

THE PEARL OF PATIENCE

NO. 3255

A SERMON

PUBLISHED ON THURSDAY, JUNE 22, 1911

DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON

ON LORD'S-DAY AFTERNOON IN JANUARY, 1880

*“Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord;
that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”*

James 5:11

[Another Sermon by Mr. Spurgeon upon the whole verse is #1845, The Pity of The Lord—The Comfort of The Afflicted]

WE need to be reminded of what we have *heard*, for we are far too ready to forget. We are also so slow to consider and meditate upon what we have heard that is profitable to have our memories refreshed. At this time we are called upon to recollect that we have heard of the patience of Job. We have, however, I trust, gone beyond mere hearing, for we have also *seen* in the story of Job that which it was intended to set vividly before our mind's eye. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.”

The Romish priest professes to make men hear the voice of the Gospel by seeing, but the Scriptural way is to make men see the truth by hearing. Faith, which is the soul's sight, comes by hearing. The design of the preaching of the Gospel to the ear is “to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world has been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” Inward sight is the result of all fruitful hearing.

Now, that which is to be *seen* in the Scriptures is somewhat deeper and calls for more thought than that which is merely heard. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job”—an interesting history, which a child may understand, but it needs divine teaching to see to the bottom of that narrative, to discover the pearl which lies in the depths of it.

It can only be said of enlightened disciples, “Ye have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” At the same time, that which is seen is also more precious to the heart and more bountifully enriches the soul than anything which is only heard. I count it no small enrichment of our mind to have heard of the patience of Job—it comforts and strengthens us in our endurance, but it is an infinitely better thing to have seen the end of the Lord, and to have perceived the undeviating tenderness and pity which are displayed even in His sorest chastisements.

This is indeed a choice vein of silver, and he that has digged in it is far richer than the more superficial person, who has only heard of the patience of Job, and so has only gathered surface truth. “The patience of Job,” as we hear of it, is like the shell of some rare nut from the Spice Islands—full of fragrance. But “the end of the Lord,” when we come to see it, is as the kernel which is rich beyond expression with a fullness of aromatic essence.

Note well the reason why the text reminds us of what we have heard and seen. When we are called to the exercise of any great virtue, we need to call in all the helps which the Holy Spirit has bestowed upon us. All our wealth of hearing and seeing we shall have need to spend in our heavenly warfare. We shall be forced full often to gird up the loins of our mind by the recollection of examples of which we have heard, such as that of Job, and then to buckle up that girdle, and brace it fast with what we have seen.

The patience of Job shall gird us and that “end of the Lord” which we have seen shall be the fastening of the band. We shall need all ere our work is done. In the present case, the virtue we are

called to exercise is that of *patience* and therefore, to help us to do it, we are reminded of the things that we have heard and seen, because it is a grace as difficult as it is necessary, and as hard to come at as it is precious when it is gained.

The text is preceded by a triple exhortation to patience. In the seventh verse we read, “Be patient, therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord.” And again, “Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

Further on, in the tenth verse, we read, “Take my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering, affliction, and of patience.” Are we thrice exhorted to patience? Is it not clear that we have even now much need of it? We are most of us deficient in this excellent grace and because of it we have missed most privileges, and have wasted many opportunities in which we might have honored God, might have commended religion, and might have been exceedingly profited in our own souls.

Affliction has been the fire which would have removed our dross, but impatience has robbed the mental metal of the flux of submission which would have secured its proper purification. It is unprofitable, dishonorable, weakening—it has never brought us gain—and never will.

I suppose we are three times exhorted to patience because we shall need it much in the future. Between here and heaven we have no guarantee that the road will be easy, or that the sea will be glassy. We have no promise that we shall be kept, like flowers in a conservatory, from the breath of frost, or that, like fair queens, we shall be veiled from the heat of the sun.

The voice of wisdom says, “Be patient, be patient, be patient. You may need a threefold measure of it. Be ready for the trial.” I suppose, also, that we are over and over again exhorted to be patient, because it is so high an attainment. It is no child’s play to be dumb as the sheep before her shearers, and to lie still while the shears are taking away all that warmed and comforted us.

The mute Christian under the afflicting rod is no every-day personage. We kick out like oxen which feel the goad for the first time. We are most of us for years as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke. “Be patient, be patient, be patient,” is the lesson to be repeated to our hearts many times, even as we have to teach children over and over again the selfsame words, till they know them by heart.

