

Cargill's lecture on Jeremiah 1.1-10 and sermon on Isaiah 26.20-21.

The following lecture and sermon were preached by Donald Cargill at Dunsyre Common in Dunsyre parish, Lanarkshire, on 10 July 1681.

Donald Cargill's Lecture on Jeremiah 1.1-10.

'The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiyah, of the priests that were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin:

To whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

It came also in the days of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah the son of Josiah king of Judah, unto the carrying away of Jerusalem captive in the fifth month.

Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying,
Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Then said I, Ah, Lord God! behold I cannot speak: for I am a child.

But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord.

Then the Lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.' – Jeremiah 1.1-10.

'Here we see the Lord is sending out a young prophet, and He is giving him great charges, and great promises, and great power. He gives him a great charge: –

First, In these three things especially: –

1st, He gives him in charge, that he is to be at His bidding or command.

2ndly, He gives him in charge to be faithful in whatever he doth. And

3rdly, He is to be without fear, and ye know that, in effect, fear binds up a man from freedom. But I say,

1. Ye must go at His command, and ye must go, says the Lord, where I send you. This is not the least property of a servant to obey his Master: he must do his Master's bidding, and must never err in obeying his Master's command. But the thing that I observe is this, that the ministers of the Gospel should speak. I say they should be at command.

Now, it is our duty to speak what God bids and commands us. We shall say this one word, we must speak what God commands. We are sure that God is either bidding ministers do little, or else they do not that which He bids them do – indeed, in effect, God bids them do little. We fear, God has given up with the most part of the ministers in Scotland. He hath dealt with us, like a man who has a stubborn servant. He bids him until he is wearied with bidding of him, and still he will not obey. Now he gives over speaking to him, and tells him to take his will; and his will is his work, and so comes of it. So the Lord seems to have left off bidding the ministers of Scotland. He will bid them do no more. Ah, He is now saying to those who have gone out of His way, "Now do what you please next." Oh then, be not disobedient! The Master must be obeyed; His commands must be done. We shall say this that we are sure of; as we should never run uncalled, so we should never sit when our Master commands us to run. We say then, when God is bidding us run and fitting us for our work, as Jeremiah here was, then should we run. When the Master bids, then the servant ought to be at command.

2. The next thing He gives him in charge, is, to be faithful, and that in these two things wherein every minister ought

to be faithful.

1st, They should be faithful in their commission.

2ndly, In what is committed unto their trust.

1. We say, we are to be faithful as to what we get in our commission. We shall not keep back one word, for the failing in one word may occasion the staggering of many. I say, a person may stagger upon one word kept back. Indeed the keeping back, or failing of many words, makes ministers greatly faulty and unfaithful to the people. And this, in effect, is one cause, amongst many others, that has procured the Church's ruin, and the people's sinning makes it so. They desire no other, and the Lord in His just anger trusts [meets] you with the desire of your hearts. Oh, ye that are unfaithful, ye will not abide by God! and He gives you ministers that come and go as you please. The

2. Thing wherein the prophet was to be faithful, viz., in what was committed to his trust. The Spirit of God hath this: "*Keep that which is committed to thy trust.*" [1Tim. 6.20.] Ye that are faithful men, that is your trust, that is your commission. But ah! the Lord has departed from ministers and Christians; because they have not kept that which was committed unto them, but have let it fall unto and before their enemies, for the more we are witnessing against His enemies the more pleading we are to Him.

3. But a third thing here enjoined, is, freedom to all the ministers of the gospel, and that without fear. You must not be afraid. Fear binds up freedom. Oh, it does not become a minister of the gospel to be moved with fear! It sets not a minister of the gospel to be either overcome with fear, or counsel. He is to be holy, to be an overseer, watchman, leader, therefore it is unsuitable for him to be overcome with such things. Nay, Christ their Master often forbids them to fear, and foretells them what they are to meet with when about His work, and yet not to fear or succumb under either fears or favours. Here Jeremiah is forbidden to fear. "*Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee,*" &c. [Jer. 1.8] Oh, this should be looked unto! But we will say this; when a minister of the gospel is tender, and has the awe of God upon his spirit, and His glory before his eyes, he will not be much afraid. And this charge binds him, first, by the awe of God; and then from a love and desire to have others get good of Christ, with a thirsting after the salvation of many.

