

"Your Salvation"

(No. 1417)

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, JUNE 2, 1878,

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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"Then took he Him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word: for my eyes have seen Your salvation." [Luke 2:28-30](#).

LAST Lord's-day morning [No. 1416, The Faithful Saying] we used the broad axe to clear the forest of self-righteousness—one after another human hopes were made to fall, for the axe was laid at the root of the trees. Now let us cultivate the clearing and sow the good seed! We might have had for our slogan, then, "The Lord of Hosts has purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory and to bring into contempt all the honorable of the earth." We tried to sweep away every vestige of anything like self-trust as we showed that Christ Jesus came to save men as sinners and that only as sinners could they have any part or lot in Him. Our Lord gave Himself for our sins, but He never gave Himself for our righteousness! We bore witness that human goodness is a mere fiction and that it is rather a hindrance than a help to the work of salvation, since it opposes itself to the grand principle of Grace by which, alone, men can be saved. So far our work has been to root out, to pull down, to destroy and to throw down. And we hope it has been done very thoroughly.

But there is a time to build up as well as a time to break down. And as we showed on the former occasion where salvation is not and cannot be, so today let us, by the help of God's Spirit, endeavor to point out where salvation really is—so that those who have learned to look away from themselves may now be taught to look to Christ! May the Holy Spirit grant us this desire of our heart and may thousands, by this sermon, find salvation!

Observe that Simeon found Christ in the Temple, being conducted there by the Holy Spirit. There was an ancient promise, "The Lord whom You seek shall suddenly come to His Temple," and this probably drew the holy man to the courts of the Lord. But the Lord might have come and Simeon might not have been there. Or the good old man might have been occupied in some other court of the holy place. But, being led of the Spirit, he came to the appointed spot at the very time when the mother of Christ was bringing the Baby in her arms to do for Him according to the Law. In this, Simeon is an instance of the Truth of God that they find Christ who are led by the Spirit and they, alone. No man ever comes to Christ by his own wit and wisdom, nor by his own unprompted will—he, only, who is drawn of the Spirit comes unto Christ.

We must submit ourselves to Divine teaching and Divine drawing, or else Christ may come in His Temple, but we shall not perceive Him. I, therefore, would earnestly remark at the outset of this discourse, how necessary it is that we should submit ourselves to the

movements of the Holy Spirit upon our souls. Let me rather say what a privilege it is to be moved by the Spirit and how gladly we should welcome His Divine influences. Beloved Hearer, as you love your soul, be very tender towards the Holy Spirit and prize even the least spark of His Divine fire. Quench not the Spirit, neither grieve Him. Prize the love of the Spirit and pray to feel His power. When He comes upon you to convict you of sin, be plastic in His hand! Yield to His teaching and humbly confess the faults and follies of which He convicts you.

When He comes to lead you gently to the Savior, be not as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding, but gladly follow where He draws, according to the prayer of the spouse in the song, "Draw me, we will run after You." All your hope of finding Christ, dear seeking Friend, lies in the Spirit of God illuminating your understanding, constraining your will and quickening your affections—therefore never vex Him, but be ever ready to obey His faintest monition. The wind blows where it wills and when you feel its breath, be glad to spread your wings that you may be borne upward by its power.

Simeon, being thus led of the Spirit, came where Christ was, but mark how quick the old man's eyes were to see Him! How should He know that this Baby in swaddling clothes was the Lord's Christ? Doubtless there were many others in the temple who saw Joseph and Mary and the priest, but they thought that nothing was to be seen but a young peasant

woman and her husband bringing their poor offering to redeem their first-born child. The frequenters of the Temple passed to and fro and felt no interest in so common a scene—but the watching eyes of Simeon had no sooner lighted upon the infant Person of our Divine Lord than at once they were held spellbound and filled with tears of joy! The aged saint went immediately to the mother, took up the Baby in his arms and without hesitation said, "Mine eyes have seen Your salvation."

Those who have been looking and longing for Christ are usually the first to perceive Him! This man had been waiting for the consolation of Israel and in the process he had gained discernment so that when Jesus appeared he knew Him at once. O Soul, if you are longing for Christ, you will know when He is near you, even as the thirsting harts of the desert scent the waters from afar. If you have an intense hunger after the Lord Jesus, you will not need to be told which is bread—you will not be deceived by a stone, for your hunger will instruct you. In this case an instinct springs out of an appetite, discernment grows out of desire—if you long for Christ, you will not readily be deceived by false teachers, for you will know what your soul craves after and will not be content with anything else!

