

## Choice Portions

A SERMON DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING, MAY 25, 1862, BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON, AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"For the Lord's portion is His people." [Deuteronomy 32:9](#).

"The Lord is my portion, says my soul." [Lamentations 3:24](#).

The love of God changes us into its own image, so that what the Lord says concerning us, we also can declare concerning Him. God is love essentially, and when this essential love shines forth freely upon us, we reflect it back upon Him. He is like the sun, the great father of lights, and we are as the moon and the planets—we shine in rays borrowed from His brightness. He is the golden seal, and we, His people, are the wax receiving the impression. Our Heaven is to be likeness to Christ and our preparation for Heaven consists in a growing imitation of Him in all things. See, Brethren, how the Lord gives the Word, and our heart, like an echo, repeats every syllable. The Lord loves His people and we love Him because He first loved us. He has chosen His saints and they also have made Him their chosen heritage. The saints are precious to Jesus and unto us who believe He is precious. Christ lived for us, and for us to live is Christ—we gain all things by His death and for us to die is gain.

The Church is the looking glass in which Christ sees Himself reflected. She is like a fair songstress taking up the refrain of Jesus' canticles of love, while He sings, "My sister, My spouse," she answers, "My Beloved is mine and I am His." It is most delightful to perceive how, through Divine Grace, Believers come to have the same feeling towards their God which their gracious Lord has towards them.

Our two texts present us with an interesting instance—the Church is God's portion—He delights in her, He finds in her His solace and His joy. But God is also, as the result of this, the Church's portion—her full delight and bliss. Beloved, the love is mutual. And whereas the Lord is married to His people, we perceive that it is no forced match on either side. He voluntarily gave Himself to her and she joyfully surrenders her all to Him. His whole heart He gave unto His chosen people, and now they as voluntarily, though led by Divine Grace, give themselves to Him. And while He clasps His Church in His arms, saying, "You are My portion," she returns the embrace and rapturously cries, "You are my portion, O Lord."

As God shall help me, and relying only on His Divine assistance, I shall try to work out these two texts at some length. We shall commence with, "The Lord's portion." We will then proceed to the second, "His people's portion." I. "THE LORD'S PORTION IS HIS PEOPLE."

1. The text teaches us that the Church of God is the Lord's own peculiar and special property. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof. The world and they that dwell therein." By creation, as well as by Providence, Jehovah is the liege Lord and Sovereign possessor of the entire universe. Let none venture to dispute His claims, or say that He is

not the great Owner of all things, for thus says the Lord, "Behold, all souls are Mine." But He has a special property in His Church.

As a king may have ample possessions, to all of which he has undoubted right, still he has royal mansions and crown lands which are in a very special sense his own. So has the Lord of All a peculiar interest in His saints. As Osborne and Balmoral and Windsor belong to our sovereign by a tenure which differs from her title and claim to the United Kingdom, so the Church is the peculiar heritage of the King of kings. The whole world is God's by common right. He is Lord of the manor of the universe. But His Church is His garden, His cultivated and fenced field, and if He should give up His rights to all the rest of the wide earth, yet He never could relinquish His rights to His separated inheritance. "The Lord's portion is His people."

How are they His? We answer, first, by His own sovereign choice. Before they were fashioned, all creatures lay in His mind's eye in the mass of creatureship, and it was in His power to make whom He would as vessels unto honor. He did so ordain to make His chosen and set His love upon them. When they lay in the impure mass, having all fallen, it was still in His power, through the plan of redemption, to raise up some and to make these His own special heritage. This He did altogether apart from any goodness in them at the time, or any goodness which He foresaw in them.

He had mercy on whom He would have mercy and ordained a chosen company into eternal life. These, therefore, are His by election. As our text says, Jacob is the lot of His inheritance, or as the Hebrew has it, "the cord" of His inheritance, an allusion to the old custom of measuring out lots by a line or cord. So by line and by lot the Lord has marked off His own chosen people, "and they shall be Mine, says the Lord, in the day when I make up My jewels."

They are not only His by choice, but by purchase. He has bought and paid for them to the utmost farthing, so that about His title there can be no dispute. Not with corruptible things, as with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord's portion has been fully redeemed. There is no mortgage on His estate, no suits can be raised by opposing claimants, the price was paid in open court and the Church is the Lord's freehold forever.