It is the Holy Ghost, ever patient under our provocations, who calls us to be “patient.” It is Jesus, the un murmuring sacrifice, who charges us to “be patient.” It is the long-suffering Father who bids us “be patient.” O you who are soon to be in heaven, be patient for yet a little while and your reward shall be revealed!

Upon these two things we will indulge a brief meditation. First, we are bidden to be patient and *it is not an unheard of virtue*. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job.” And secondly, we are bidden to be patient and *it is not an unreasonable virtue*, for you “have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

I. IT IS NOT AN UNHEARD OF VIRTUE TO BE PATIENT—“Ye have heard of the patience of Job.”

Observe well that the patience of Job was the patience of *a man like ourselves*, imperfect and full of infirmity, for as one has well-remarked, we have heard of the impatience of Job as well as of his patience. I am glad the divine biographer was so impartial, for had not Job been somewhat impatient, we might have thought his patience to be altogether inimitable, and above the reach of ordinary men.

The traces of imperfection which we see in Job prove all the more powerfully that grace can make grand examples out of common constitutions and that keen feelings of indignation under injustice need not prevent a man’s becoming a model of patience. I am thankful that I know that Job did speak somewhat bitterly and proved himself a man, for now I know that it was a man like myself who said, “The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.”

It was a man of flesh and blood, such as mine, who said, “Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?” Yea, it was a man of like passions with myself who said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”

You have heard of the patience of your Lord and Master, and tried to copy it, and half despaired. But now you have heard of the patience of His servant Job, and knowing as Job did that your Redeemer lives, you should be encouraged to emulate him in obedient submission to the will of the Lord.

“Ye have heard of the patience of Job,” that is, the patience of *a greatly tried man*. That is a very trite yet necessary remark—Job could not have exhibited patience if he had not endured trial. And he could not have displayed a patience whose fame rings down the ages, till we have heard of it, if he had not known extraordinary affliction.

Reflect then, that it was the patience of a man who was *tried in his estate*. All his wealth was taken! Two or three servants were left—left only to bring him evil tidings—each one saying, “I only am escaped alone to tell thee.” His flocks and his herds were gone, the house in which his children had met was a wreck, and the princely man of Uz sat upon a dunghill, and there were none so mean as to do him reverence. Ye have heard of the patience of Job in loss and poverty—have you not seen that, if all estates should fail, God is your portion still?

Job was caused to suffer sharp *relative troubles*. All his children were snatched away without a warning, dying at a festival where, without being culpably wrong, men are usually unguarded, and in a sense unready, for the spirit is in *déshabille*. His children died suddenly, and there was a grievous mystery about it, for a strange wind from the wilderness smote the four corners of the house and overthrew it in an instant.

And such an occurrence must have connected itself in Job’s mind either with the judgment of God or with Satanic influence—a connection full of the most painful thoughts and surmises. The death of his dear ones was not a common or a desirable one, and yet all had so been taken. Not a son or daughter was left him. All gone! All gone! He sits among the ashes a childless man. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job.” Oh, to have patience under bereavements, patience even when the insatiate archer multiplies His arrows!

Then, and I here speak most to myself, “Ye have heard of the patience of Job” under *personal affliction*. It is well said by one who knew mankind cruelly well, that, “we bear the afflictions of other people very easily,” but when it touches our bone and our flesh, trial assumes an earnest form and we have need of unusual patience.

Such bitter pain as Job must have suffered, we have probably none of us known anything the same degree. And yet we have had weary nights and dreary days. Each limb has claimed a prominence in anguish and each nerve has become a road for armies of pains to march over. We know what it is to feel thankful tears in our eyes merely for having been turned over in bed. Job, however, far excels us. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job,” and you know how he sinned not when from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he was covered with irritating boils.

In addition to all this, Job bore what is perhaps the worst form of trial, namely, *mental distress*. The conduct of his wife must have much grieved him when she tempted him to “curse God, and die.” However she meant it, or however her words may be translated, she evidently spoke like a foolish woman when her husband needed wise consolation.

And then those “miserable comforters”—how they crowned the edifice of his misery! Cold-blooded mortals sneer at sentimental grievances, but I speak from my heart when I affirm that griefs which break no bones and take not a coin from our store may yet be among the sharpest whips of sorrow. When the iron enters into the soul, we know the very soul of suffering.

