

The Glorious Habitation

A Sermon

(No. 46)

Delivered on Sabbath Morning, October 14, 1855, by the

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At New Park Street Chapel, Southwark.

“Lord thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.”—[Psalm 90:1](#).

Moses was the inspired author of three devotional compositions. We first of all find him as Moses the poet, singing the song which is aptly joined with that of Jesus, in the Revelation, where it says, “The song of Moses and of the Lamb.” He was a poet on the occasion when Pharaoh and his hosts were cast into the Red Sea, “his chosen captains also were drowned in the Red Sea.” Further on in his life we discover him in the character of a preacher; and then his doctrine distilled as the dew, and his speech dropped like the rain, in those chapters which are full of glorious imagery, and rich with poetry, which you will find in the book of Deuteronomy. And now in the Psalms, we find him the author of a prayer: “A prayer of Moses, the man of God.” Happy combination of the poet, the preacher, and the man of prayer! Where three such things are found together, the man becomes a very giant above his fellows. It often happens that the man who preaches has but little poetry; and the man who is the poet would not be able to preach and utter his poems before immense assemblies, but would be only fit to write them by himself. It is a rare combination when true devotion and the spirit of poetry and eloquence meet in the same man. You will see in this Psalm a wondrous depth of spirituality; you will mark how the poet subsides into the man of God; and how, lost in himself, he sings his own frailty, declared the glory of God, and asks that he may have the blessing of his heavenly Father always resting on his head.

This first verse will derive peculiar interest if you remember the place where Moses was when he thus prayed. He was in the wilderness; not in some of the halls of Pharaoh, nor yet in a habitation in the land of Goshen; but in a wilderness. And perhaps from the summit of the hill, looking upon the tribes of Israel as they were taking up their tents and marching along, he thought, “Ah! poor travelers. They seldom rest anywhere; they have not any settled habitation where they can dwell. Here they have no continuing city;” but he lifted his eyes above, and he said, “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.” Passing his eye back through history, he saw one great temple where God’s people had dwelt; and with his prophetic eye rolling with sacred frenzy, he could see that throughout all futurity the specially chosen of God would be able to sing, “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.”

Taking this verse as the subject of our discourse this morning, we shall, first of all, *explain it*; and then we shall try and do what the old Puritans called “*improve*” it; by which they did not mean improve the text, but improve the people a little in the consideration of the verse.

I. First, we will try to explain it somewhat. Here is *a habitation*: “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place;” and, secondly, if I may use such a common word, here is *the lease of it*: “Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations.”

First, then here is *a habitation*: “Lord, thou hast been our habitation.” The mighty Jehovah, who filleth all immensity, the Eternal, Everlasting, Great I Am, does not refuse to allow figures concerning himself. Though he is so high that the eye of angel hath not seen him, though he is so lofty that the wing of cherub hath not reached him, though he is so great that the utmost extent of the travels of immortal spirits have never discovered the limit of himself—yet he does not object that his people should speak of him thus familiarly, and should say, “Jehovah, thou hast been our dwelling-place.” We shall understand this figure better by contrasting the thought, with the state of Israel in the wilderness; and, secondly, by making mention of some things by way of comparison, which are peculiar to our house, and which we never can enjoy if we are not the possessors of a dwelling-place of our own.

First, we shall contrast this thought, “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place,” with the peculiar position of the Israelites as they were traveling through the wilderness.