As soon as a truly awakened soul sees Jesus, though it is but the beginnings of Him, it recognizes Him! It recognizes the hem of His garment and the print of His feet. Though the Lord is seen only as an Infant and the heart's idea of Him is very incomplete, yet He is perceived to be The Incomparable One and the soul cries out, "He is all my salvation and all my desire." May we thus be taught by the Spirit of God and thus made to long for Christ—and

we shall have a quickness of eye to perceive Him and to see infinitely more in Him than this blind world has ever dreamed! From Simeon we shall try to learn this morning. Should not the aged teach us wisdom?

Three things appear to me to be worthy of our attentive observation. First, that Christ is salvation, for that is the pith and marrow of Simeon's song—"My eyes have seen Your salvation." Secondly, that Christ is to be taken up into the arms and looked upon. And thirdly, that when He is thus treated, Christ has a wonderful effect upon the soul. May we be led to try all this for ourselves. Personal testing is far better than mere hearing. I may preach to you and it may end in nothing, but if you will now come and take my Lord in your arms, an eternity of good will come of it! O taste and see that the Lord is good!

I. In the first place we learn from Simeon that CHRIST IS SALVATION. He is a Savior, for so the angels sang—"Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord." But He is more than a Savior—He is salvation itself! Moses sang, "He also has become my salvation." David said, "The Lord is my light and my salvation," and Isaiah exclaimed, "Behold, God is my salvation." It is well to see salvation in the work, life and death of Christ, but we must never forget that the essence of it lies in His Person—He Himself is salvation!

Then he took Him up in his arms and said, "My eyes have seen Your salvation." This was before our Lord had begun to preach or to teach, or to suffer for our sins—as a Baby He was God's salvation! The Gospel loses very much of its sweetness when the Person of Christ is placed in the background and treated as if it were a mere myth, or as if it were quite a secondary consideration. Why, this is the choicest dainty of the feast! It is the most substantial food whereon the saints are nourished—His flesh is meat, indeed, and His blood is drink, indeed! Everything about our Lord is saving, but He, Himself, is salvation. His teaching, His example, His love, His tenderness, His sufferings, His Glory—all help us—but it is His own glorious self which puts efficacy into them! Had He not been Man, He could not have died! And had He not been God, His dying could not have availed for our redemption!

We are bid to come, not to His work, but to Him—"Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden." To Him we come and our heart can say, "He only is my rock and my salvation." Let us pursue this theme by saying of our Lord that He is the only salvation. Simeon had not found another. We are told of that aged saint, that he was just and devout—and assuredly if any man could have seen salvation by the Law, Simeon would have seen it! Just towards man, devout towards God, he had hit upon the true balance of a perfect character! But he had not seen salvation in his own character! He looked for it to the Lord's Christ. Neither to his honest actions before his fellow men, nor to his secret prayers and communing with God did Simeon turn for eternal life, otherwise he would not have been

looking for a salvation which he had already found—nor would he, at the sight of Jesus, have rapturously exclaimed, "My eyes have seen Your salvation."

Not in yourself, O Simeon! Not in all that you had done, or felt, or said had you seen salvation! But there in the Baby you did behold it with supreme delight! Simeon, too, had been very familiar with the courts of the Lord's House.

He was one of those who almost lived in the temple. Sacrifices were seen by him every morning and every evening and upon all high festivals. But in the blood of bullocks and lambs he had never seen salvation. Frequently did he gaze upon the instructive types and symbolic ordinances of the Law. But as he looked on them he saw only shadows and still watched for the Substance. Never over the morning lamb, or the paschal supper, had Simeon said, "My eyes have seen Your salvation"—that exclamation was never uttered till he had seen Christ Himself!

Beloved, salvation is not to be found in ordinances nor in sacraments! God forbid we should say, when we have seen a Baptism, or the imitation of it, "We yield You hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it has pleased You to regenerate this infant with Your Holy Spirit, to receive him for Your own child by adoption and to incorporate him in Your holy Church." There are some who wickedly talk so, though we can hardly imagine that they believe what they say! It is in vain to show them their folly—they are wedded to it—but let us pray, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." God forbid we should talk about salvation in connection with the Lord's Supper as the superstitious do, who seem to regard it as a passport to Paradise and, therefore, press it upon the dying! Truly we may, in the Lord's Supper, eat and drink condemnation to ourselves unless we discern the Lord's body.

