

Our Expectation

(No. 2186)

DELIVERED BY

C. H. SPURGEON,

AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"He shall see His seed." [Isaiah 53:10](#).

THE first thought suggested by this text is that Jesus is still alive, for to see anything is the act of a living person. Our Lord Jesus died. We know that He died. We are glad that there is overwhelming evidence that, not in appearance, but in fact, He died. His side was pierced. He was given up by the Roman authorities for burial—the imperial authorities were sure of His death. The soldier had made assurance doubly sure by piercing His side. His disciples buried Him. They would not have left Him in the cave if they had felt any doubt about His death. They went in the morning after the Sabbath to embalm Him. They were all persuaded that He had really died. Blessed be the dying Christ! Here our living hopes take their foundation. If He had not died, we must have died forever. The more assured we are of His death, the more assured we feel of the life of all who are in Him!

But, my Brothers and Sisters, He is not dead. Some years ago, someone, wishing to mock our holy faith, brought out a handbill which was plastered everywhere—"Can you trust in a dead man?" Our answer would have been, "No. Nobody can trust in a man who is dead." But it was known by those who printed the bill that they were misrepresenting our faith. Jesus is no longer dead! He rose again the third day. We have sure and Infallible proofs of it. It is an historical fact, better proved than almost any other which is commonly received as historical, that He did really rise again from the grave. He arose no more to die. He has gone out of the land of tears and death. He has gone into the region of immortality. He sits at the right hand of God, even the Father, and He reigns there forever. We love Him that died, but we rejoice that He who died is not dead, but always lives to make intercession for us!

Dear children of God, do not be afraid that Christ's work will break down because He is dead. He lives to carry it on. That which He purchased for us by His death, He lives to secure for us by His life. Do not let your faith be a sort of dead faith dealing with a dead man—let it be instinct with life, with warm blood in its veins. Go to your own Christ, your living Christ—make Him your familiar Friend, the Acquaintance of your solitude, the Companion of your pilgrimage. Do not think that there is a great gulf between you, a living man, and Him. The shades of death do not divide you from Him. He lives, He feels, He sympathizes, He looks on, He is ready to help, He will help you even now. You have come in to the place where prayer is known to be made, burdened and troubled and you seek relief. Let the thought that your Lord is a living Friend ease you of your burden. He is still ready

to be your strong Helper and to do for you what He did for needy ones in the days of His sojourn here below. I want even you, who do not know Him, to remember that He lives, that you may seek Him tonight—that before another sun shall rise you may find Him and, finding Him, may, yourselves, be found and saved. Do not try to live without the living, loving Friend of sinners! Seek His healing hand, then beg for His company. Get it. Keep it and you shall find that it makes life below like Heaven above! When you live with the living Christ, you will live, indeed! In Him is the Light of God and the Light of God is the life of men!

And now to the text itself, with brevity. I have to observe upon it, first, that Christ's death produced a posterity. "When you shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed." Evidently the death of Christ was fruitful of a seed for Him. Secondly, that posterity remains. Our Lord Jesus Christ does not look, today, on emptiness—He is not bereaved of His household, but He still sees His seed. And, thirdly and lastly, that posterity is under His immediate eyes at all times, for, "He shall see His seed."

I. Well, first of all, THE DEATH OF CHRIST HAS PRODUCED A POSTERITY. We do not read, here, that the Lord Christ has followers. That would be true, but the text prefers to say He has a seed. We read, just now, that the Lord Jesus has disciples. That would be distinctly true, but the text does not so read. It says, "He shall see His seed." Why His

seed? Why, because everyone who is a true follower or disciple of Christ has been born by a new birth from Him into the position of disciple. There is no knowing Christ except through the new birth. We are naturally sold under sin and we cannot discern the spiritual and real Christ until we have a spirit created within us by the new birth, of which He said, "You must be born again." This is the gate of entrance into discipleship! None can be written in the roll of followers of Christ unless they are also written in the register of the family of God—"this and that man was born there." Other men can get disciples for themselves by the means that are usual for such ends, but all the disciples of Christ are produced by miracle. They are all discipled by being newly-created! Jesus, as He looks upon them all, can say, "Behold, I make all things new." They all come into the world, of which He is King, by being born into it. There is no other way into the first world but by birth—and there is no other way into the second world, wherein dwells righteousness, but by birth—and that birth is strictly connected with the pangs of the Savior's passion, "when you shall make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed." See, then, the reason why we have here the remarkable expression—"His seed."