We remark, first, that *they must have been in a state of great uneasiness*. At nightfall, or when the pillar stayed its motion, the tents were pitched, and they laid themselves down to rest. Perhaps to-morrow, ere the morning sun had risen, the trumpet sounded, they stirred themselves from their beds and found the ark was in motion, and the fiery cloudy pillar was leading the way through the narrow defiles of the mountain up the hillside, or along the arid waste of the wilderness. They had scarcely time to arrange their little property in their tents and make all things comfortable for themselves, before they heard the sound of “Away! away! away! this is not your rest; you must still be onward journeying toward Cannan!” They could not plant a little patch of ground around their tents, they could not lay out their house in order, and arrange their furniture, they could not become attached to the spot of ground. Even though just now their father had been buried in a place where a tent had tarried for a time yet they must be off. They must have no attachment to the place, they must have nothing of what we call comfort, ease, and peace; but be always journeying, always traveling. Moreover, so exposed were they, that they never could be very easy in their tents. At one time the sand, with the hot simoom behind it, would drive through the tent and cover them almost to burial. On frequent occasions the hot sun would scorch them, and their canvas would scarce be a preservation; at another time the biting north wind would freeze around them, so that within their tents they sat shivering and cowering around their fires. They had little ease; but behold the contrast which Moses, the man of God, discerns with gratitude,

“Thou art not our tent, but thou art our dwelling-place. Though we are uneasy here, though we are tossed from side to side by troubles, though we travel through a wilderness, and find it a rough pathway, though when we sit down here we know not what comfort means, O Lord, in thee we possess all the comfort which a house can afford, we have all that a mansion or palace can give the prince, who can loll upon his couch, and rest upon his bed of down. Lord, thou art to us comfort, thou art a house and habitation.” Have you ever known what it is to have God for your dwelling-place in the sense of comfort? Do you know what it is, when you have storms behind you, to feel like a sea-bird, blown to the land by the very storm? Do you know what it is, when you have been caged sometimes by adversity, to have the string cut by divine grace, and like the pigeon that flies at once to its own dovecot, have you sped your way across the ether, and found yourself in God? Do you know what it is, when you are tossed on the waves, to do down into the depths of Godhead, there rejoicing that not a wave of trouble ruffles your spirit, but that you are serenely at home with God your own Almighty Father? Can you, amid all the uneasiness of this desert journey, find a comfort there? Is the breast of Jesus a sweet pillow for your head? Can you, lie thus on the breast of Deity? Can you put yourself in the stream of Providence and float along without a struggle, while angels sing around you—divinely guided, divinely led—“We are bearing thee along the stream of Providence to the ocean of eternal bliss!” Do you know what it is to lie on God, to give up all care, to drive anxiety away, and there—not in a recklessness of spirit, but in a holy carelessness—to be careful for nothing, “but in every thing by supplication to make known your wants unto God?” If so you have gained the first idea; “Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place throughout all generations.”

Again, the Israelites were *very much exposed to all kinds of noxious creatures*, owing to their residing in tents, and their habits of wandering. At one time the fiery serpent was their foe. By night the wild beasts prowled around them. Unless that fiery pillar had been a wall of fire around them and glory in the midst, they might all have fallen a prey to the wild monsters that roamed the deserts. Worse foes they found in human kind. The Amalekites rushed down from the mountains; wild wandering hordes constantly attacked them. They never felt themselves secure, for they were travelers through an enemy’s country. They were hasting across a land where they were not wanted, to another land that was providing means to oppose them when they should arrive. Such is the Christian. He is journeying through an enemy’s land; every day he is exposed to danger. His tent may be broken down by death; the slanderer is behind him, the open foeman is before him; the wild beast that prowls by night, and the pestilence that wasteth by day, continually seek his destruction; he finds no rest where he is; he feels himself exposed. But, says Moses, “Though we live in a tent exposed to wild beasts and fierce men, yet thou art our habitation. In thee we find no exposure. Within thee we find ourselves secure, and in thy glorious person we dwell as in an impregnable tower of defense, safe from every fear and alarm, knowing that we are secure.” O

Christian, hast thou ever known what it is to stand in the midst of battles, with arrows flying thick around thee more than thy shield can catch; and yet thou hast been as secure as if thou wert folding thine arms and resting within the walls of some strong bastion, where arrow could not reach thee, and where even the sound of trumpet could not disturb thine ears? Hast thou known what it is to dwell securely in God, to enter into the Most High, and laugh to scorn the anger, the frowns, the sneers, the contempt, the slander and calumny of men; to ascent into the sacred place of the pavilion of the Most High, and to abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and to feel thyself secure? And mark thee, thou mayest do this. In times of pestilence it is possible to walk in the midst of cholera and death, singing—

“Plagues and deaths around me fly,
Till he please, I cannot die.”