Now, I say, where fear is, this will have but little access. Here the prophet has a charge, which the awe of God upon him, and love to the salvation of souls, bind upon him. For, says the apostle, "*Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men.*" [2Cor. 5.11.] He knows what his charge and commission bears, even the gathering in of souls to God, and he thirsted to have this fulfilled. His zeal and thirst so bound him in the work that he could stand at nothing to have souls made good and their salvation accomplished.

Here we see also that it was a suffering time in which Jeremiah. the prophet was brought out. In the 3rd verse we see that there were three kings, Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, whom he had to speak unto – the father and the sons, the father good, the sons evil. One while, he has a good king to deal with, to encourage him to be faithful and free; and then for a long time of his life, he has two wicked kings that were always against him. And when he wanted a wicked king, he had a wicked people to deal with, who made him a sad life and a great work, as he was still striving to get them brought off their wicked and evil courses. We may therefore observe this from it: –

1. That when once ministers are set out, they ought to be content with their lot, and not to be afraid. We shall say only this, that ministers of the gospel have in their commission three encouragements not to fear by which they may the better face the storm, and which for their greater encouragement they may set in opposition to it.

2. The next thing observable is the time or continuance of his commission, which was to the carrying away of the captivity. He preaches them to captivity. There are some who preach to captivity, others preach to plagues, others to

judgments. Some preach people to hell. Alas! there are some who think nothing of the word of God preached unto them! but it will possibly continue, till it preach some of you to captivity, to hell, and to wrath. We acknowledge with grief of heart, and we say it as before the Lord, the Lord is now preaching judgment and ye may look to meet with it. Yea, ye need scarcely look for a change to the better till some of you and judgment meet together.

But more particularly, the Lord speaks to Jeremiah, and makes known His great kindness unto him; “*Before I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee.*” [Jer. 1.5.] Now, there are three things here observable: – great manifestations, great promises, and an ample commission. The first two of these are granted for his greater encouragement; but the thing that we say is, that the Lord ordinarily manifests Himself much more at one time than at another, as at the time of conversion He will not only communicate His mind to some concerning His eternal purposes towards them, but His purpose as to what He will make of them in the world, yea, His thought as to their office and what they shall do for Him. These come all at one time here. He instructs this holy man about his sanctification and election, calling and conversion, and about His providences that he is to meet with, and all the favours and mercies he is to receive from God; and all these he hath here at once for his encouragement. But it may be here asked, “What is the reason the Lord does so with one, and not with another?” One reason is, that they may lay aside their own particular concerns, and that their whole care may be about the public work of the ministry. I say that their whole care may be about the public work, and that himself with the salvation of his own soul may be laid aside as insured. Till this be once sure, they are ever unable for the public work of the ministry, and this being once made sure, they are to lay it by till they go before the tribunal of God. Has God once said it? let it stand so.

But there is another thing we may observe from this, that when the Lord sanctifies any, and deals thus singularly with them, it is clear He hath some extraordinary thing ado with them. There are many who come out at random to the ministry. But what comes of them! Some run one way and some another, and when brought unto any eminent piece of service they soon turn aside. And what is the cause of it? Is it not because they were not sure themselves, and so could not deal with others, being unprepared for the work? Well, says the Lord, “Ye shall not continue, ye shall turn your backs upon it—yea, stumble, fall, and break your necks upon it.” [See Isa. 7.9 & 8.15.] Some seek unto strange shelter for fear.