See how Job’s friends fretted him with arguments and worried him with accusations. They rubbed salt into his wounds, they cast dust into his eyes, their tender mercies were cruel, though well-intentioned. Woe to the man who in his midnight hour is hooted at by such owls. Yet the hero of patience sinned not. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job.”

Job's was in all respects a most real trouble, he was no mere dyspeptic, no hysterical inventor of imaginary evil. His were not fancied losses nor minor calamities. He had not lost one child out of a numerous family, nor a few thousands out of a vast fortune, but he was brought to sad bereavement, abject poverty, and terrible torment of body and mind. But despite it all, "Ye have heard of the patience of Job," and heard more of his patience than of his afflictions. What a mercy to have heard of such a man and to know that one of our own race passed through the seven-times heated furnace and yet was not consumed!

The patience of Job was the patience of *a man who endured up to the very end*. No break-down occurred. At every stage he triumphed and to the utmost point he was victorious. Traces of weakness are manifest, but they are grandly overlaid by evidences of gracious power. What a marvelous man was he with all those aches and pains, still bearing witness to his God, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

He reasons well even in the heat of his passionate zeal for his character. He reasons bravely too, and catches up the points of his adversaries like a trained logician. He holds fast his integrity and will not let it go. And best of all, he cries, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Oh, glorious challenge of a dying man to his immortal Kinsman!

The enemy could not triumph over Job—he threw him on a dunghill and it became his throne, more glorious than the ivory throne of Solomon. The boils and blains with which the adversary covered the patriarch were more honor to him than a warrior's gilded body corslet. Never was the arch-fiend more thoroughly worsted than by the afflicted patriarch.

And instead of pitying the sufferer, my pity curdles into contempt for that fallen spirit who must there have gnawed his own heart, and drunk deep draughts of gall and wormwood as he saw himself foiled at all points by one who had been put into his power and one, too, of the feeble race of man. Surely, in this he experienced a foretaste of the bruising threatened at Eden's gate as to be given him by the woman's seed. Yes, Job endured unto the end, and therefore, he stands as a pillar in the house of the Lord. Cannot we also endure unto the end too? What does hinder grace from glorifying itself in us?

We may once more say that the patience of Job is the virtue of *one who thereby has become a great power for good*. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job." Yes, and all the ages have heard of the patience of Job—and heaven has heard of the patience of Job and hell has heard of it too—and not without results in each of the three worlds.

Among men, the patience of Job is a great moral and spiritual force. This morning, when musing upon it, I felt ashamed and humbled, as thousands have done before me. I asked myself, "What do I know of patience when I compare myself with Job?" And I felt that I was as unlike the great patriarch as I well could be.

I recollect a minister who had been somewhat angered by certain of his people, and therefore preached from the text, "And Aaron held his peace." It was remarked that the preacher's likeness to Aaron reached no further than the fact that Aaron held his peace and the preacher did not. May we not penitently confess that our likeness to Job is much of the same order?

He was patient, and we are not? Yet, as I thought of the patience of Job, it caused me to hope. If Job was patient under trial and affliction, why should not I be patient too? He was but a man—what was wrought in one man may be done in another. He had God to help him and so have I. He could fall back upon the living Redeemer—so can I, and why should I not?

Why should I not attain to patience as well as the man of Uz? It made me feel happy to believe in human capacity to endure the will of God, the Holy Spirit instructing and upholding. Play the man, beloved friend! Be not cut down! What God has done for one He can do for another. If the man be the same, and if the great God be the same, and be sure He is, we too may attain to patience in our limited circle. Our patience may be heard of among those who prize the fruits of the Spirit.

II. I will not detain you, lest I weary you, except to say, in the second place, IT IS NOT AN UNREASONABLE VIRTUE TO BE PATIENT for, according to our text, there is great love and tenderness in it. “Ye have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

We must have seen, in Job’s story, if we have regarded it aright, that *the Lord was in it all*. It is not a narrative in which the devil is the sole actor—the great Lord of all is evidently present. He it was who challenged Satan to consider Job and then questioned him as to the result.

Less seen than the evil one, the Lord was nevertheless present at every act of the drama. God was not away while His servant suffered. In fact, if there was any place where the thoughts of God were centered more than anywhere else in providence at that time, it was where the perfect and upright man was bearing the brunt of the storm.

The Lord was ruling, too. He was not present as a mere spectator, but as still master of the situation. He had not handed over the reins to Satan—far from it, for every step that the enemy took was only by express permission from the throne. He allowed him to strip his servant, but he set the limit, “Only upon himself put not forth thine hand.” When to complete the test, the enemy was permitted to plague his body, the Lord added, “But save his life.”