It is possible to stand exposed to the utmost degree of danger, and yet to feel such a holy serenity that we can laugh at fear; too great, too mighty, too powerful through God to stoop for one moment to the cowardice of trembling, “we know whom we have believed, and we are persuaded that he is able to keep that which we have committed unto him.” When houseless men wander, when poor distressed spirits, beaten by the storm, find no refuge, we enter into God, and shutting behind us the door of faith, we say, “Howl, ye winds; blow, ye tempests; roar, ye wild beasts; come on, ye robbers!”

“He that hath made his refuge God,
Shall find a most secure abode,
Shall walk all day beneath his shade,
And there at night shall rest his head.”

Lord, in this sense, thou hast been our habitation.

Again, poor Israel, in the wilderness, *were continually exposed to change*. They were never in one place long. Sometimes they might tarry for a month in one spot—just near the seventy palm-trees. What a sweet and pleasant place to go out each morning, to sit beside the well and drink that clear stream! “Onward!” cries Moses; and he takes them to a place where the bare rocks stand out from the mountain side, and the red burning sand is beneath their feet; vipers spring up around them, and thorny brakes grow instead of pleasing vegetation. What a change have they! Yet, another day they shall come to a place that shall be more dreary still. They walk through a defile so close and narrow, that the affrighted rays of the sun dare scarce enter such a prison, lest they should never find their way out again! They must go onward from place to place, continually changing, never having time to settle, and to say, “Now we are secure, in this place we shall dwell.” Here, again, the contrast casts light upon the text: “Ah!” says Moses, “though we are always changing, Lord, thou hast been our dwelling-place throughout all generations.” The Christian knows no change with regard to God. He may be rich to-day, and poor to-morrow; he may be sickly to-day and well to-morrow; he may be in happiness to-day, to-morrow he may be distressed; but there is no

change with regard to his relationship to God. If he loved me yesterday he loves me to-day. I am neither better nor worse in God than I ever was. Let prospects be blighted, let hopes be blasted, let joy be withered, let mildews destroy every thing, I have lost nothing of what I have in God. He is my strong habitation whereunto I can continually resort. The Christian never becomes poorer, and never grows richer with regard to God. "Here," he can say, "is a thing that never can pass away or change. On the brow of the Eternal there is never a furrow; his hair is unwhitened by age; his arm is unpalsied by weakness; his heart does not change in its affections; his will does not vary in its purpose; he is the immutable Jehovah, standing fast and forever. Thou art our habitation! As the house changes not, but stands in the same place, so have I found thee from my youth up. When first I was cast upon thee from my mother's breast, I found thee my God of Providence. When first I knew thee by that spiritual knowledge which thou alone canst give, I found thee a sure habitation; and I find thee such now. Yea, when I shall be old and gray-headed, I know thou wilt not forsake me; thou wilt be the same dwelling-place in all generations."

One thought more in contrasting the position of the Israelites with ourselves—that is, *weariness*. How weary must Israel have been in the wilderness! How tired must have been the soles of their feet with their constant journeyings! They were not in a place of repose, luxury, and rest, but in a land of journeying, and weariness, and trouble. I think I see them traveling, wiping frequently the burning sweat from their brows, and saying, "O that we had a habitation where we might rest! O that we could enter a land of vines and pomegranates, a city where we might enjoy immunity from alarm! God has promised it to us, but we have not found it. There remaineth a rest for the people of God; O that we might find it." Christian! God is your habitation in this sense. He is your rest; and you will never find rest except in him. I defy a man who has no God to have a soul at rest. He who has not Jesus for his Saviour, will always be a restless spirit. Read some of Byron's verses, and you will find him—if he was truly picturing himself—to be the very personification of that spirit who "walked to and fro seeking rest and finding none." Here is one of his verses:—

"I fly like a bird of the air,
In search of a home and a rest;
A balm for the sickness of care,
A bliss for a bosom unblest."