It is in the Lord Himself that there is salvation and in none other—not even in the outward ordinances of God's ordaining is salvation to be found, for the Lord has not placed it there. See Jesus and you have seen salvation! And the only salvation! The most moral life and the most attentive remembrance of sacred ceremonies will land you short of the salvation of your soul unless you see Jesus and take Him to be your All in All. We must all learn to sing that song which Isaiah has recorded in his 12th chapter—"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation."

According to Simeon's song, the Lord Jesus is God's salvation. Dwell on that little word, "Your." "My eyes have seen Your salvation." In the Person of Christ we see the salvation which God had of old covenanted to bestow upon His people—the salvation which, in due season, the Lord had prepared before the face of all people—a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of His people Israel. The promised, predestinated and prepared salvation of God is Christ Jesus! This is the salvation of which the Prophets spoke, to which all the symbols pointed—the salvation which was hidden from ages and from generations that it

might shine forth like the sun upon this favored dispensation. It is a salvation devised and provided by God which manifests and glorifies God! It is a salvation which is Godlike, being both just and gracious! It is great beyond conception! In a word, it is God's salvation.

O Beloved, think much of Christ because the Lord God Almighty ordained Him for you and gives Him to you! God gave up His own Son for you, even His well-beloved Son! And He Himself, by the Holy Spirit, has revealed Him to you and in you, teaching you to know Him, to trust Him, to love Him and to follow Him! Therefore value Jesus beyond all price as God's own salvation! God Himself accepts Christ in our place and makes Him our salvation—will we not accept Him? God Himself does rest in Christ—will we not rest in Him? God smells a sweet savor in the Sacrifice which Christ has offered—will we not also rejoice and eat the peace offering and be glad before the Lord? Are any of you seeking salvation at this moment? I pray you do not think of inventing a savior of your own, but are willing to take God's salvation! And when you ask what and who that salvation is, our only answer must be—Christ is the salvation of God!

If you have seen Jesus by the eyes of faith, your eyes have seen God's salvation! You are saved, saved on the spot, saved forever! Jesus is Heaven's balm for earth's wounds, God's remedy for man's diseases! Do not put away this priceless gift of infinite mercy. Receive it heartily—receive it at once! Jesus is set before you, take Him up in your arms! When Simeon said, "My eyes have seen Your salvation," he must have meant that in that little Baby he saw salvation set forth in its essence. Can you bring yourselves, now, in fancy and in faith, which may, for once, work together, into the courts of the Temple? Can you see Mary with the little Christ in her arms? Look upon Him and take Him up and put yourself into Simeon's place and say, "My eyes have seen Your salvation."

This little child is salvation and yet how can it be? By the light of Scripture we can understand what else would seem incredible. For here is, first, God in human flesh! The Divine Nature in mysterious union with the human! Behold, He who is now in your arms as an Infant is also the Infinite God! Feeble as He is as to His humanity, He is Omnipotent as to His Deity! He is at once the Son of Man and the Son of God! Herein is man's salvation! When we think of the fact that God came down to our low estate and espoused our nature, we are sure that He means nothing but good to man and we

are ready to burst out with Simeon's joyous exclamation and cry, "My eyes have seen Your salvation!" We are sure that man will be lifted up to Heaven now that Heaven has come down to man!

Our Lord was not merely a Child, but a poor Child. He was so poor that His mother, when she had to redeem Him, could not bring a lamb, which was the sacrifice for all who could afford it. She presented the poorer offering, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons, and so she came as a poor woman and He was presented to the Lord as a poor woman's Child. Herein lies, also, rich comfort for lowly hearts. And as they think of it, each one may

say, "My eyes have seen Your salvation." When I think of the Prince of Glory and the Lord of angels stooping so low as this, that a poor woman bears Him in her arms and calls Him her Baby, surely there must be salvation for the lowest, the poorest and the most sunken! When the all-glorious Lord, in order to be Incarnate, is born a Baby, born of a poor woman and publicly acknowledged as a poor woman's child, we feel sure that He will receive the poorest and most despised when they seek His face! Yes, Jesus, the son of the carpenter, means salvation to carpenters and all others of lowly rank!