See the blood-mark upon all the chosen, invisible to human eye but known to Christ, for "the Lord knows them that are His"? He forgets none of those whom He has redeemed from among men. He counts the sheep for whom He laid down His life and remembers well the Church for which He gave Himself. Should any fraudulent adversary dispute His claim, He shows His pierced hands and points to His wounded side. The emblems of His passion are the seals of His possession.

They are also His by conquest. Old Jacob, when he lay dying, gave to Joseph one portion above his brothers, which he had taken out of the hand of the Amorite with his sword and

with his bow. The Lord Jesus can truly say of His people that He has taken them out of the hand of the Amorite with His sword and with His bow. Your conquering hand, O Jesus, when nailed to the Cross, rent away Your children's chains. You have trod our foes in Your anger and trampled them in Your hot displeasure. Behold their blood is sprinkled upon Your garments and You have stained all Your raiment.

Upon your necks, O you tyrants of the Church, has the Anointed put His feet. He has dashed you in pieces with His own right hand! He has broken the ties of the young lions and delivered His Israel out of the jaw of the lion and the paw of the bear. He has obtained His saints as a portion which He divides with the great, and as a spoil which He has taken from the strong. We are Christ's this day by conquest in us. What a battle He had in us before we would be won! How long He laid siege to our hearts! How often He sent His terms of capitulation.

But we rejected all overtures of submission. We barred our gates. We fenced our walls against Him. The Law, with its great battering ram, smote our gates till the posts rocked in their sockets, but we fortified our strongholds and fought stoutly against the Most High, vowing that we would not be subdued. But ah, do you not remember that glorious hour when He carried our hearts by storm, when He put His Cross against the wall and scaled our ramparts, planting on our strongholds the blood-red flag of His atoning mercy?

O Brethren, we are, indeed, the conquered captives of His omnipotent love. Thus chosen, purchased and subdued, the rights of our Divine possessor are undeniable, and we, His people, are the regalia of His royalty, the gems of His crown, the sheep of His pasture, the children of His love, the darlings of His heart—if He could renounce all else which owns His sway, yet can He never give them up of whom it is written, "the Lord's portion is His people."

2. In the second place, the text shows that the saints are the objects of the Lord's special care. "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth"—with what object?—"To show Himself strong in behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him." The wheels of Providence are full of eyes. But in what direction are they gazing? Why, that all things may "work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose." God is omnipresent and omniscient—has an eye to all creatures and all things.

He sees all immensity. He beholds all things at one gaze. Yet, "the eyes of the Lord," in a special sense, "are upon the righteous." And though His ears are open to all things, yet, in a peculiar manner, "His ears are open to their cry." It is true the Lord is the eternal Watcher of the universe and never sleeps. Yet, in a very distinct sense, He is the guardian of His Church. "I the Lord do keep it. I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it. I will keep it night and day." "Behold He that keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep."

He encompasses all things by the Word of His power and He upholds all things by His might. But His power, His presence and His protection, are more peculiarly with His Church, for He is to her "a wall of fire round about her and a glory in her midst." The Church, then, as God's portion, is His peculiar care. When she lay at first in her barrenness, as a corner of the vast howling wilderness, He took her under His care. He fenced and hedged her. He began to dig up by the roots her nettles, her thorns, her briers. He sent the spirit of burning into her, by which the weeds of evil were consumed. He plowed her deep with convictions. He harrowed her with the Law. He scattered into her the incorruptible seed of the Word of God, which lives and abides forever.

When He saw her tender blades springing up, He watched over every one of them, sending the dewdrops, and the rain showers, and the sunbeams, and the wind, just when they were needed. And He continues still to watch, even when her harvest grows ripe and the blade has given place to the full corn in the ear. He will watch until He himself, descending from the Great White Throne, shall take the golden sickle and reap the sheaves and return to His eternal garner rejoicing, bringing His sheaves with Him.

Dear Friends, it is sweet to reflect how careful God is of His Church. We are jealous of our eyes, but the Lord keeps His people as the apple of His eye. What a wonderful affection birds have for their young. They will sooner die than let their little ones be destroyed! But like as an eagle flutters over her nest, so does the Lord of Hosts defend Jerusalem. What love a true husband has for his spouse! How much rather would he suffer than that she should grieve! And just such love has God towards His Church. Oh, how He cares for her! How He provides for her as a king should provide for his own queen! How He watches all her footsteps, guards all her motions.