Read the lives of any men who have had no gospel justification, or have had no knowledge of God, and you will find that they were like the poor bird that had its nest pulled down, and knew not where to rest, flying about, wandering, and seeking a habitation. Some of you have tried to find rest out of God. You have sought to find it in your wealth; but you have pricked your head when you have laid it on that pillow. You have sought it in a friend, but that friend's arm has been a broken reed, where you hoped it would be a wall of strength. You will never find rest except in God; there is no refuge but in him. Oh! what rest and

composure are there in him! It is more than sleep, more than calm, more than quiet; deeper than the dead stillness of the noiseless sea in its utmost depths, where it is undisturbed by the slightest ripple, and winds can never intrude. There is a holy calm and sweet repose which the Christian only knows, something like the slumbering stars up there in beds of azure; or like the seraphic rest which we may suppose beatified spirits have when they before the throne continually bow; there is a rest so deep and calm, so still and quiet, so profound, that we find no words to describe it. You have tried it, and can rejoice in it. You know that the Lord has been your dwelling-place—your sweet, calm, constant home, where you can enjoy peace in all generations. But I have dwelt too long upon this part of the subject, and I will speak of it in a different way.

First of all, *the dwelling-place of man is the place where he can unbend himself, and feel himself at home, and speak familiarly.* In this pulpit I must somewhat check my words; I deal with men of the world who watch my speech, and are ever on the catch, men who wish to have this or that to retail—I must be on my guard. So you men of business, when you are on the exchange, or in your shops, have to guard yourselves. What does the man do at home? He can lay bare his breast, and do and say as he pleases; it is his own house, his dwelling-place; and is he not master there? Shall he not do as he will with his own? Assuredly; for he feels himself at home. Ah! my beloved, do you ever find yourself in God to be at home? Have you been with Christ, and told your secrets in his ear, and found that you could do so without reserve? We do not generally tell secrets to other people, for it we do, and make them promise that they will never tell them, they *will* never tell them except to the first person they meet. Most persons who have secrets told them, are like the lady of whom it is said she never told her secrets except to two sorts of persons—those that asked her and those that did not. You must not trust men of the world; but do you know what it is to tell all your secrets to God in prayer, to whisper all your thoughts to him? You are not ashamed to confess your sins to him with all their aggravations; you make no apologies to God, but you put in every aggravation, you describe all the depths of your baseness. Then, as for your little wants, you would be ashamed to tell them to another; before God you can tell them all. You can tell him your grief that you would not whisper to your dearest friend. With God you can be always at home, you need be under no restraint. The Christian at once gives God the key of his heart, and lets him turn every thing over. He says, “There is the key of every cabinet; it is my desire that thou wouldst open them all. If there are jewels, they are thine; and if there be things that should not be there, drive them out. Search me, and try my heart.” The more God lives in the Christian, the better the Christian loves him; the oftener God comes to see him, the better he loves his God. And God loves his people all the more when they are familiar with him. Can you say in this sense, “Lord, thou hast been my dwelling place?”

Then, again, *man's home is the place where his affections are centered*. God deliver us from those men who do not love their homes! Lives there a man so base, so dead, that he has no affection for his own house? If so, surely the spark of Christianity must have died entirely out. It is *natural* that men should love their homes; it is *spiritual* that they should love them better still. In our homes we find those to whom we must and ever shall be most attached. There our best friends and kindred dwell. When we wander, we are as birds that have left their nests and can find no settled home. We wish to go back and to see again that smile, to grasp once more that loving hand, and to find that we are with those to whom the ties of affection have knit us. We wish to feel—and every Christian man will feel—with regard to his own family, that they are the warp and woof of his own nature, that he has become a part and portion of them; and there he centers his affection. He can not afford to lavish his love everywhere. He centers it in that particular spot, that oasis in this dark desert world. Christian man, is God your habitation in that sense? Have you given your whole soul to God? Do you feel you can bring your whole heart to him, and say, “O, God! I love from my soul; with the most impassioned earnestness I love thee.