But why has Mary brought Him to the Temple? She has brought Him to redeem Him. He was her firstborn and therefore He must be redeemed. Was He then under the Law? Yes, for our sakes He was under the Law and He who redeemed us had to be, Himself, redeemed! When I think of the 12 and sixpence, or thereabouts, which His mother paid as redemption money, what a contrast rises before me! He has redeemed us unto God by His blood and yet, as Mary's firstborn, a price was paid in silver for Him. "A good price that I was priced at of them." Now, because our Lord Jesus came under the Law and obeyed its precepts, we see salvation in Him. When God Himself, Incarnate, came under the Law so as to have redemption money paid for Him, we understand it all, for it is written, "But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

This wondrous stoop of Deity to lowly humanity and this marvelous honoring of the Law in our nature by One who is Immanuel, God With Us, has brought salvation to our fallen race! Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, for Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ—that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith! But, to my mind, Simeon did not only see salvation represented in its Essence, but his faith saw salvation guaranteed by the appearance of the wondrous Child. Incarnation is the beginning of Substitution and the commencement of Substitution is the guarantee of the completion and the continuance of it! Our Lord would not have taken upon Himself the nature of the seed of Abraham if He had not intended to do so effectually to redeem and deliver them. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, also, Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

Be you sure of this, that He will not commence to battle with Satan and then leave the conflict before the enemy is destroyed! In that Baby, Simeon did well to see all the work of saving men, for the appearing of the Lord in our flesh and blood was the sure pledge of it! He saw, there, a perfect obedience presented to God, for the Baby was brought under the Law at the very outset and its redemption money was paid—a sure sign that to the end the Incarnate God would say, "Thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness." No jot or tittle of the Law would Christ omit, since even as a Baby He was both circumcised and presented

in the Temple according to the Law. Simeon, I doubt not, saw in the presentation of Christ in the temple, a foreshadowing of His death on the Cross. The time would come when He must be brought to the altar and no redemption would be offered for Him, for He, Himself, must be the price for His people.

Simeon saw, as he gazed upon the Child, the agony and bloody sweat, the Cross and passion, for he knew that the Incarnate God would not shrink from anything which He had undertaken. That fair and lovely face, the most beautiful probably that human eye ever rested upon—Simeon could, by faith, see it more marred than that of any man while, in our place, He suffered the wrath of God. Simeon was so well instructed that his faith saw the Child, in due time, dead— dead because the Law had carried out its penalty and the Sin-Bearer had been made to die. And he could see the Resurrection, too. As he saw the Child carried home by the rejoicing mother, because He had been redeemed, he foresaw the hour when Jesus should return unto the Father, having accomplished eternal redemption for all His people! He saw in that Child both Light and Glory and he felt deep peace suffuse his mind at the sight and, therefore, I feel sure that he saw in the Infant Christ the pledge and assurance of that perfected work which closed with, "It is finished."

Bethlehem ensures Gethsemane and Calvary, for the Christ of God will not fail nor be discouraged, but having put forth His hand, He will finish the work which His Father gave Him to do. So then, Beloved, if you see Christ, you have seen the sum and total of His work. His Person is so intimately connected with all that He has done that He bears within Himself all its virtue and efficacy—and by a look at Him we receive the result of all that He has accomplished! Trust Jesus as born in our nature, as living a life of holiness, as dying a sacrificial death, as buried, as risen, as interceding and as, by-and-by, to return, and you have salvation! Jesus anywhere, Jesus everywhere is salvation! Those who have only a contracted view of Him and behold Him rather in His Infancy than in His Glory have, nevertheless, seen His salvation!

Come, then, you trembling, tottering, timorous ones and see salvation secured by a Savior who exactly suits your weakness! Even a feeble old man can lift a baby! Come in your feebleness and embrace the Savior in whose condescending littleness salvation lies secure! I might say many things here, but I prefer just to keep to that one point, that Jesus Christ is the whole of salvation. Simeon did not say, "My eyes have seen a part of Your salvation." No, but the whole of it. Christ bought, by His blood, all that was necessary for our redemption! And having bought it, He brought it down to us, descending to seek and to save the lost. He came on earth to proclaim salvation and to let all men know that it is treasured up in Him. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell."