The ruling hand is always on the curb. The dog of hell is allowed to snap and snarl, but his chain is not removed, and the collar of omnipotent restraint is on him. Come, dear friends, you that are in trouble, remember that God is in your sorrow, ruling it to its desired end, and checking it that it should go no further than according to His will. And you neither have suffered, nor in the future will suffer, any more than He in infinite love permits.

Moreover, *the Lord was blessing Job by all his tribulation.* Untold blessings were coming to the grand old man while he seemed to be losing all. It was not simply that he obtained a double portion at the end, but all along, every part of the testing process wrought out his highest good. Now have we seen the end of the Lord and that end is unmingled goodness.

The Lord was standing by every moment to stop the refining process when it had come to the proper point, so that no more of it should happen than was really beneficial, and at the same time no less than should secure His gracious purpose. True mercy is bound at times to seem untender, for it might be a great and lifelong evil for the surgeon to stop the knife before its work is done. The Lord was wisely tender and tenderly wise with Job—and even in his case the sore affliction was not allowed to proceed a single degree beyond the needful point of intensity.

And when we come to look all Job’s life through, we see that *the Lord in mercy brought him out of it all with unspeakable advantage.* He who tested with one hand supported with the other. Whatever Satan’s end might be in tempting the patriarch, God had an end which covered and compassed that of the destroyer—and that end was answered all along the line, from the first loss which happened among the oxen to the last taunt of his three accusers. There was never a question, in the heights of heaven as to the ultimate issue. Eternal mercy was putting forth its irresistible energy, and Job was made to bear up though the trial, and to rise from it a wiser and a better man.

Such is the case with all afflicted saints. We may well be patient under our trials, for the Lord sends them. He is ruling in all our circumstances. He is blessing us by them, He is waiting to end them, and He is pledged to bring us through. Shall we not gladly submit to the Father of our spirits? Is not this our deepest wish, “Thy will be done”? Shall we quarrel with that which blesses us? Shall we repine when the end of the trouble is so near and so blessed? No. We see that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy, and therefore we will be patient.

Beloved, let us accept future sorrow with joy, for it is love divine which will add to our years whatever sorrowful seasons may yet come to us. Job’s life might have ended in the first period without the trial, but if the patriarch, with perfect knowledge of all things, could have had his choice, would he not have chosen to endure the trial for the sake of all the blessing which came of it?

We should never have heard of the patience of Job if he had continued in his prosperity—and that first part of his life would have made a very poor commonplace history as compared with what we now

find in the pages of Scripture. Camels, sheep, servants, and children make up a picture of wealth, but we can see this any day. The rare sight is the patience—this it is which raises Job to his true glory. God was dealing well with His faithful servant, and even rewarding his uprightness, when He counted him worthy to be tried. The Lord was taking the surest and kindest way to bless and honor one who was a perfect and an upright man—one that feared God and eschewed evil.

It was pitiful of the Lord to permit sharp trial to come upon Job for his good. There was more tender mercy in subjecting him to it than there would have been in screening him from it. False pity would have permitted the good man to die in his nest, but true pity put a thorn into it and made him mount aloft as the eagle. It was great mercy, after all, which took him out of the state in which he washed his steps with butter, and cast him into the mire, for thus he was weaned from the world and made to look the more eagerly for a better portion.

No doubt, in Job's character, the Lord saw certain failings which we cannot see, which He desired to remove, and perhaps He also marked some touches of grace which needed to be supplied—and divine love undertook to complete his perfect character. Perhaps his prosperity had sunned him till he had grown somewhat hard in tone and sharp in judgment, and therefore, the Lord would soften and mellow his gracious spirit. The things lacking were no common virtues, for in these he was perfect, but certain rich and rare tints of the higher life—and these could not be imparted by any other means than severe suffering.

Nothing more could really be done for Job but by this special agency, for doubling the number of his camels and sheep would only enlarge his cares, since he had enough already—of children, too, he had a sufficient family and of all earthly things abundance. But to give him twice the grace, twice the experience, twice the knowledge of God, perhaps twice the tenderness of character he had ever possessed before, was a mode of enrichment which the tender and pitiful Lord adopted out of the greatness of His wisdom and favor. Job could only thus be made doubly rich in the rarest of all treasures—and the All-merciful adapted that method.