“The dearest idol I have known—

Whate’er that idol be—

Help me to tear it from its throne,

And worship only thee!”

O God! though I sometimes wander, yet I love thee in my wanderings, and my heart is fixed on thee. What though the creature doth beguile me, I detest that creature; it is to me as the apple of Sodom. Thou art the master of my soul, the emperor of my heart; no vice-regent, but King of kings. My spirit is fixed on thee as the center of my soul.

“Thou art the sea of love

Where all my pleasures roll,

The circle where my passions move;

The center of my soul.”

O God! thou hast been our dwelling-place throughout all generations.”

My next remark is concerning the *lease of this dwelling-place*. God is the believer’s habitation. Sometimes, you know, people get turned out of their houses, or their houses tumble down about their ears. It is never so with ours: God is our dwelling-place throughout all generations. Let us look back in times past, and we shall find that God has been our habitation. Oh, the old house at home! who does not love it—the place of our childhood, the old roof-tree, the old cottage! There is no village in all the world half so good as that particular village where we were born! True, the gates, and stiles, and posts have been altered; but still there is an attachment to those old houses, the old tree in the park, and the old ivy-mantled tower. It is not very picturesque, perhaps, but we love to go to see it. We like to see the haunts of our boyhood. There is something pleasant in those old stairs where the clock

used to stand; and in the room where grandmother was wont to bend her knee, and where we had family prayer. There is no place like that house after all! Well, beloved, God has been the habitation of the Christian in years that are gone by. Christian, your house is indeed a venerable house, and you have long dwelt there. You dwelt there in the person of Christ long before you were brought into this sinful world; and it is to be your dwelling-place throughout all generations. You are never to ask for another house; you will always be contented with that one you have; you will never wish to change your habitation. And if you wished it, you could not; for he is your dwelling-place in all generations. God give you to know what it is to take this house in its long lease, and ever to have God for your dwelling-place!

II. Now I come to improve this text somewhat. First, let us improve it to SELF EXAMINATION. How may we know whether we be Christians or not, whether the Lord is our dwelling-place, and will be throughout all generations? I shall give you some hints for self-examination, by referring you to several passages which I have looked out in the first epistle of John. It is remarkable that almost the only scriptural writer who speaks of God as a dwelling-place, is that most loving apostle, John, out of whose epistle we have been reading.

He gives us in the 12th verse of the 4th chapter, one means of knowing whether we are living in God: "*If we love one another*, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us." And again further on, he says, "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." You may then tell whether you are a tenant of this great spiritual house by the love you have toward others. Have you a love toward the saints? Well, then, you are a saint yourself. The goats will not love the sheep; and if you love the sheep, it is an evidence that you are a sheep yourself. Many of the Lord's weak family never can get any other evidence of their conversion except this- "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And though that is very little evidence, yet it is such a one that the strongest faith often can not get a much better. "If I do not love God, I love his people; if I am not a Christian, I love his house." What! has the devil told thee thou art not the Lord's? Poor Faintheart, dost thou love the Lord's people? "Yes," sayest thou, "I love to see their faces, and to hear their prayers; I could almost kiss the hem of their garments." Is it so? and would you give them if they were poor? would you visit them if they were sick, and tend them if they needed assistance? "Ah! yes." Then fear not. You who love God's people must love the Master. We know we dwell in God if we love one another.

In the 13th verse is another sign: "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because *he hath given us of his Spirit*." Have we ever had the Spirit of God in us? That is one of the most solemn questions I can ask. Many of you know what it is to be excited by religious feeling who never had the Spirit of God. Many of us have great need to tremble lest we should not have received that Spirit. I have tried myself scores of times, in different ways,

to see whether I really am a possessor of the Spirit of God or not. I know that the people of the world scoff at the idea, and say, "It is impossible for any body to have the Spirit of God." Then it is impossible for any body to go to heaven; for we must have the Spirit of God, we must be born again of the Spirit, before we can enter there. What a serious question is this: "Have I had the Spirit of God in me? True, my soul is at times lifted on high, and I feel I could sing like a seraph. True, sometimes I am melted down by deep devotion, and I could pray in terrible solemnity. But so could hypocrites, perhaps. Have I the Spirit of God? Have you any evidence within you that you have the Spirit? Are you sure that you are not laboring under a delusion and a dream? Have you actually the Spirit of God within you? If so, you dwell in God. That is the second sign.