As He contains salvation so does He dispense it, for He is exalted on high to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins. As He dispenses it, so out of His fullness has He made all of us to receive Grace for Grace. Because He draws us to Himself, we have come

and are coming to Him perpetually. In Him we have our life preserved and by Him our steps are upheld. Because He lives, we, also, live—He is made of God unto us wisdom and sanctification. Christ has salvation within Himself and he that gets Him has complete salvation. "He that believes in Him has everlasting life." Brothers and Sisters, you are saved from the ruin of the Fall if you have Christ! The second Adam has repaired the ruins of the first. Brothers and Sisters, you are saved from the guilt of sin if you have Christ, for your sin is yours no longer— it is not imputed to you—"The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Brothers and Sisters, you are delivered from the power of original sin if you have Christ for, behold, the new-born life within you shall be in you a well of water springing up unto everlasting life! Christ has entered into you and He will bind the strong-armed man and cast him out. In having Christ, my Brethren, you have obtained victory over the world, the flesh and the devil—for this is the victory which overcomes all these—even our faith! Go forward and grasp what is already your own. Yes, and when death comes, it shall not be death to you, for he that lives and believes in Him shall never die! You shall be more than a conqueror in this thing, also—therefore be not in bondage through fear of death! You have salvation in every aspect of it and every form of it as soon as you have obtained Christ.

Very commonplace teaching, perhaps, you think. Yes, let it be commonplace! Let it be the bread you live upon, the air you breathe. I beseech you never forget that the whole of salvation is in Christ! Do not expect to find a portion of it in yourselves, nor in outward ordinances, nor in the works of the Law, nor in priestcraft, nor anywhere else—the body of salvation is Christ and all its substance is in Him. Do you object to this? Then let me ask you, in what point is Christ deficient? What more do you need? Do you need penances? Has He not already suffered all that Justice requires? What do you need? Would you toil to gain the kingdom of Heaven? Lo, He has opened it to all Believers by a toil which covered Him with bloody sweat! What more is required? Washing? There is the fountain filled with blood. Clothing? There is the robe of spotless righteousness. Medicine? Truly with His stripes we are healed!

Think of anything that can be required to make a man perfect and you will find it all in Christ. "For you are complete in Him." "Christ is all." Suppose, Beloved, that our Lord Jesus were not perfect as a Savior, what then? Could any of us make up the deficiency? What is there of ours that we could bring to Him? If His robe of righteousness were not finished, would any of our filthy rags be fit to be joined to His cloth of gold? If that fountain were not full and efficacious for cleansing, what would you pour into it? What could you contribute but your own pollution? What help could that be? Dream of yoking a gnat with an archangel and then imagine that you can help your Lord in the work of salvation! Shall a creeping worm be needed to complete the work of Him who made the world? What wild nonsense is this! Must the Son of God be helped by sinners dead in sin? O Friends, if Jesus is not able

to save you from first to last, you are lost, for neither yourself, nor priest, nor pope can bring anything to the Lord but dross and dung—and shall this be added to that most fine gold tried in the fire with which Christ redeems the souls of men?

At this moment I speak personally of my own confidence—I have no hope of being saved if Jesus is not the whole of my salvation. I trust Him in everything and for everything and I solemnly warn any here who are trusting a little in Christ and also somewhat in themselves, that their hope will be vain! Jesus must be everything or nothing! If we take Christ we must take the whole of Christ. There must be no picking and choosing. We must have all of Christ and He must be all our salvation and all our desire. What hinders? Surely we delight to do this at once!

II. We leave our first head for you to think upon and turn to the second. CHRIST IS TO BE TAKEN UP INTO OUR ARMS AND TO BE LOOKED AT. I am quite sure that when Simeon took Christ up into his arms, although that was a physical action, yet there was a spiritual action underneath it. It was in his heart that he took up our Lord. And when his natural eyes saw Christ, he beheld Him also with the eyes of his soul—of this we are sure, for if the mere sight of Christ with his eyes had been so pleasing to Simeon, he would have said, "Lord, let Your servant never go away, for my eyes have seen Your salvation. Let me, therefore, stay here and always see Him."