Learn from this that all who truly follow Christ and are saved by Him, have His life in them. The parent's life is in the child. From the parent that life has been received. It is Christ's life that is in every true Believer—"For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you, also, appear with Him in glory." We have our natural life and this makes us men—we have our spiritual life and this makes

us Christians. We take life from our parents—this links us with the first Adam. We have taken life from Christ—this joins us to the second Adam. Do not mistake me, that same life which abides in Christ, at the right hand of God, is that everlasting life which He has bestowed upon all those who put their trust in Him. That water springing up into everlasting life He gave us. He made it to be in us a well of water springing up. The first drops of that living spring, the whole outcome of the spring, and the spring itself, came from Him!

Let me put it to you, Beloved Hearers. Do you know anything about this new birth? Do you know anything about this Divine Life? There are multitudes of religious people, very religious people—but they are as dead as doornails! Multitudes of religious persons are like waxworks, well-proportioned and you might mistake them, by candlelight, for life. But in the Light of God you would soon discover that there is a mighty difference, for the best that human skill can do is a poor imitation of real life. You, dear Hearer, dressed in the garments of family religion and adorned with the jewels of moral virtue, may be nothing beyond "a child of nature finely dressed, but not the living child." God's living children may not seem to be quite so handsome, nor so charmingly arrayed as you are and, in their own esteem, they may not be worthy to consort with you, but there is a solemn difference between the living child and the dead child, however you may try to conceal it! Righteous men know themselves to be sinners—sinners believe themselves to be righteous men. There is more Truth of God in the fear of the first than there can be in the faith of the second, for the faith of the second is founded on lies. Beloved, we become, I say again, the followers of Christ by being made partakers of His life—and unless His life is in us, we may say what we will about Christ and profess what we like about following Him—but we are not in the secret! We are out of the spiritual world altogether—that world of which He is the Head, the Creator, the Lord. You see why the word, "seed," is used? We come to Him by birth—we are partakers of His life.

Furthermore, Believers in our Lord are said to be His seed because they are like He. I wish that I could say this with less need to qualify it, but the man who really believes in Jesus and in whom the diving life is strong and powerful, is like Jesus and especially like Jesus in this—that, as the Christ consecrated Himself wholly to God's service and Glory, so has the Believer done. And as the Christ founded His successes on being dead and buried, surrendering honor, comfort and life, itself, for His work, so should the true Believer be willing to give up anything and everything, that He may achieve His life-purpose and bring glory to God.

"As He is, so are we in this world"—that is, we are bent upon the glory of God, filled with love to men and anxious for their salvation—that God may be glorified thereby. You know best, Brothers and Sisters, whether this is true of you. But if we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of His. If we are not like Christ, it is not possible that we are His seed, for the seed is like the parent. Surely, children are like their father—not all to the same de-

gree—but still, there is the evidence of their sonship in their likeness to him from whom they came. Our Lord's true people are like He, or they could not be styled, "His seed." Alas, the old nature blots and blurs the resemblance! The stamp of the first Adam is not altogether removed, but it ought to grow fainter and fainter while the lines of the Divine portrait should grow stronger and

clearer. Is this the experience of our life in Christ? I pray that it may be so. It should cause us great searching of heart if there is not in us an increasing likeness to our Lord.