But to speak more particularly concerning these words, “*Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee.*” [Jer. 1.5.] Here we have these two things. First, his predestination, and then his formation. I say, before God’s hand was at the forming or creating of him in the belly, His mind was upon him. “*I knew thee*” – that is, I had thee upon mine heart. In a word, there are some folk that the Lord hath such a respect unto that He beholds them soon. How does He see them? Even in the womb, and He sets His heart upon them before they have a being. “*I knew thee before ever I formed thee in the belly; and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*” [Jer. 1.5.] He sees him both in respect of his calling, and in respect of the providence he should meet with, and that before ever he came into the world. He also beholds the wicked to their terror throughout eternity, and reserves them unto the day of wrath; but here, says He, “*I knew thee.*” And oh, but it must be an unspeakable joy to souls to have this made known to them, that God saw what they should be before He formed them—I say, to have the Lord manifesting unto them not only what they have been, but also what they shall be, making them see that ere ever He formed them He ordained them unto eternal life. Comfortable is that word of Job, “*Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.*” [Job 10.12.] And oh, what ground of hope for the soul to know that it was upon God’s heart at the beginning! and that he was predestinate from eternity unto grace and glory. “*Before I formed thee... I knew thee.*” We shall not say any more on this, as to what thoughts God hath for eternity to His people. He Himself can only manifest them to the soul, and His manifesting of them is such as makes the soul as sure and certain of them as of their own being. And their being upon God’s heart from eternity makes them sure of life eternal. “*Before thou camest out of the womb, I sanctified thee.*” Well, ye see here that the Lord soon puts to His hand. Some folk are careless

about assurance until the end of their days. But here is sanctification in the womb. We shall only say this: it is well if they can say they are sure of sanctification before they go out of the world. But that sanctification is best that is begun early; yea, we may say of this sanctification from the womb, they who share of it may be sure that they are never behind in the way, neither will they stumble so soon as others do; yea, where this is tenderly and lively entertained, all things in a world bulk but little with them. But what the Spirit of God looks upon is this: "*I have sanctified thee before thou camest forth of the womb*" – sanctified very soon after formation. We shall say this: so soon as parents know of the formation of the child, so soon should they be holding up its case to God. Parents' prayers ought to begin with their beginning. Why so? Here is the answer, that they may bring them forth sanctified, for there have been some brought forth sinners, and some saints into the world.

Another thing considerable is, "*And I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations,*" so, in effect, he needed not fear. The Lord let him see beforehand that he is as sure as to his part, that he might refuse nothing He commanded him to do; as if He would say, "Ye must not refuse to do anything for Me, that have done so great things for you. I have given thee grace in the belly, and sanctified thee from the womb, for preventing thee from great fears and great falls, that thou mightest be sure every way, and thou must not think to refuse My bidding, but ever be at My call and command."

And then we see his commission; "*And I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*" We shall not speak here what are ministers' commissions; but we are sure that the Lord lays more upon them than upon others, and they should see to it. Yea, ministers are under a charge that no particular person under heaven is able to do or perform.

But here is the prophet's answer. Ye see a wonder here, which is this. After the Lord hath sanctified and done all for him, hear what he says: "*Ab! Lord God, behold I cannot speak, for I am a child.*" [Jer. 1.6.] Is it not strange to hear such an answer as this? But it is not strange, considering the reasons he gives; it was only the fear he had of himself, it was not his unwillingness. He was not unwilling, but afraid that his message would not be taken off his hand, as if he had said, "*There is nothing binders me from doing whatever the Lord commands me but the fear of its not being taken off my hand.*" After all, we see that the Lord accepts of this answer. We shall say of it, that being fitted of Him, and our commission made manifest by Him, we ought to go on acting faith upon Him, undertaking what He calls us to, against all infirmities within and opposition without. I say, ye should try and make sure your evidence, and so go forward in His strength. For we are sure of this, that those who being under such favours receive, and yet are unwilling to comply with the Lord's call, do in that respect act contrary to their charge and obligation. And would we not be offended, and highly displeased, if one did so unto us? However, we see here that the prophet makes these two excuses after all, "*I cannot speak: I am a child.*" Indeed, his answer was enough, considering that as the Lord gave him a great charge, so He gave him great promises comprehended in these words in "*Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*" Let us never stand, then, when God calls; for here is the promise sufficient to bear all charges: "*Lo, I am with you always unto the end of the world.*" Here is furniture. Here is fullness of comfort and consolation in this one promise, that He will be with us. Nothing should frighten us. Here is a sufficiency, "*He will never leave us, nor forsake us.*" It is true, ministers have not the promise of worldly ease, or of safety from trouble; but they have the promise of safety in troubles, and deliverance out of them. We will say this one word, that when ministers have great promises from God, they are not to look for exemption from trouble. That is not the promise to be accomplished to us while in time. Fightings and victory here, and the crown above. We have then the promise of assistance and protection in trouble. Let us then look unto Him for determination and furniture in duty, and "*thus go on in [the] strength of God the Lord.*"