He has her at all times beneath His eyes and protected by His hands. Hear how He tells of His care in providing for His Israel. "Now when I passed by you and looked upon you, behold, your time was the time of love. And I spread my skirt over you and covered your nakedness: yes, I swore unto you and entered into a Covenant with you, says the Lord God, and you became Mine. Then I washed you with water. Yes, I thoroughly washed away your blood from you and I anointed you with oil. I clothed you, also with broidered work and shod you with badger's skin.

"And I girded you about with fine linen and I covered you with silk. I decked you also with ornaments and I put bracelets upon your hands and a chain on your neck. And I put a jewel on your forehead and earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown upon your head. Thus were you decked with gold and silver. And your raiment was of fine linen and silk and broidered work. You did eat fine flour and honey, and oil: and you were exceedingly beautiful."

Never was there care so tender, so perpetual, so faithful, so affectionate, as the care of God over all His chosen ones, for indeed, it is no fiction and no metaphor—the Lord's portion

really is His people. He covers us with His feathers and under His wings do we trust. His Truth is become our shield and buckler. The Lord is mighty in battle for His Church. He puts out His omnipotence when He first of all delivers her, and no less might does He show every day when He keeps her from falling. And He will present her at last spotless before His face. Never was castle upon a mountain summit, fortified by nature, so impregnable as is the Church of God—

"Munitions of stupendous rock Her dwelling place shall be; There shall her sons without a shock The wreck of nature see."

3. The text includes the idea that the Church is the object of the Lord's special joy, for a man's portion is that in which he takes delight. Brethren, how very strong the Scripture is as to the delight which God has in His saints. I am sure you and I cannot see anything in ourselves why the Lord should take pleasure in us. We cannot take delight in ourselves, for we often have to groan, being burdened, conscious of our sinfulness. I am afraid that God's people cannot take much delight in us, for they must perceive so much of our imperfections and our follies that they must rather lament our infirmities than admire our graces.

Oh, who would not rejoice in this transcendent Truth of God, this glorious mystery? The Lord takes pleasure in them that fear Him, in them that hope in His mercy! I do not read anywhere that God delights in the cloud-capped mountains, or the sparkling stars—but I do read that He delights in the habitable parts of the earth and that His delights are with the sons of men. I do not find it written that even angels give His soul delight, nor does He say, concerning cherubim and seraphim, "I will be a father unto you and you shall be My sons and daughters." But He does say that to the poor fallen race of man—debased, depraved, dejected by their sin—but saved, exalted, glorified by His Grace!

See what terms He uses. He calls them His dwelling place. "In Jewry is God known, His name is great in Israel, in Salem also is His tabernacle and His dwelling place in Zion." "For the Lord has chosen Zion. He has desired it for His habitation." Where is a man most at ease? Why at home—

"Wherever we wander, there's no place like home." Beloved, the Church is God's home. And as at home a man unbends himself, takes his pleasure, manifests himself to his children as he does not unto strangers—so in the Church, the Lord unbends Himself, condescendingly manifesting Himself to them as He does not unto the world. O could you think of it, that the chosen of God are as dear to Him as your humble cottage is to you, as the roofter of your ancestors and the place of your birth?

We are expressly told that the Church is the Lord's rest. "This is My rest forever, here will I dwell for I have desired it." As if all the world beside were His workshop and His Church His rest. In the boundless universe He is busy marshalling the stars, riding upon the wings of the wind, making the clouds His chariot. But in His Church He is at rest, in Zion the Everlasting One spends His Sabbaths!

Yet further, there is an unrivalled picture in the Word where the Lord is even represented as singing with joy over His people. Who could have conceived of the Eternal One as bursting forth into a song? Yet it is written, "He will rejoice over you with joy, He will rest in His love, He will joy over you with singing." As He looked upon the world, He spoke and said, "It is very good," but He did not sing. And as He views the works of Providence, I hear not that He sings. But when He gazes on you and on me, the purchase of Jesus' blood—His own chosen ones—the great heart of the Infinite restrains itself no longer but, wonder of wonders, and miracle of miracles, God, the Eternal One, sings out with the joy of His soul! Truly, "the Lord's portion is His people."