There is also this to be said for those who are called His seed—that they seek the same ends and expect to receive the same reward. We are towards Christ, His seed, and thus we are heirs to all that He has—heirs to His business on earth, heirs to His estate in Heaven. We are to be witnesses to the Truth as Jesus was—and to go about doing good as He did—and to seek and save the lost after His example. This we must inherit, as a son follows his father's business. All that Christ has, belongs to His seed. As a man hands down to his posterity, his possessions, Christ Jesus has made over to His people all that He is and all that He has—and all that He ever will be, that they may be with Him, behold His Glory—and shine with Him as the stars forever and ever! We are His seed in this respect—that He has taken us into His family and given us the family patrimony—and made us partakers of all things in Himself.

Now, Beloved, this is all through His death. We are made His seed through His death. Why principally through His death? Why, because it was by reason of His death for us that the Father could come and deal with us, and the Spirit could breathe upon us and new-create us! There was no dealing with us by a just God until the atoning Sacrifice had rolled away the stone that blocked the way, namely, the necessity that sin should be punished. Christ, having died for us, we came into another relation to justice and it became possible for us to be regenerated and brought into the household of God. Beloved, I think that you know, in your own experience, that it was His death that really operated most upon you in the matter of your conversion. I hear a great talk about the example of Christ having great effect upon ungodly men, but I do not believe it and certainly have never seen it! It has great effect upon men when they are born again and are saved from the wrath to come—and are full of gratitude on this account—but before that happens, we have known men admire the conduct of Christ and even write books about the beauty of His Character, while, at the same time, they have denied His Godhead! Thus they have rejected Him in His essential Character and there has been no effect produced upon their conduct by their cold admiration of His life.

But when a man comes to see that He is pardoned and saved through the death of Jesus, He is moved to gratitude and then to love. "We love Him because He first loved us." That love which He displayed in His death has touched the mainspring of our being and moved us with a passion to which we were strangers before. And, because of this, we hate the sins that once were sweet. And we turn with all our hearts to the obedience that once was so

unpleasant. There is more effect in faith in the blood of Christ to change the human character than in every other consideration. The Cross once seen, sin is crucified! The passion of the Master once apprehended as being endured for us, we then feel that we are not our own, but are bought with a price. This perception of redeeming love, in the death of our Lord Jesus, makes all the difference— this prepares us for a higher and a better life than we have ever known before. It is His death that does it!

And now, Beloved, if by His death we have become His seed, (and I think I speak at this time to many who can truly say they hope that it is so with them), then let us consider the fact for a minute. We are His seed. They speak of the seed royal. What shall I say of the seed of Christ? Believer, you may be a poor person living in an obscure lane, but you are of the imperial house! You are ignorant and unlettered, it may be, and your name will never shine in the roll of science, but He who is the Divine Wisdom acknowledges you as one of His seed! It may be that you are sick—even now your head is aching, your heart is faint—you feel that, by-and-by, you will die. Ah, well, but you are of His seed who died and rose and is gone into Glory! You are of the seed of Him "who only has immortality." You may put away your crowns, you kings and emperors—earth, yellow earth, hammered and decorated with other sparkling bits of soil—you may put them all away, as altogether outdone in value! We have crowns infinitely more precious and we belong to a royal house tran-scendently more glorious than any of yours!

But then it follows, if we are thus of a seed, that we ought to be united and love each other more and more. Christian people, you ought to have a clannish feeling! "Oh," says one, "you mean that the Baptists ought to get together!" I do not mean anything of the kind! I mean that the seed of Christ should be of one heart and we ought to recognize that wherever the life and love of Jesus are to be found, there our love goes out! It is very delightful, at Christmas time, or perhaps at some other time in the year, for all the family to meet. And though your name may be, "Smith," or, "Brown," yet you feel there is some importance in your name when all your clan have met together. It may be a name that is very common, or very obscure, but, somehow, you feel quite great on that day when all the members of the family have joined to keep united holiday. Your love to one another gathers warmth as the glowing coals are drawn together.