But another thing the prophet is furnished with is, Power. He gives him great power: "*See, I have this day set thee over the*

nations... To root out, to pull down, to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant." This is a great power indeed, for a creature to have the power of heaven, power to plant, pluck up, and to destroy. We shall only say this of it, that ere all be done great men shall know that there hath been a prophet and a minister that hath had the mind of the Lord in what he hath done; and that as we have cursed or excommunicated, so the Lord hath cursed or excommunicated; and as we have denounced wrath, so the Lord has denounced wrath; and as we have pulled down, so the Lord will pull down; and as we have laid houses desolate, so the Lord will lay many houses desolate; and as we have cursed many that have turned their backs upon Him, His cause and interest, so the Lord has cursed them, and they shall be cursed, and that shall be heard of to succeeding generations.'

Donald Cargill's sermon at Dunsyre Common on Isaiah 26.20-21.

'Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee: hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.' – Isaiah 26.20-21.

'There are few, yea, none in safety who are in debt. We wonder how men in debt can be secure. We cannot tell when God will come upon us; but it is man's great advantage to be near God. This is greater than all other advantages. The greatest, yea, the best of blessings are included in it. There are some things, nay, many things that are worse than nothing, and these are evil things; but the being near God hath many unspeakable advantages, and even as to temporal things it goes as high as a mortified soul can desire. But we know that all are not godly; all have not equal advantages. There are some who are children, some who are enemies, and some who are strangers. But there are chambers of safety for the children. What is then for strangers and enemies? Nothing but the wrath of God. What are strangers and enemies like? They are like two rivers that are running far asunder but at length they run both into the ocean, and then they are both one when they come to the ocean or sea of God's wrath. But for children there are chambers, and there is indignation for strangers and enemies to God.

Well then, we see there is a storm coming; and the Lord shows us the tender care He takes of His people, by warning them beforehand to get themselves into their chambers. "*Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers.*" [Isa. 26.20.] We shall say this, that there is much tenderness in God if there were faith in us. Doubtless, it is a great and unspeakable disadvantage to us that we are not exercising more faith in God, especially when we are urged to it upon His account. There is nothing can or will answer His call but faith. God calls none to enter into these chambers but such as have faith. What will put a soul into these chambers? Nothing but faith. Then we may say this of it, that, in effect, faith both opens and shuts the doors. It opens the doors for us to enter in, and it shuts the doors behind us when we are entered into these chambers. Hence, if there be no faith there is no soul can enter in, and there is no soul can be in safety but within these chambers, and there are none can enter in but those who do it by faith.

But there are three things that especially hinder us in the exercise of faith: –

1. The want of an interest in God.
2. The want of conscientiousness of integrity.
3. The want of assurance as to the goodness of the cause.

