are rendered so deeply calm, so solidly patient by the indwelling of the Spirit of God, that they bear without seeming to bear—and that which would crush another seems to have no weight with them. The deep peace of mind of a truly meek Christian is, I think, a very beautiful thing.

Over and above that, these meek people have a *delightful contentment*. Whatever happens to them, they accept it as God’s will. “Good day!” said one, and the other said, “Sir, I never had a day that was not good, for God arranges all.” “Oh!” said the first speaker, “but it is good weather today.” “Ah!” was the reply, “but whatever weather comes, to me it is good, for God sends it and I am happy, let it be what it may.”

When self rules, you are never pleased. It is too hot for some of you today, is it not? Not many months ago, it was too cold. When it rains, though it is raining bread from heaven for millions of people, you cry out in a fret, “What a pity it is such a wet day!” And when the sun shines, you would like to be delivered from the burning heat, though that heat is ripening the corn for man and the grass for the cattle.

He that will not be pleased with God is never pleased with himself. But he that is of a meek and quiet spirit goes through the world feeling that all is right, whatever comes, and he continues to praise and bless the Lord. I have known some Christians of this sort—I wish I could say that I knew more.

There was a dear man of God, an elder of this church, who, when he came to me one Lord’s-day morning, when I was half-choked with a horrible November fog, said cheerfully, “Dear Pastor, may we have a happy Sabbath today! It is foggy outside—may it be all bright within! I hope the Lord will strengthen you to be full of holy courage, because some people may feel dull through the bad weather. At any rate, let us rejoice and be glad in our God.” I have some such friends around me now, thank God, but may we have many more!

Sometimes, God puts upon the meek the beauty of *great joy*, as if the light of heaven shone right through them. The light that God has kindled in their hearts shines through their faces and you can see that they are among the happiest of men, because God has beautified them with salvation.

Then He puts upon these meek people a beauty of *holy character*. I daresay you know some persons of this sort, as I rejoice to say that I do. I always feel that it is a great honor to be in their company. They are not very famous people, or very clever people—they will never do very much which the world will notice and put in the papers—but when I get near them, I seem to be like a ship that has entered the harbor, or that has come under a huge bluff where it is sheltering from the wind that is blowing out at sea. They are so good and so gracious that it is a blessing to be with them.

I was with such a one this week and I looked up to the truly grand old man with the utmost reverence as he spoke of what God had done for his soul in foreign lands, and of how the Lord had helped him to bear hardship and trial for Christ’s sake. I experienced a great delight as I listened to his holy words and felt the unction that rested upon him.

Dear sister or brother, God can make *you* just such a saint as that. He can make you to be full of holiness, so that everybody who comes near you will see that there is a divine beauty upon you. That is poor beauty which consists merely in bright eyes and rosy cheeks, or in the fair whiteness of the lily that will fade like the lily or like the rose. But that beauty which God puts upon us by the grace that shines from within—the beauty of holiness such as there was upon Christ—this we ought to cultivate, praying to God to fulfill in us the promise of the text and to beautify us with His salvation.

As men and women, who are what they ought to be in Christ, grow old, their temper mellows and *their whole spirit ripens*. There are some godly matrons and some venerable men whose words are most weighty and wise—you cannot hear them speak without recollecting their very tones, for there is a long and deep experience at the back of their testimony.

When I listened to George Mueller, some years ago, I do not think there was very much in what he said if I took the words apart from himself. But then it was George Mueller who said it, with that holy blessed life of faith at the back of every word—I was like a child, sitting at a tutor’s feet, to learn of him. I pray God to make you, my brethren and sisters, men and women of that sort.

May He not only save you, but beautify you with salvation. May He not only make you penitent, but make you meek. Not only take you to heaven, but bring heaven down to you, and pour it into your soul that you may begin to enjoy the bliss of heaven even while you are here below!