So may it be in your heart towards all those that belong to Christ! You are of the blood royal of Heaven! You are neither a Guelph nor a Hohenzollern, but you are a Christian! And that is a greater name than all! He has a seed—even He whom, unseen, we, this night, adore. My inmost soul glories in the Head of my clan—in Him of the pierced hands and the nailed feet—who wears for His princely star the lance mark in His side! Oh, how blessedly bright is He! How transcendently glorious are the nail prints! We adore Him in the infinite majesty of His unutterable love! We are of His seed and so we are near akin to Him. Do not think that I am too familiar. I go not beyond the limit which this Word of God allows me,

no, I have scarcely come up to the edge of it! We are truly of the seed of Jesus, even as the Jews are of the seed of Israel—not born after the flesh, for He had none born to Him in that way—but born after the Spirit, wherein His seed is as the stars of Heaven! We rejoice with exultation as we read the text, "He shall see His seed."

Thus much on our first point.

II. Now, my second point is THAT POSTERITY OF HIS REMAINS. Our Lord always has a seed. That seems to me to be clear from the indefiniteness of the text. It does not say that He shall see His seed for so long and then no longer, but it stands as a prophecy fulfilled, always fulfilling and always to be fulfilled—"He shall see His seed." Christ will always have a seed to see. His Church, then, will never die out while the world stands and, throughout eternity, that seed must still exist in the endless state, for world without end our Lord Jesus shall see His seed!

I notice that the word is in the plural—"He shall see His seeds," as though some were truly His seed and yet, for a time, at least, differed from the rest. Our Lord said of those not yet converted, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring." And again, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word." Christ will see generation after generation of those redeemed by His blood who shall be born into His family and shall call Him blessed! Instead of the fathers, shall be the children, whom He will make princes in all the earth! The Septuagint reads it, "He shall see a long-lived seed." Though I do not think that the version is correct, still, it shows that it was thought and believed that the Messiah would have a perpetual seed. Certainly it is so. Beloved, if it had been possible to destroy the Church of God on earth, it would have been destroyed long ago! The malice of Hell has done all that it could do to destroy the seed of Christ—the seed that sprang from His death.

Standing in the Coliseum at Rome, I could not, as I looked around on the ruins of that vast house of sin, but praise God that the Church of God existed, though the Coliseum is in ruins! Anyone standing there, when the thousands upon thousands gloated their eyes with the sufferings of Christians, would have said, "Christianity will die out, but the Coliseum, so firmly built will stand to the end of time!" But lo, the Coliseum is a ruin and the Church of God more firm, more strong, more glorious than ever! Only read the story of the persecutions under Nero and under Diocletian, in the olden times, and you will wonder that Christianity survived the cruel blows. Every form of torture which devils could invent was inflicted upon Christian men and women! Not here and there, but everywhere, they were hunted down and persecuted. It makes one tremble with horror as he reads of women tossed on the horns of bulls, or set in red-hot iron chairs—and men smeared with honey to be stung to death by wasps, or dragged at the heels of wild horses, or exposed to savage beasts in the amphitheatre.

But I will say no more about it. The gallant vessel of the Church plowed the red waves of a crimson sea, her prow scarlet with gore, but the ship itself was the better for its washing and sailed all the more gallantly because of boisterous winds. As to our own country, read the story of persecutions here. You will have enough if you only read Foxe's "Book of Martyrs." I wish that every house had in it a large-typed copy of the "Book of Martyrs." Well do I recollect, as a child, how many hours, how many days, I spent looking at the pictures in an old-fashioned "Book of Martyrs," and wondering how the men of God suffered, as they did, so bravely. I remember how I used to turn to that boy of Brentford, who was first beaten with rods and afterwards tied to the stake, to cheerfully burn for Christ's sake. I am reminded, by the effect which it had upon my mind, of what was said of a certain ancient Church in this city of London, which was greatly persecuted.

Many, many years ago, a number of persons were noticed to be going towards Smithfield, early one morning, and somebody said, "Where are you going?" "We are going to Smithfield." "What for?" "To see our pastor burnt." "Well, but what, in the name of goodness, do you want to see him burnt for? What can be the good of it?" They answered, "We go to see him burn that we may learn the way." Oh, but that was grand! "To learn the way!" Then the rank and file of

the followers of Jesus learned the way to suffer and die as the leaders of the Church set the example! Yet the Church in England was not destroyed by persecution, but it became more mighty than ever because of the opposition of its foes!