But the apostle gives another sign in the 15th verse: "Whosoever shall *confess that Jesus is the Son of God*, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." The confession of our faith in the Saviour is another sign that we live in God. Oh! poor heart, canst thou not come under this sign? Thou mayest have but little boldness, but canst thou say, "I believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ?" If so, thou dwellest in God. Many of you, I know, say—"When I hear a sermon, I feel affected by it. When I am in the house of God I feel like a child of God, but the business, cares, and troubles of life take me off, and then I fear I am not." But you can say, "I do believe in Christ; I know I cast myself on his mercy, and hope to be saved by him." Then do not say you are not a child of God if you have faith.

But there is one more sign whereby we ought to examine ourselves, in the 3rd chapter, 24th verse: "*He that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him*, and he in him." Obedience to the commandments of God is a blessed sign of a dwelling in God. Some of you have a deal of religious talk, but not much religious walk; a large stock of outside piety, but not much real inward piety, which develops itself in your actions. That is a hint for some of you who know that it is right to be baptized, and are not. You know it is one of the commandments of God, that "he that believeth shall be baptized," and you are neglecting what you know to be your duty. You are dwelling in God, I doubt not, but you lack one evidence of it, namely—obedience to God's commandments. Obey God, and then you will know that you are dwelling in him.

But I have another word by way of improvement, and that is one of CONGRATULATION. You who dwell in God, allow me to congratulate you. Thrice happy men are ye, if ye are dwelling in God! You need not blush to compare yourselves with angels, you need not think that any on earth can share such happiness as yours! Zion, O how blessed art thou, freed from all sins! Now thou art, through Christ, made to dwell in God, and therefore art eternally secure! I congratulate you, Christians, first, that you have such a *magnificent house* to dwell in. You have not a palace that shall be as gorgeous as Solomon's—a mighty palace as immense as the dwellings of the kings of Assyria, or Babylon; but you have a God that is more than mortal creatures can behold; you dwell in an immortal fabric, you dwell in the

Godhead—something which is beyond all human skill. I congratulate you, moreover, that you live in such a *perfect house*. There never was a house on earth that could not be made a little better; but the house you dwell in has every thing you want; in God you have all you require. I congratulate you, moreover, that you live in a house that shall *last forever*, a dwelling-place that shall not pass away; when this world shall have been scattered like a dream; when, like the bubble on the breaker, creation shall have died away; when all this universe shall have died out like a spark from an expiring brand, your house shall live and stand more imperishable than marble, more solid than granite, self-existent as God, for it is God! Be happy then.

Now, lastly, a word of ADMONITION AND WARNING to some of you. My hearers, what a pity it is that we have to divide our congregation, that we can not speak to you in a mass as being all Christians. This morning, I would I could take God's word and address it to you all, that you all might share the sweet promises it contains. But some of you would not have them if I were to offer them. Some of you despise Christ, my blessed Master. Many of you think sin to be a trifle, and grace to be worthless, heaven to be a vision, and hell to be a fiction. Some of you are careless, and hardened, and thoughtless, without God, and without Christ. Oh! my hearers, I wonder at myself that I should have so little benevolence, that I do not preach more fervently to you. Methinks if I could get a right estimate of your souls' value that I should speak not as I do now with stammering tongue, but with flaming words. I have great cause to blush at my own slothfulness, though God knows I have striven to preach God's truth as vehemently as possible, and would spend myself in his service; but I wonder I do not stand in every street in London and preach his truth. When I think of the thousands of souls in this great city that have never heard of Jesus, that have never listened to him; when I think of how much ignorance exists, and how little gospel preaching there is, how few souls are saved, I think—O God! what little grace I must have, that I do not strive more for souls.