But the sight was spiritual and, therefore, he, though he had known Christ after the flesh, did not desire to know Him any more—but was willing to depart to the realm of pure spirits—for which that sight had prepared him. Now, will you try and picture Simeon taking up Christ that you may do the same? He no sooner saw Him than, asking nobody's leave, he lifted up the blessed Baby in his arms! That was a grasp of faith and its meaning was, "He is mine! I take Him to be my salvation." For himself he embraced the Incarnate Lord and he was not ashamed to avow his faith in the courts of the Lord's House in the midst of Jerusalem! It had been revealed to him that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ and now he openly acknowledges that this was the Christ, the Consolation of Israel!

Dear Hearers, can you not put forth your arms, this morning, and take up my Lord to be your own forever? There is nobody to forbid you—no, many are inviting you! Take Him, now, and be happy. Does your heart say, "Yes, He shall be mine"? Then delay not to claim Him! What a mercy it is that Jesus could be taken up in the arms and salvation thus be held in men's hands! He that in the beginning was with God and is, indeed, God Himself, nevertheless can be taken up in the arms of faith! A whole Christ can be held in an old man's feeble arms! O that other aged men would come and take Him! Yes, and young men and women, too! Would God that thousands of every age and sex would now confess the Lord Jesus to be their salvation! God help you so to do at once!

Simeon held that Baby in the grasp of love as well as of faith, for I am sure the old man pressed the Baby to his bosom and looked most fondly upon Him as he said, "My eyes have

seen Your salvation." He could not have held Him out at arm's length—that would have been impossible in such a case—but he felt that he at last saw the dearest Object of his desires and so he clasped Him to his bosom! Come, let us, one by one, do the same. "My Jesus, my Salvation, You are all mine and I love You. The Heaven of heavens cannot contain You and yet I hold You! You fill all worlds and yet I have You, all my own, the beloved of my soul forever." What an armful that aged saint had obtained! Did ever human arms hold a burden more precious, a treasure more desirable? Come, then, Brothers and Sisters, and say, "Christ shall be mine this morning, all mine and forever mine! By faith I take Him to be my very own." God help you, by His Holy Spirit, to give your Lord such an embrace.

While Simeon was thus holding the child in his arms, he gazed upon Him with intense delight. I know he did, for he said, "My eyes have seen Your salvation." With what wondering pleasure and reverence he looked into that dear face and marked those altogether lovely features. Doubtless he looked and looked, and looked, and looked and looked again! He could scarcely bear to lift his eyes. So must you do with Christ. First, take Him to be yours and then let your eyes be riveted upon Him. Never let your thoughts forsake this choicest of all subjects for godly meditation! Think much of Him who is the whole of your salvation and embrace Him in that respect.

Alas, there are some Christians who never think of Jesus in that way. There is a certain creed which tells you you may be saved today and lost tomorrow! No Believer has obtained eternal salvation according to that theory, but only a temporary and possible salvation. On that theory there is no seeing the whole of God's salvation as soon as you see Jesus—you only see a bare hope of it. But we know that whoever believes in Jesus is saved and, therefore, we assert that Christ is salvation and He that has Him is saved! Christ's words are, "I give unto My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of My hand." And he who knows the meaning of these words rejoices that he has the whole of salvation in his arms and he may look at it as long as he lives and never cease to look, for it is worthy of lifelong admiration!

I like the thought of Simeon being an old man and taking the Infant Jesus in his arms. I have a hope that one of these days, by God's mercy, this poor old world of ours, which has come to her dotage and decay, may be led, by Sovereign Grace, to embrace Jesus the ever new! Then will the Millennium dawn and the world may then pray for the last conflagration to end her sorrowful history, saying, "Now let this globe depart in peace, for it has seen Your salvation." But, to drop all figurative speech, it is a great blessing to the aged man to have Jesus in his arms. Though he shall be compelled by the infirmities of age to ask with Barzillai, "Can your servant taste what I eat or what I drink?" Yet he shall find great sweetness in the Bread of Heaven and the name of Jesus shall be as wine on the lees well refined. If, through age and infirmity, he can hear no more the voice of singing men and singing women, he that has Christ, has music in his heart forever!