Once more, remember that the Lord represents himself as married to His Church. What does He say to her? "You shall be called Hephzibah and your land Beulah: for the Lord delights in you and your land shall be married. As a young man marries a virgin, even so shall your God marry you. And as a bridegroom rejoices over a bride, even so shall your Lord rejoice over you." He puts the affection, you see, in the most brilliant light. It is not only the affection of the husband to the wife, but seeing that some men are changeable, and their love grows cold, the Lord selects that hour of first love when the bridegroom, fresh and newly married, rejoices over his bride. The joy and love of the young honeymoon of married life is but a faint picture of the complacency and delight God always has in His people.

Dear Friends, this is a subject to be thought of rather than to be talked about, for I find thoughts in my heart this morning, rather than in my head, and I cannot get them out. But this I know, there cannot be a closer union between any two beings than there is between Christ and His people, for they are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones. There cannot be a warmer love than this. A mother's love is nothing compared to it—yes, "she may forget her sucking child and cease to have compassion on the son of her womb. Yet will I never forget you, says the Lord that has mercy on you."

The husband may repulse from his arms the chosen one whom once he loved so tenderly but, "He hates putting away." Whom once He has embraced He embraces forever. "I will betroth you unto Me forever; yes, I will betroth you unto Me in righteousness and in judgment and in loving kindness and in mercies. I will even betroth you unto Me in faithfulness."

Oh that this love were shed abroad this morning in our poor frozen hearts! Oh that we felt God's delight in us! For if by faith we knew all this, and by sweet experience could attest it, surely we should be better prepared to join with Jeremiah in the second text and say, "The Lord is my portion, says my soul."

4. Our text teaches us that God's people are His everlasting possession. You will say, "Why?" There is an allusion here to the division of the portions among the different tribes. That which was the portion of Asher never could be the portion of Zebulon and that which belonged to Simeon never could belong to Dan. For there was a Law made, that if any man should lose his inheritance by debt, or should be driven to the necessity of selling it, yet at

the Year of Jubilee it always came back again to him, so that, you see, no Israelite ever lost his portion.

Now, God maps out for Himself His people. He says, "These are My portion." And do you think, Brethren, God will lose His portion? No—if He should sell His portion into the hand of the enemy for a season, yet at the Year of Jubilee it would return to Him. Glory be to God, that Year of Jubilee is come! We were sold once. It did seem as if we were no more the people of God. But the high priest has died, the Year of Jubilee has been proclaimed, and now God's inheritance has come back to Him, and if it could be alienated again, He would recover it.

If a man is a child of God and is suffered to fall, he shall certainly be brought back by bitter repentance before he dies, that his soul at the last may be saved, for God shall not lose His heritage. Have you not noticed, in reading Scripture, how the Israelites always clung tenaciously to their portion? When Ahab said to Naboth, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house: and I will give you for it a better vineyard than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you the worth of it in money," Naboth said to him, "The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto you."

And so, Brethren, God will never sell His children at any price. Nor if He could have better people instead, would He change them. They are His and they shall be His while time lasts. And when time ends and eternity rolls on, He never can, He never will, cast away His chosen people. Let us in this rejoice and be exceedingly glad. "The Lord's portion is His people."

II. We turn to our second text—"THE LORD IS MY PORTION, SAYS MY SOUL."

Dear Friends, this sentence implies that true Believers have the Lord as their sole portion. It is not, "The Lord is partly my portion," not "The Lord is in my portion." No, He Himself makes up the sum total of my soul's inheritance. The Lord Himself is my portion. Men of this world, we are told, have their portion in this life. In the field they have it in their abundant crops, and in the house they have it in comfort, in riches. Some of them have it in purple and fine linen, faring sumptuously every day.

But how is it God gives them so good a portion here? You may have seen a farmer when he has his meal prepared for his swine, he passes two or three of his little children in the yard as he is going out at feeding time. Why does he not give some of the meal to his children? He scoops it out till he has filled the hog's trough full, and then the swine come and eat till they lie down, full to bursting, their eyes standing out with fatness. How is it he does not give some of it to his children?