Since then there have been laborious attempts to destroy the Church of Christ by error. One hundred years ago or so, throughout the most of our Dissenting Churches, a sort of Unitarianism was triumphant. The essential doctrines of the Gospel were omitted, the pith of it was taken away, the marrow was torn out of its bones. The Church of England was asleep, too, and everywhere it seemed as if there was a kind of orthodox heterodoxy that did not believe anything in particular, and did not hold that there was a doctrine worth anybody's living for or dying for—but that all religious teaching should be like a nose of wax—that you might shape whichever way you liked. It looked as if the living Church of God would be extinguished altogether. But it was not so, for God did but stamp His foot and, from all parts of the country, men like Mr. Wesley and Mr. Whitefield came to the front—and hundreds of others, mighty men of valor—proclaimed the Gospel with unusual power! And away went the bats and the owls back to their proper dwelling place! The same mischievous experiment is being tried now, and there will be the same result, for the living Christ is still to the front. The King is not off the ground, yet! The battle will be won by His armies. Jehovah has declared His decree, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." Our Lord shall yet see His seed on the conquering hand.

Worldliness has gone a long way to destroy the Church of God. I judge it to be the worst cankerworm that assails us. Persons come into the Church with a profession which they

never carry out. Have we not all around us persons who say that they are Christians and are not, but lie? And many who, we hope, are Christians, are but very poverty-stricken specimens of the race, with little love, little zeal, (indeed, they are afraid to be too zealous), little searching of the Word, little prayer, little consecration, little communion with God. They are enough to kill all hope of better things. The Lord have mercy upon His poor Church when she comes to be neither cold nor hot, so that He is ready to spue her out of His mouth! Yet, the lukewarm can still be heated! The cause is not dead! "He shall see His seed."

Take it as a standing miracle that there are any godly people on the face of the earth, for there would not be one were it not for the exertion of miraculous power! Christianity is not a natural growth—it is constantly a Divine creation. Christian life needs to daily have the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The Church must perpetually receive fresh light and life from above, or else it would die—but still stands the promise, "He shall see His seed." While sun and moon endure, there shall be a people who follow the Lamb! And even though they are so few that Elijah might say, "I, only I, am left, and they seek my life to take it away," God will reserve to Himself thousands that have not bowed the knee to Baal!

III. And now I am to wind up with this third thought—THIS POSTERITY IS ALWAYS UNDER THE IMMEDIATE EYES OF CHRIST. "He shall see His seed." Oh, I like this, "He shall see His seed"! He sees them when they are first born anew. I keep looking out from this pulpit for that small portion of them that may be born in this place—and there are many watchful Brothers and Sisters here who try to speak to all that come into the place in whom there are movings of the Spirit. If there is an anxious soul, they seek to find him out. We cannot see them all, but HE shall see His seed! Sometimes it is a question whether they are His seed or not—a very great question with themselves, but none with Him—He sees His seed! Some are seeking—they have hardly found. They are longing—they have scarcely realized the way of faith. Ah, well, He sees your first desires, your humble breathings, your lowly hopes, your trembling approaches. He sees you! There is not a child of His, born in any out-of-the-way place, but what He perceives him at once! He observes The first living cry, the first living tear. "He shall see His seed." What a mercy to have such a Watcher! We poor earthly pastors are of small use, but this great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, with eyes that never miss a single new-born lamb of Grace—what a mercy to have such a Shepherd to look after the whole flock! "He shall see His seed."

Yes, and ever afterward, wherever His seed may wander, He still sees them. Some of you, perhaps, have lived long in England, but you are contemplating going far away—to Australia or America. You wonder whether you will meet with any friend who will help you spiritually. Do not fear. "He shall see His seed." "Rivers unknown to song are not unknown to God." And if you should have to dwell quite alone in the bush, and have no Christian acquaintance, still go directly to the Son of God, for, "He shall see His seed." The eyes of

Christ are never off from the eye of faith. If you look to Him, you may rest well assured that He looks to you!