1st, They that want an interest in God have nothing to trust unto, and so want acquaintance with and nearness to Him. Some children do not or cannot trust unto their charter, which is in effect a trusting and entering into these chambers. Now, where the want of an interest is there will be great discouragement. Ye cannot commit yourselves to God, for what else have ye, if ye want a relation to and acquaintance with Him. But there are few folk that have that charter, and those who want it have nothing to do with that which I am now speaking of. But

2ndly, The conscientiousness of one's integrity helps much in the exercise of faith. When a soul is conscientious of its integrity, though with much infirmity, he can say, "Though I be sometimes overcome with temptations to sin, yet my endeavour is to wrestle and strive against sin." And

3rdly, There is the goodness of the cause: even the assurance of the goodness of one's cause helps the soul to the exercise of faith in a storm or time of trouble. In effect, the exercise of faith is just a thrusting one's self in at the doors of these chambers where there is safety. But there are two things here in these words now read in your hearing: –

1. A manifestation of the present purposes of God. There is a manifestation of it now where God is, as it were, coming

from His place to hold a Circuit. Now God is, as it were, leaving heaven, and coming down to the earth to hold a Court. Neither angels, nor prophets, nor apostles are to be judges. We see there are many wrongs done, and many pleas betwixt man and man. The great Judge must sit, and these causes must be decided. And woe unto you who have a sentence truly and justly given in against you! For He will sit a Judge, and ye shall have sin, devils, your own consciences, and the justice of God to accuse you. All these will accuse you, and tell what things you have done or committed. Oh, there are many wrongs done; many pleas, and many faults amongst us! I say the Master will hold a Court. The panels will be there. The agent and the bloody weeds will be there, and there are many bloody weeds amongst us.

Now the Master of Scotland must come, and keep a Court in Scotland. He will not only go through Scotland, but He will go through other nations also. "*For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.*" [Isa. 26.21.] Indeed, we will say this, the world is now become, as it were, mad and wild; therefore there is a necessity for the Lord to come and hold a Court against them. I say, we see how little justice and how great cruelty is in the courts of men; therefore God's justice must hold a Court because of man's injustice. There are many unjust courts held, and it is for that He must hold His Court. Woe will be then to them that are found in their injustice and iniquity! for God is coming not only to judge for every oppression and bloodshed, but also for every hidden iniquity in the heart. The Judge is coming to judge, and it is for all iniquity. It is a wonder that men will not believe this. It will be found that many are sleeping in their sins and living quietly in their iniquity, and are not striving against it. Many indeed have been robbed of their chastity, but there are others who have slept with their iniquities.

But the Judge knows what striving there has been against temptations, and how few have been chaste.

Now what will be next? All will compear. The agent will compear. The witness will compear. The bloody weeds will compear. The earth that received the saints blood will compear. The earth that received such a man's blood will then be opened up; "*For the earth shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain.*" [Isa. 26.21.] It will no more keep the blood on scaffolds, the blood on seas, the blood on the fields, the blood in houses. Many have been killed secretly. Now all has been silent. Now, says the earth, "We will no more be silent." I say, the time is approaching that the righteous Judge will sit. God will sit Judge, and there will be an open proclamation, and all will be summoned before Him who are to be judged. Then the earth will no more cover her slain. It has covered them for some time, but it will no more cover them.

This is the first thing; and it is a manifest token of what God is about to do. He will come shortly and hold a Court, and blood will be the great article of the indictment. I say, the blood of enemies will be the great article of the indictment. "*The earth shall disclose her blood, and no more cover her slain.*"

2. There is an advice given to God's people, and what is that? It is

(1.) That God's people should get out of the way of danger. "*Come, my people.*" [Isa. 26.20.] Oh, but God is tender of His people's safety! But, alas! there are few of them so tender of it themselves as to hear God speaking kindly unto them, to make haste into their chambers. There are chambers for you. Oh, then, like doves, fly in at your windows. Well, then, I say, this is counsel unto them. This is His command. We see some great work God has to do, and He would have His people providing for it. He commands you to lay by all other things, and to labour to get a place of refuge near God; for He has a great work to do and He would have you providing against an approaching storm. Labour to get a secret hiding-place, a place of retirement from all danger.