"Oh, no," says he, "This is not the children's meat," and as it is not meet to take the children's bread and give it unto dogs, so it would not be meet to take the swine's meat and give it unto children. When Martin Luther had a large sum of money sent to him, he gave

it all away directly to the poor, for he said, "O Lord, You shall never put me off with my portion in this life." Now when God's children receive anything in the way of gifts from Providence, they thank God for it, and endeavor to use it for His honor and glory—but they still insist that it is not their portion.

You know, when you go to a shop to buy goods, they give you the brown paper and the string in the bargain—so when we seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all these things are added to us. For godliness has the promise of the life that is now, as well as of that which is to come. But we don't go to buy the brown paper and the string, they are not what we are looking after—so with the true Christian, his portion, that which he seeks after—is his God. This is his only portion, he seeks nothing besides.

When Abraham had many children by his wife Keturah, you remember it is written he gave them their portions and sent them away. But he never did so with his Isaac. Lord, let me be Your Isaac! Give the world its portion. Give the emperor his crown. Give the rich man his money bags, send him away. But let me be a stranger with You as Isaac in his father's tent.

The man who has such a portion as this, ought not to wish for anything beyond. What can be needed beyond this portion? We are walking in the sunlight today—a fine glorious summer's day—if anyone of you should be crying in your pew this morning, and I should ask, "What are you weeping for?" and you should reply, "I am weeping because I cannot see the stars," we should think you mad. For he that has the sunlight can do without the starlight—so with the Believer. Why should he be weeping because he has lost this or lost that?—

"You at all times, will I bless;

Having YOU, I all possess;

How can I bereaved be,

Since I cannot part with YOU?" St. Augustine was likely, very often, to pray, "Lord, give me Yourself." A less portion than this would be unsatisfactory. Not God's Grace merely, nor His love. All these come into the portion but, "the Lord is, my portion, says my soul." More than His attributes, more than His love, more than His Covenant, is Jehovah Himself the special portion and privilege of His own Beloved ones. "My Soul, wait you only upon God, for my expectation is from Him." As God is our only portion, so He is our own portion—"The Lord is my portion, says my soul." I hope He is your portion, dear Brethren. But whether

He is or not does not concern me so much as whether He is mine.

Come, Brethren, have you got a personal grip of this portion? Are you sure it is yours? Pray for sinners. Ask that God may bring them in, but see, first of all, to your own personal interest in these precious things. Let it go round these pews now. Can you say, "The Lord is MY portion?" Let it not be a general declaration but a particular affirmation—"The Lord is MY portion." Yes, with streaming eyes and bursting heart, many a soul here that can now see



Jesus hanging on the Cross taking away all its guilt, can say, though almost choked with tears, "Yes, blessed be His name, the Lord is my portion."

Some of you are very poor. You have nothing in the world, but you can say, "The Lord is my portion." Like the old woman who, when she had nothing to eat but a dry crust of bread and only a cup of water to drink, broke the bread and said, "All this, and Jesus Christ, too!" We have heard of a great man who once took a poor Believer and said—"Look over there at those hills." "Yes, Sir." "Well, all that is mine. That farm yonder, and that one yonder, and beyond that river over there—it is all mine."

"Ah," said the Believer—"look at yonder little cottage, that is where I live and even that is not mine, for I have to rent it. And yet I am richer than you. I can point up yonder and say—there lies my inheritance, in Heaven's unmeasured space. And you may look as far as ever you can, you cannot see the limit of my heritage, nor find out where it ends nor where it begins."

Oh, what a blessing, Brethren, it is as if you and I can say, "He is my heritage!" Do not, I beseech you, be satisfied with generals—come to particulars. I know people think they are going to Heaven in the lump but they never will. Men go to Hell in bundles but they go to Heaven separately. "But we are a Christian nation." Nonsense about a Christian nation! We are as fairly an un-Christian nation as we are a Christian nation. "Oh but we were all made Christians when we were sprinkled." You are not such fools as to believe this abominable superstition. You know better! How can a drop of water on the forehead change the heart or affect the nature, or floods of water, for that matter? You know better than that.

Have you been born again from above? If you have not, you are not the children of God, and you have not a child's portion. Have you passed from death unto life? If not, you have not the portion of the living in Zion. You may, perhaps, have had your portion as the prodigal son did, who said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me." But unless you are converted, unless you have been brought to put your faith in Christ, you can never have that portion which belongs to the true-born heir of Heaven, for to him God has said—"Son, you are ever with Me and all that I have is yours."