The beauty of it is that this look of Christ, whereby He sees His seed, is one of intense delight. I cannot preach upon that most precious topic, but I wish you to think it over—it is a Divine pleasure to the Lord Jesus to look at you—it is promised Him as a reward for His death! Mother, you know, yourself, what a pleasure it has been for you to look at your

daughter and watch her grow up. You would not like to tell her all you have thought of her—you have looked at her with intense delight. Now, the Lord Jesus Christ looks at you in just the same way! Love is blind, they say. Jesus is not blind and He sees in His people much more than they ever will see in themselves! He sees their hopes, their desires, their aspirations. And He often takes the will for the deed and marks that for a beauty which now may be half-developed and, therefore, not all we could wish it to be. It is, at present, the caricature of a virtue—but it is well meant and will come right. And the Lord sees it as it will be—and He rejoices in it! Oh, what blessed eyes those are of His that can spy out beauties which only He can see! Since He has created them and put them there, himself, He sees them! "He shall see His seed." He suffered so much for our redemption that He must love us. We cost Him so much that He must delight in us—

"The Son with joy looks down and sees

The purchase of His agonies."

"He shall see His seed."

Brothers and Sisters, our Savior will always behold His redeemed ones! He will see all His seed to the last. When they come to the river which divides them from the celestial country, "He shall see His seed." It may possibly be gloomy with some of you, but it is not often dark at death-time. Many of the Lord's children have a fine candle to go to bed with. Even if they go to bed in the dark, they fall asleep the sooner. But in either case, their Lord will see them if they cannot see Him. When you can see nothing and the brain begins to reel—and thought and memory flee—He sees His seed!

But what a seed He will have to see in the morning! I am not yet an old man, as some suppose from the many years of my ministry, but I am often looking forward to that blessed morning when all the sacred seed shall meet around the Throne of God. I believe the Christ will come in to see all His beloved purchased ones and He will search to see whether we are all there. Then shall the sheep pass again under the hand of Him that counts them—and He will count them, for He knows whom He bought with His blood—and He will see that they are there in full tale. I think that I hear the reading of the register, the muster roll. Will you be there to answer to your name?

Dear Friends, all the Lord's seed will be there—all that were born into His house with a new birth. They shall answer, "Yes, yes, yes, we are here! We are here!" Oh, but the joy we shall have in being there—the delight in beholding His face! Yet, if all our joys are put to—

gether, they will not equal the joy that He will have when He finds them all there for whom He shed His blood—all whom the Father gave Him—all who gave themselves to Him—all who were born as His seed—not one lost! "Of all whom You have given Me, I have lost none." Oh, the joy, the delight, of our Well-Beloved in that day! Then shall He see His seed!

And I believe that it will be a part of His Heaven for Him to look upon His redeemed. He is the Bridegroom, they make up the bride—and the bridegroom's joy is not in seeing his bride for once on the wedding day, but he takes delight in her as long as they both live! A true husband and a true spouse are always lovers—they are always linked together by strong ties of affection. And it is so with that model Husband, the Lord Christ and His perfect Church above. He loves His people no less and He could not love them any more than when He died for them, and so, forever, "He shall see His seed."

Thus have I talked with you in a very poor and feeble way, as far as my speech is concerned. But the doctrine is not feeble, the Gospel is not poor! O you that are the seed of Christ, go out and magnify Him by your lives! Be worthy of your high calling. Show the nobility of your pedigree by the magnanimity of your lives!

And you that are not among His seed, look where you are! What can you do? All that you can do will bring you no further—you must be born again—and this is the work of the Spirit of God. The Spirit of God works the new birth in His own way, but He works according to the Gospel. What is the Gospel? "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." I give you the Gospel without mutilating it, just as I get it in the Gospel by Mark, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." Obey the precept and the promise is yours! God help you to believe in the Lord Jesus and so to have eternal life! The moment you believe in Jesus Christ you are born again. May He, by His Holy Spirit, seal the message with His blessing to everyone in this house, for His own name's sake! Amen.

PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—John 12:20-45.