(2.) "*Enter into your chambers,*" [Isa. 26.20.] says He. Well, there is a warning. What more? "*Shut thy doors about thee.*" [Isa. 26.20.] Make all fast. Make sure both before and behind thee, and leave no open doors; for justice will make a wonderful narrow search, and will pry into the least cleft or recess, and therefore make sure.

(3.) "*Hide thyself:*" [Isa. 26.20.] It is good for us. It is our advantage to be there until the wrath be over – "*till the indignation be overpast*" [Isa. 26.20.] – and we are never to come out from thence. Oh, thrice happy they that shall never come out of these chambers! We are sure, we are persuaded, it shall ever be well with them, who are once entered into these chambers of safety.

But as we cannot speak particularly unto these words here, we shall hint at these two things following: –

(1.) The tender care of God to His people, and especially when they are reduced to straits. I say, they are always made to know His kindness in a time of trouble or difficulty. We shall say somewhat concerning this. In effect we say that the best of believers are not able to abide much dandling. It is well known that folk cannot carry much under these things; for they cannot bear much without becoming proud and self-conceited. I say, they are not able to bear much of the manifestations of God's kindness towards them. But we are sure of this one thing, that in a difficult time they meet with the best of dispensations – I say, for the most part, the best dispensations are reserved for the most hard and difficult times. Now, we are sure of this, that when He sees you hardest put to it, then He will verify this, for when ye come before men, and cannot get your Bible, then be sure God will evidence His kindness unto you; He will not then conceal it.

(2.) But this is not the thing we would speak to; but the thing is this; that there are chambers of safety for God's people in a time of indignation. Now seek them out; for there are chambers of safety provided for God's people and children in a time of wrath and indignation.

Now wherefore are they called chambers? They are called chambers upon these accounts: –

1. They are chambers for presence and delight.

2. For strength, protection, and defence. In a word, for delight, these chambers are a palace; and for strength, protection, and defence, they are castles, so that they are chambers of safety and pleasure too. They are God Himself who is all in all to the believer. We may say this of them: they are a palace of defence from the wrath of God, for it never pursues a man within these chambers. They are places of delight, safety, security, and strength. It is no wonder, then, that a soul desires to be near God, and within these chambers; for there they have all their soul can desire. There is nothing can fright or terrify the soul of a believer, when he is once entered into these chambers: for they are for "*a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.*" [Isa. 32.2] Safety, pleasure and delight are to be found in them. O happy soul that shall be delighted with them! He is not to be pitied, indeed; there is nothing to wrong him when a storm of wrath is without upon the world.

But here it may be thought or asked, What is signified by these chambers? It is the soul committing itself unto God in His providence; the providence of God shall provide chambers for you. O Sirs, strive to get within these chambers of God's providences; for we are all likely to meet with a storm. Oh, but there are few who commit themselves to God! and it is a wonder the enemy gets not more folk. When some come amongst their hands, we see what comes of them. We are sure of this, that there is over little committing ourselves to God. When they are overtaken with temptations, they think their own wit or wisdom will do their turn; but indeed it will not do. Hence so many yield unto the enemy. They are not betaking themselves unto their chambers and their heart fails them, and they forget to flee into them. Oh, but folk have need to be within these chambers now, when they cannot go out nor come in, lie down nor rise up, without hazard! Labour then to be within these chambers. "*Come, my people, enter into thy chambers, and shut the doors about thee.*"

The next thing that we thought principally to speak to is, that the safety of man lies in the mercy of God. Man's safety in a time of indignation lies in God's mercy, and your duty is to betake yourselves to it. Thus you will be in the chambers

of defence. A soul must betake itself to the mercy of God, and so must be in the exercise of the duty here required, if it would put itself into these chambers. But when we speak of God's mercy and our exercise of betaking ourselves to it, we do not mean that these two have an equal hand in this. No, the mercy of God is still before duty, for it is the love and mercy of God that stir up a man unto duty. Then the Lord must both do His own part, and stir us up, and enable us to do our part too. It is the mercy of God, properly, that does the whole work; and though He puts us upon doing, yet we must do all in His strength.