In old age Solomon tells us that the grasshopper is a burden, but this Child is none. Then the sun, the light, the moon and the stars are darkened, but this Child gives light to all who see Him. Then the keepers of the house tremble, but they are strengthened as they hold the Lord! Then they that look out of the windows are darkened, but they are bright when they gaze upon the Savior. The doors are shut in the streets, but no door shuts out the Lord Jesus! The voice of the bird awakens the light sleeper, but no sound shall break the repose of those who rest in Jesus. With the aged, desire fails, but not with the aged saint, for he sees in Christ Jesus all his desires fulfilled! And though man goes to his long home, he that has the holy Child Jesus to go with him may even long for the journey, saying, "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace." Mourners may go about the streets of earth, but he who has seen in Christ the salvation of God ascends to other streets where sorrow and sighing are fled away. Thrice blessed old age which thus renews its youth with Christ Jesus!

III. That brings us to our last point, upon which we have no time for more than a few words. WHEN CHRIST IS

TAKEN UP INTO THE ARMS AND LOOKED UPON, HE HAS A WONDERFUL EFFECT. Notice the case before

us. First, waiting is ended. Simeon had been waiting for the consolation of Israel, but he could now say, "Lord, what do I wait for?" We, too, had been waiting, wishing, longing and pining—but when we found our Lord, we no longer waited, but we could each one say—"I need nothing, I wish for nothing, I long for nothing, I pine for nothing. 'My eyes have seen Your salvation.'" Now, also, Simeon was excited to praise the Lord. He took Him up in his arms and blessed God. None can bless God like those who have Christ in their arms! I do not know that Simeon had ever been a poet before, but he began to pour out his swan song, his last, sweetest and, perhaps, his only hymn. Every line is full of exultation and delight!

Simeon soon had a song in his mouth when he had Christ in his arms! Then shall the tongue of the dumb sing! The very stones would cry out if a man could see God's salvation and yet be silent. Those who could never speak six words before have grown eloquent when Christ Jesus has been their theme. He is my God and I will praise Him! He is my father's God and I will extol Him. And now that he has seen the Lord's Christ, notice the effect upon Simeon's eyes. He desires to close them upon all else. I have heard of some who have looked on the sun unadvisedly till they could not see anything else—but this I know—he who looks on Christ becomes blind to all rival attractions! If these eyes have once seen the salvation of God, it looks like sacrilege to set them upon the base things of time and sense! Let the gate be closed through which Jesus has entered—it seems profane to allow a single object belonging to this traitorous world to enter our mind by eye-gate any more!

Having eaten the white bread of Heaven, we want no more of the husks of earth! Having had a glimpse of the Incarnate God, what more is there to see? Simeon's eyes had seen Christ

and what then? Why, now they were prepared to look on death! He had been told he should not see death till he had seen the Lord's Christ and now he is ready to see his final hour and all of gloom which may attend his departure. He says, "Lord, now let Your servant depart." He regards it not as dying, but as going from the present scene to a more glorious country! If you have ever looked Christ in the face, the king of terrors has lost his terror and, instead of being a king, has become your servant! We may well long for the time when we shall have done with earth and be shut in with our Beloved! The proverb is, "See Naples and die," but we may much improve upon it, and say, "See Christ and never die," but be quite content to depart and to be with Him!

Lastly, that sight, of course, had made Simeon's eyes ready to behold the Glory of God. I suppose if we could be taken up just as we are into Heaven—if we were unrenewed men and women—we should not be able to see the Glory of God for lack of spiritual eyes. We must first look at Christ—and when our eyes have been brightened and strengthened

by the splendors of Incarnate Deity, they will be fitted to behold the King Himself as He sits upon His Throne! At any rate, when some of us have had a sight of Christ, we have wondered what more we could see in Heaven. When Solomon's Song has come to be our everyday talk and the Beloved has made us to feel that His left hand is under our head while His right hand embraces us, we have almost thought we would not give a pin change earth for Heaven—for whether in the body or out of the body we could not tell—but this we knew, we could sing, "My Beloved is mine and I am His. He feeds among the lilies."

If your soul once comes there and if the Lord helps you to continue there, then dying will be nothing more than crossing the threshold and going from the doorstep of the King's palace to the interior of its halls! Some Believers dwell in the suburbs of the Celestial City and little will be their change when, in a little while, they shall enter the central golden streets where the sun shall no more go down, neither shall the Lord withdraw Himself! The Lord give you to find all your salvation in Christ! And may He teach you a great deal more than these poor stammering lips can ever tell you. May Christ Jesus our Lord be every day more near and dear to me and to you. To Him be Glory forever and ever! Amen.