Examining the matter from another point of view, it may appear that Job was tried in order that he might be better able to bear the extraordinary prosperity which the Lord had resolved to pour in upon him. That double portion might have been too much for the patriarch if he had not been lifted into a higher state. If abundance is hard to bear, superfluity is even worse, and therefore, to those He loves, the Lord gives more grace.

Job by his trials and patience received not only double grace, and double wealth, but double honor from God. He had stood very high in the peerage of the excellent as a perfect and an upright man before his trial, but now he is advanced to the very highest rank of spiritual nobility. Even our children call him "the most patient man under pains and suffering." He rose from the knighthood of sincere goodness to the peerage of heroic endurance.

At first, he had the honor of behaving admirably amid wealth and ease, but he was in the end elevated to sit among those who glorify God in the fires. Benevolence, justice, and truth shone as bright stars in the sky of his heavenly character, but now the moon of patience silvers all and lights up the scene with a superior beauty. Perhaps the Lord may love some of us so specially that He means to put upon us the dignity of endurance—He will make us knights, not of the golden fleece, but of the iron cross. What but great pitifulness and tender mercy could plan such a lot for our unworthy selves?

Once more, Job by his trials and the grace of God was lifted up into the highest position of usefulness. He was useful before his trial as few men of wealth and influence have been, but now his life possesses an enduring fruitfulness which blesses multitudes every day. Even we who are here this afternoon "have heard of the patience of Job." All the ages have this man for their teacher.

Brothers and sisters, we do not know who will be blessed by our pains, by our bereavements, by our crosses, if we have patience under them. Specially is this the case with God's ministers, if He means to make much of them—their path to usefulness is up the craggy mountain's side. If we are to comfort God's afflicted people, we must first be afflicted ourselves. Tribulation will make our wheat fit to be

bread for saints. Adversity is the choicest book in our library, printed in black letters, but grandly illuminated.

Job makes a glorious comforter and preacher of patience, but no one turns either to Bildad, Zophar, or Eliphaz, who were “miserable comforters” because they had never been miserable. You, dear sisters, whom God will make daughters of consolation to your families, must in your measure pass through a scholarship of suffering too—a sword must pass through your own hearts if you are to be highly favored and blessed among women.

Yet, let us all remember that affliction will not bless us if it is impatiently borne. If we kick at the goad, it will hurt us, but it will not act as a fitting stimulus. If we rebel against God’s dispensations, we may turn His medicines into poisons and increase our grief by refusing to endure them.

Be patient, be patient, be patient, and the dark cloud shall drop a sparkling shower. “Ye have heard of the patience of Job.” Imitate it. “Ye have seen the end of the Lord.” Rejoice in it. “He is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” Yield yourselves to Him. Divine Spirit, plant in us the sweet flower of patience, for our patient Savior’s sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

ROMANS 8:1-22

This precious chapter reminds us of the description of the land of Havilah, “where there is gold, and the gold of that land is good.”

Verse 1. *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus,* [See Sermon #1917, In Christ No Condemnation]

There is no condemnation to them—it is gone, and gone forever. Not only is part of it removed, but the whole of it is gone. “There is therefore now *no* condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” This is their legal status before God—in Christ Jesus, without condemnation. And this is their character—

1. *Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

Their daily conversation is according to their new spiritual nature and according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit—and not according to their fleshly nature, and the guidance of self and Satan.

2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of life and death.*

“It cannot any longer rule me and it cannot now condemn me. I am free from it, for I am now under the new and higher ‘law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.’”

3-4. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.* [See Sermons #699, Sin Condemned and Executed By Christ Jesus and #2228, The Law’s Failure and Fulfillment]

If there are any men in the world who keep the law of God, they are the very persons who do not hope to be saved by the keeping of it, for they have by faith found righteousness in Christ, and now by love and gratitude are put under the power of the law of the spiritual life in Christ, and they so live, by God’s grace, that they do manifest the holiness of the law in their lives.

5. *For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh;*

They care for nothing else—they are satisfied as long as their appetites are gratified. They are of this world and the things of this world fill them to the brim.

5. *But they that are after the Spirit [do mind] the things of the Spirit.*

Spiritual joys, spiritual hopes, spiritual pursuits—these belong only to those who are spiritual.

6. *For to be carnally minded—*

To be fleshly minded—

6. *Is death;*

That is what it comes to, for the flesh comes to death at last and after death, it goes to corruption. If we live after that carnal fashion, this will be the end of our living—“death.”