But again, the Lord is to His people an inherited portion. Many men have to thank God that their fathers were born before them, for they worked and made their money, and left their estates to them. It is not every man who is rich that owes his riches to his own industry, and certainly, if you and I are so rich as to have God for our inheritance, we owe it to the fact of our birth. How came I to be the child of God? I was born so—O no, you were born an heir of wrath. I know I was the first time but the second time I was born in the image of His Son, begotten again unto lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

You cannot earn this inheritance by working for it. You cannot purchase it. You can only gain it by inheriting it. Ask yourselves very solemnly whether you know anything of the new birth, and if you do not, as the Lord my God lives, and as your soul lives, you can

have no lot or portion in this matter until you do. "If children, then heirs. Heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ." But if not children, then not heirs and the heritage cannot be yours.

But further, Brethren, this heritage is also ours by choice. We have chosen God to be our heritage. Believer, I ask you, supposing it could be left to you now whether you would have God to be your portion, or have the most splendid earthly destiny, which would you have? Oh, you would say, "Let me have my God." At first, I grant you, the will of man is not free to choose Christ, for man chooses evil and not good and the Lord must choose our inheritance for us, or else we shall never choose it. "You have not chosen Me but I have chosen you," was the word of Christ through the Apostle to all His people. But if we are really called according to the purpose of electing love we can sing—

"Loved of my God, for Him again

With love intense I burn; Chosen of Him before time began, I choose Him in return."

Better to have Christ and a fiery stake, than to lose Him and wear a royal robe. Better Christ and the old Mamertine dungeon of the Apostle Paul, than to be without Christ and live in the palace of Caesar. Christ Jesus, You blessed portion of our souls! You are altogether lovely. And if we had to begin again, we would, by Your Grace, begin with You.

Again, dear Friends, God is his people's settled portion. When you were married, some of you, there were marriage settlements to be made, deeds to be drawn up, and lawyers called in and witnesses to sign the marriage covenant. I suppose that when the Princess Alice gets her portion, it will be settled upon her in some way or other. For where there are great portions, there should be settlements. Blessed be the name of the Most High, there is a marriage settlement made upon all the Lord's people—their portion is settled on them.

"Yes, and amen in Christ Jesus," all the promises have been made to the chosen seed. Heaven and earth may pass away but the Covenant of Grace shall not be removed. The covenant of day and night may be broken. The waters may again cover the earth, sooner than the decree of Divine Grace be frustrated. Every promise of the Covenant is a consequence to every heir of Heaven, nor can Satan break them. No Parliamentary act passed on earth, no deed perpetrated in the conclaves of Hell, can ever affect the eternal, immutable, everlasting settlements of Covenant Grace which are made in Christ Jesus, ordered in all things and sure. The Lord is my settled portion.

The Lord is my all-sufficient portion. God fills himself. And as Manton says, in his exposition of the 119th Psalm, "If God is all-sufficient in Himself, He must be all-sufficient for us." And then he uses this figure—"That which fills an ocean will fill a bucket. That which will fill a gallon will fill a pint. Those revenues that will defray an emperor's expenses, are enough for a beggar or a poor man—so when the Lord Himself is satisfied with Himself, and it is His happiness to enjoy Himself, there needs no more—there is enough in God to satisfy." This is clear reasoning, Brethren, and surely if the expenses of Heaven's court never

did affect God's riches, all the expenses of our trial and affliction while we are here, never can diminish the unsearchable riches of God which are in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But you will tell me that man's wishes are very large and that it is hard to satisfy them. Ah, my Brethren, I know they are—with anything here below. You may have heard, I dare say, of the gentleman who told his servant, "You have been a very faithful servant to me, John, and as you are getting old, I should like to give you a pension. Now, what do you think would satisfy you?" "Well, master," said he, "I think if I had fifty pounds a year I should be very well satisfied, indeed." "Well, think it over," said the master, "and come to me and let me know."