III. So I come to my last point, which is, THE GOOD RESULTS TO BE EXPECTED—the advantages which come out of being beautified with salvation. If you and I, by God’s grace and the power of His Spirit, become truly meek and are beautified with His salvation, this will be the result of it all.

First, *God will be glorified*. God was not glorified by you, brother, when you made that fiery speech the other night. You were very zealous, I know, but you used some very queer language and God was not glorified by it. Sometimes, in a dispute, a person who does not know anything about the quarrel can tell which of the two is right by seeing which one controls his temper the better.

Use hard arguments, brother, hard arguments but soft words. And if you can get the two together, you will win the victory. If we are not meek, we do not adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things. But if we are meek, then God is glorified.

Further than that, by our meekness *Christ is manifested*. When a man can bear provocation and does not utter an angry word, then those who are round about say within themselves, “That is the spirit of Christ.” They cannot see Christ Himself, for He has gone into the glory, but when they see the meek believer, they say, one to another, “Surely that must be something like what Christ was when He was here below.” God grant that you, dear friends, may be living photographs of your divine Lord!

I feel sure, too, that this meekness *makes a Christian attractive*. Your high and mighty man is not wanted in any company. Here is one who is wonderfully good in his own estimation—he is so holy that he cannot mix with his fellow men. You feel, when he comes into the room, “Here comes the perfect

man—let us get out of the way. He is so superlatively good that he will make some of us feel very bad before long, for we do not like holiness set in that kind of frame.”

I know some people who seem as if they meant to make religion as objectionable as ever they could—and as if they had attained to a high degree of Christianity when they had made everybody dislike them—but it should not be so. O brothers and sisters, we must be meek and be beautified with salvation, for then we shall be able to attract others to Christ!

If we want to draw them to Him, we must let them see how sweetly blessed is the Christian life and how a man can be sternly upright and yet at the same time be blessedly cheerful. How he can be dead against sin and yet full of holy love to the sinner—how he would not, to save his life, budge an inch from that which is right and true, and yet would give his life away if by blessing another he might bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord beautify us thus with salvation and great good will come of it!

May the Lord grant to some of you, who are not meek, but the very reverse, that you may come under the touch of His renewing Spirit and be born again! Then will you be capable of becoming truly meek—and then will God beautify you with His salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

EXPOSITIONS BY C. H. SURGEON

PSALM 149 AND MATTHEW 5:1-12

Psalm 149:1. *Praise ye the LORD.*

This is a Hallelujah Psalm. It begins with, “Praise ye the LORD,” and finishes in the same way. It is a complete circle of praise. The long streams of the Psalms end in glorious cascades of hallelujahs. One after another these jubilant notes roll out, as in Handel’s magnificent Hallelujah Chorus.

1. *Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints.*

There was an old song previous to this new one—in the 148th Psalm—the Psalm for sun and moon and stars, for deeps and dragons, for old men and maidens, and so on. But this is a Psalm for saints, so it is “a new song” for the new creation. Therefore, let all the new creatures of God sing it from their hearts.

2. *Let Israel rejoice in him that made him:*

This is the best and highest form of creation—the making, not only of men, but of men of God, the making of Israels, the making of prevailing princes.

2. *Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.*

Let them rejoice that their Maker reigns, that He rules over them, and that He rules over all things—“Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King.”

3. *Let them praise his name in the dance: let them sing praises unto him with the timbrel and harp.*

That is, let them repeat the joy of Israel at the Red Sea, when Miriam “took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances; and Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously.” So, O you children of God, let the praises of your God and King ring out as with the music of the timbrel and harp.

4. *For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people:*

Then, should not they take pleasure in Him? If He looks upon them with divine delight, should not they look up to Him with adoring gratitude? What is there in us to give Him any pleasure? But if His delights are with the sons of men, surely the sons of men should have their delights in Him—“For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people.”

4-5. *He will beautify the meek with salvation. Let the saints be joyful in glory:*

Let them glory in God and be joyful in Him. Let their spirits seem to rise even beyond grace up to the anticipation of glory—“Let the saints be joyful in glory.”