One word by way of *warning*. Do you know, poor soul, that you have not a house to live in? You have a house for your body but no house for your soul. Have you ever seen a poor girl at midnight sitting down on a door-step crying? Somebody passes by, and says, "Why do you sit here?" "I have no house, sir. I have no home." "Where is your father?" "My father's dead, sir." "Where is your mother?" "I have no mother, sir." "Have you no friends?" "No friends at all." "Have you no house?" "No; I have none. I am houseless." And she shivers in the chill air, and gathers her poor ragged shawl around her, and cries again, "I have no house—I have no home." Would you not pity her? Would you blame her for her tears? Ah! there are some of you that have houseless souls here this morning. It is something to have a houseless body; but to think of a houseless soul! Methinks I see you in eternity sitting on the door-step of heaven. An angel says, "What! have you no house to live in?" "No house," says the poor soul. "Have you no father?" "No; God is not my father; and there is none

beside him.” “Have you no mother?” “No; the church is not my mother; I never sought her ways, nor loved Jesus. I have neither father nor mother.” “Have you no house, then?” “No; I am a houseless soul.” But there is one thing worse about that—houseless souls have to be sent into hell; to a dungeon, to a lake that burns with fire. Houseless soul! in a little while thy body will have gone; and where wilt thou house thyself when the hot hail of eternal vengeance comes from heaven? Where wilt thou hide thy guilty head, when the winds of the last judgment-day shall sweep on thee with fury? Where wilt thou shelter thyself, when the blast of the terrible one shall be as a storm against a wall, when the darkness of eternity comes upon thee, and hell thickens round thee? It will be all in vain for you to cry, “Rocks, hide me; mountains, fall upon me;” the rocks will not obey you, the mountains will not hide you. Caverns would be palaces if you could dwell in them, but there will be no caverns for you to hide your head in, but you will be houseless souls, houseless spirits, wandering through the shades of hell, tormented, destitute, afflicted, and that throughout eternity. Poor houseless soul, dost thou want a house? I have a house to let this morning for every sinner who feels his misery. Do you want a house for your soul? Then I will condescend to men of low estate, and tell you in homely language, that I have a house to let. Do you ask me what is the purchase? I will tell you; it is something less than proud human nature will like to give. It is without money and without price. Ah! you would like to pay some rent wouldn’t you? You would love to do something to win Christ. You can not have the house then; it is “without money and without price.” I have told you enough of the house itself, and therefore I will not describe its excellences. But I will tell you one thing—that if you feel that you are a houseless soul this morning, you may have the key to-morrow; and if you feel yourself to be a houseless soul to-day, you may enter it now. If you had a house of your own I would not offer it to you; but since you have no other, here it is. Will you take my Master’s house on a lease for all eternity, with nothing to pay for it, nothing but the ground-rent of loving and serving him forever? Will you take Jesus, and dwell in him throughout eternity? or will you be content to be a houseless soul? Come inside, sir; see, it is furnished from top to bottom with all you want. It has cellars filled with gold, more than you will spend as long as you live; it hath a parlor where you can entertain yourself with Christ, and feast on his love; it has tables well stored with food for you to live on forever; it hath a drawing-room of brotherly love where you can receive your friends. You will find a resting room up there where you can rest with Jesus; and on the top there is a look-out, whence you can see heaven itself. Will you have the house, or will you not? Ah! if you are houseless, you will say, “I should like to have the house; but may I have it?” Yes; there is the key. The key is, “Come to Jesus.” But, you say, “I am too shabby for such a house.” Never mind; there are garments inside. As Rowland Hill once said—

“Come naked, come filthy, come ragged, come poor,
Come wretched, come dirty, come just as you are.”

If you feel guilty and condemned, come, and though the house is too good for you, Christ will make you good enough for the house by-and-by. He will wash you, and cleanse you, and you will yet be able to sing with Moses, with the same unfaltering voice, “Lord, thou hast been *my* dwelling place throughout all generations.”