So the day comes. "Now, what do you want to satisfy you?" "Well, Sir, as I said before, I should never want for anything, or wish for anything in this world, if I had fifty pounds a year." "Well, John, it shall be done. There is the settlement for you—you shall have it." That man went out of the door and said to a friend, "I wish I had said a hundred." So, you see, it is not easy to satisfy man. When he thinks he is satisfied, he still sees something beyond, the horse leech in his heart still cries, "Give, give." But God is a satisfying portion. You cannot wish for anything more than this—

"All my capacious powers can wish, In You is richly stored; Nor can my soul conceive a joy Which is not in my Lord."

I think I may add—and the experience of every Believer will bear me out—we have today a portion in which we take intense delight. I have tried in a poor way to show that God had a delight in His people. Beloved, do not His people, when they are in a right state of heart, have an intense delight in Him? Friends, we have known what it is to have delight in our children, delight in our Church. We have had delight in this House of Prayer. We have delight in one another, in sweet companionship and communion. But if you have ever tasted delight in God, you will say with Rutherford, "I have eaten the bread of angels and my mouth is out of taste for the brown bread of this world."

God gives us "a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." "I will satiate the soul of My priests with fatness and My people shall be satisfied with My goodness, says the Lord." Oh the delights that we have in God! They are not ankle-deep delights, nor knee-deep delights. But they are a river to swim in. Here we can bathe our souls—here we riot and revel in inexhaustible luxuriance of delight. Here our spirit stretches her wings and mounts like an eagle. Here she expands herself and only wishes she were more capacious, and therefore she cries, "Lord, expand me, enlarge my heart, that I may hold more of You."

Often have we felt in the spirit with Rutherford, when he cried, "Lord, make me a heart as large as Heaven, that I may hold You in it! But since the Heaven of heavens cannot contain You, Lord, make my soul as wide as seven heavens, that I may contain Your fullness." "O that the Lord would bless me, indeed, and enlarge my coasts."

And lastly, this is to the saints of God an eternal portion. Ungodly Man, you have your portion now. It will melt, Sir! When the last fire comes, it will be consumed. But the lot of the Believers will outlast the fire. The conflagration which devours all the work of man's hands shall not be able to touch, nor even to scorch any part or parcel of the portion of Believers. Indeed, it is in the world to come that Believers shall have their portion. Here they have none except trials and troubles—"in the world you shall have tribulation." But as God cannot be seen and as He is the Believer's portion, so their portion cannot be seen.

It is a good remark of an excellent commentator upon that passage, "For which cause He is not ashamed to be called their God." He writes to this effect, "If it were only for this world, God would be ashamed to be called His people's God, for His adversaries would say, 'Look at those people, how tried they are, what troubles they have, who is their God? And, says he, the Lord speaks as if He might be ashamed to be called their God, if this life were all. But the Scripture says, 'Why God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He has prepared for them a city.' "

Thus may the Lord turn upon His enemies and Say, "I am their God and although I do chasten them sorely, and lead them through the deep waters, yet see what I am preparing for them—see them as they shall be when I shall wipe all tears from their eyes and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters." It is in the prospect of bliss so ecstatic, joy so boundless, glory so eternal, that He is not ashamed to be called their God.

We are not ashamed, Brethren, to call Jehovah our God. Now let us go our way this morning to our homes. Let us eat the fat and drink the sweet in God. Let us put on our beauteous array and be appareled with the sun and have the moon under our feet. Let us go forth as princes of the blood-royal, and act according to our quality. Let us rejoice in the Lord always. Let us show to the world that we are a happy and a blessed people, until our adversaries shall have their mouths watering while they say, "Let us live the life and die the death of the righteous." "The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places and we have a goodly heritage."

Dear Friends, I shall only ask in conclusion—are there not many here who cannot say, "You are my portion, O Lord"? Will you do me this favor this morning? When you get home will you think what your portion is, and cast your accounts up? If you cannot put God in the list, I tell you that when you have cast all your portion up, it comes to nothing. It may glitter for a season, but it shall go out like brambles that crackle under the pot but which die out afterwards in a little heap of white ashes. You have nothing if you have not God.

Ask if it is worth while for the sake of this empty world to lose eternal things—and if you are convinced it is not, then may God lead you to put your trust in the Lord Jesus, and in the Lord Jesus only. "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved." Or, to give you the full, as Christ puts it, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." He that with his heart believes in Christ and with his mouth makes a profession of faith, (and it should

be done in Baptism), shall be saved. God grant us His Grace to believe, then our portion is sure forever and ever, in this world and in the world to come.