6. *But to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*

For the spirit will never die and the spirit has that within it which will bring it perfect peace.

7-8. *Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Those that have never been born again, so as to be “in the Spirit,” are still just as they were born—“in the flesh”—so they cannot please God. Do what they may, there is an essential impurity about their nature so that they cannot be well-pleasing unto God. We must be born-again, we must become spiritual by the new birth which is wrought by the Holy Spirit, or else it is impossible for us to please God.

O you who are trying your best to please God apart from the new birth and apart from Christ, see how this iron bar is put across your path—“they that are in the flesh cannot please God.” Go then to Him and ask Him to give you of His Spirit, that you may be spiritual and no longer carnal.

9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.*

It does not matter what he calls himself—he may be a preacher, he may be a bishop—if he has not the Spirit of Christ, “he is none of his,” and if he has the Spirit of Christ, though he may be the most obscure person on earth, he belongs to Christ.

10. *And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin;*

The grace of God has not changed that body—it still remains earth, dust, worms’ meat—and it must die unless Christ should come and transform it by His coming. “The body is dead because of sin” and hence come those aches and pains, that heaviness, that weariness, that decay, those infirmities of age which we experience as long as we bear about with us this body of death.

10. *But the Spirit is life because of righteousness.*

There is a living power within us which triumphs over this dying, decaying body. So we rejoice notwithstanding all our afflictions, trials, and depressions.

11. *But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*

There is to be an emancipation even for this poor flesh—a translation and a glory for it yet in Christ.

12. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.* [See Sermon #96, The Christian—A Debtor]

Certainly not, for we owe the flesh nothing. It keeps us down and hampers us, it is a hindrance to us, but we certainly owe it nothing. So let us not be subservient to it, let us not consult or even consider it, and especially let us never come under its fatal bondage.

13. *For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die:*

It is a dying thing, and “ye shall die” if you live after its dying fashion.

13. *But if ye through the Spirit—*

That living, immortal power—

13-14. *Do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.* [See Sermon #1220, The Leading of The Spirit, The Secret Tokens of The Son of God]

Oh, high dignity and blessed privilege! As soon as we ever get away from the dominion of the flesh, and come to be led by the Spirit of God, and so become spiritual men, we have the evidence that we are the sons of God, for “God is a Spirit,” so His sons must be spiritual.

15. *For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;*

We did have it once, and it wrought some good effect upon us for the time being. When we were under the law, we felt ourselves to be in slavery, and that made us go to Christ for liberty.

15. *But ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Oh, blessed, blessed state of heart to feel that now we are born into the family of God and that the choice word which no slave might ever pronounce may now be pronounced by us, “Abba!” It is a

child's word, such as a little child utters when he first opens his mouth to speak, and it runs the same both backwards and forwards—AB-BA. Oh to have a childlike spirit that, in whatever state of heart I am, I may still be able to say, in the accents even of spiritual infancy, "Abba, Father!"

16. *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:* [See Sermons #339, The Sons of God; #402, The Joint-Heirs and Their Divine Portion and #2961, "Heirs of God"]

What better testimony can we have than that of these two witnesses, first of our own spirit and then of the Holy Spirit, Himself, "that we are the children of God"? Note that this is not spoken concerning everybody. The doctrine of the universal Fatherhood of God is a doctrine of the flesh, and not of the Spirit—it is not taught anywhere in God's Word.

This is a Fatherhood which relates only to those who are spiritual—we are born into it by the new birth and brought into it by an act of grace in adoption. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God," this is a special privilege that belongs only to those who are spiritual.

17-18. *And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

Do we suffer now? Then let us wait for something better that is yet to come. Yes, we do suffer, and in this we are in accord with the whole creation of God, for the whole creation is just now, as it were, enduring birth pangs. There is something better coming, but meanwhile it is troubled and perplexed, moaning and groaning.

19-22. *For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.*

See how it often weeps in the superabundant rain that seems like a minor deluge. Note how, at times, creation's very bowels seem to be tossed and torn with pain and agony by volcanoes and earthquakes. Mark the tempests, tornadoes, hurricanes, and all kinds of ills that sweep over the globe, leaving devastation in their track. And the globe itself is wrapped in swaddling bands of mist, and shines not out like its sister stars in its pristine brightness and splendor. The animal creation, too, wears the yoke of bondage. How unnecessarily heavy have men often made that yoke!

Taken from The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit C. H. Spurgeon Collection. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.