5. *Let them sing aloud upon their beds.*

If they be sick, or if they lie awake at night, or if they have enjoyed sweet rest, let them not fail to praise God for it—“Let them sing aloud upon their beds.”

6. *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand;*

But let it be a spiritual sword, that two-edged sword of God’s Word which will cut through coats of mail. And as they wield it, let them ever rest satisfied that victory shall surely be theirs. One of the poetical versions of this Psalm rightly renders this verse,—

*“Ye saints of the Lord; as round Him ye stand,
His two-edged sword, His Word, in your hand,
To sound His high praises your voices employ!
To victory He raises, and crowns you with joy.”*

7. *To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;*

So they had to do in those old times. But we, happily, have not to do so now, except it be in a spiritual sense that, with the sword of God’s Word we are to cut down the idols of the heathen and subdue the nations to our King.

8. *To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;*

Reading the passage in a Gospel sense, we lead men captives in the bonds of love that are stronger than fetters of iron. O soldiers of Christ, army of the living God, this is the battle you have to fight—be this your victory, too!

9. *To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.*

So the Psalm ends upon its keynote—“Hallelujah.” “Praise ye the LORD.”

Now let us turn to the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew and see what we have to rejoice in there.

Matthew 5:1. *And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:*

You notice that the Preacher sat down and that His disciples stood around Him. If you find it somewhat warm and trying tonight, remember that you have the best of it, for you sit while the speaker stands. Concerning our Lord, we read, “When he was set, his disciples came unto him:”—

2. *And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,—*

Perhaps someone says, “He could not have taught them without opening His mouth.” I have found that a great many try to teach without opening their mouths, but the earnest preacher speaks with all his might. So did Jesus in the open air on the mountain side—“He opened his mouth and taught them.” Such grand things as He had to say ought to come from open portals, so He mumbled not, but “opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,”

3. *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven.*

“Blessed.” See how Jesus begins His Sermon on the Mount? He begins with benedictions. He is a cloud that is full of rain and that empties itself upon the earth. The moment you begin to know Christ, you begin to have blessings. And the more you know of Him, the more blessed you will be.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit.” Not those who boast themselves of spiritual riches and personal goodness, but the lowly, the meek, the trembling, the humble, the poor in spirit, “for their’s is the kingdom of heaven.”

4. *Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.*

Let them now be comforted in the prospect of future comfort. There are no mourning hearts that mourn over sin, and mourn after God, that shall be deserted by their God—“they shall be comforted.”

5. *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.*

They do in the truest sense enjoy even this life—their contented spirit makes them monarchs. The great man, with all his wealth, is often uneasy with a craving ambition for more, but the quiet spirits of

God’s people find a kingdom everywhere. The mountains and the valleys belong really to him who can, with happy eye, look upon them and then lift his face to heaven and feel, “My Father made them all.”

6. *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness:*

They want to be better. They are hungry and thirsty after more holiness. They boast not of personal perfection, they are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but they have not attained to it yet.

6. *For they shall be filled.*

God will fill them, and when He fills men with His fullness, they are full indeed.

7. *Blessed are the merciful:*

The forgiving, the generous, the kind. “Blessed are the merciful:”

7-8. *For they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.*

There is such a connection between purity of heart and purity of understanding that the man whose eye is clarified by holiness shall see God.

9. *Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.*

They shall not only be the children of God, but people shall call them by that name. There is something so Godlike in trying to put away discord, and to remove anger, and to promote love, that it makes men feel that peacemakers must be the children of God.

10-11. *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for their’s is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.*

It is not when men truthfully speak evil concerning you, but when they say it *falsely*. Not when they say evil against you because of your ill tempers which provoke them, but when they do it falsely, for Christ’s sake, then, “blessed are ye.”

12. *Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*

And you are treading in their steps, so you are entering into their heritage. You have your beginning with them and you shall have your end with them. If persecuted with them, you shall also reign with them.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—149 (VERSION I), 726, 721

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