Now, there is a great part of the work in the mercy of God, and a part of it in the soul. In effect, it is God's mercy when He does it alone, and it is His mercy when He does it with us. But we may speak a word of this, What way does mercy do it? The Lord does it Himself in these three things: –

1st, In giving us warning of the danger before it come. Oh, but we have all need of much warning from God to flee out of the way of His wrath! There are some souls so wise that they will never lie, so to speak, a night in wrath's way. Oh, he is a happy man who hath his soul hid! Oh, it is great wisdom to be out of the way of wrath! This is the case with persons when they are lying within these walls, and their "*defence is the munition of rocks.*" [Isa. 33.16.] O happy soul who is lying nightly there, and cannot think to be one moment out of such a safety and such a life. Sometimes they delight to draw sweetness from Him: either by one favour or by another they must hold Him, as it were, in their bosom, and with the spouse, "*lying all night between their breasts.*" [Cant. 1.13.] I say, He gives them warning, and much warning have we gotten, but it is little taken notice of. Oh, but this is a happy soul that takes the alarm as God gives it! He summons and alarms us; He assures us that wrath is approaching, but alas that these alarms make so little impression upon us! They are lost to many of us. Woe unto us that we have improved them no better! God has warned us sooner and later, but it hath had little or no effect if it has not made us more secure. Have ye been speaking to God? Have ye told Him what ye are like to meet with from enemies, and how ye have been admitted unto His bosom?

2ndly, As He gives seasonable warning what is to come, so He makes some take warning and believe, while to others it seems but idle tales or dreams. Well, we know not if ye have taken heed to it, or if God's warnings have sunk down into your hearts or not, but ye have been long burthened with these things. Well, we say, as God gives warning, so He makes us to take warning. If so, then it is the mercy of God that hath made some to believe when others have despaired. Now, then, you who believe and take warning, it is the mercy of God which determined you to it, and, as it were, gives you a new heart to do so. But, what is more, it makes you provide against the day of wrath. What believe ye? Ye believe He will make out His word of threatening. So I say there are no more believers than persons who provide against the wrath of God. And, oh, he is a happy man who, when he comes before the tribunal of God, hath his acquaintance made with his Judge, and has got near unto God! I say he is a happy man who hath got his peace made with God, and whose Judge is his friend. Then have ye got all made sure – the acquaintance made and the defence provided?

3rdly, There is another thing. The mercy of God goes yet farther, as it gives warning, and makes us believe it, so it also provides the chambers for us. His people have no more to do but to flee "*unto these chambers and hide themselves from wrath.*" The Lord will never rise to exercise them with judgment till chambers be provided, and then the people of God need not fear; for chambers are provided for all that will flee unto them. But, in effect, we will say that in the day of your straits a process will be made, and you will be asked, "What do ye amongst the enemies of God?" What! will ye die amongst God's enemies? Alas! for ye are to be seen complying amongst the rest of God's enemies against Him, and if persons do so they have no reason to look for these chambers of protection from Him.

Now, there are these three things that the people of God must do. If they would have His assistance in their duty, they

must all supplicate Him for help to do these things:—

1st, There is an entering in unto these chambers.

2ndly, There is a shutting of the doors. And

3rdly, There is a hiding.

1. There must be an entering in, as we have said before. This is a committing ourselves to God, and a covenanting with Him by faith. So ye see faith must go before an actual covenanting with God. Then ye must commit and resign yourselves over to Him, in time, that ye shall no more go back to the entanglements of the world. But, alas! there are few or none in the land who are afraid either for the devil, or the severity of justice.

2. "*Shut the doors about thee.*" What is that? Why it is to make all sure behind you. Wrath will pursue you, and, if ye be over long a-fleeing unto those chambers, wrath will overtake you. Many have but loose grips and have not made all sure behind them, and the wrath of God will let them see that they have neither shut doors nor windows behind them; and where there has been nothing of this done there are open doors, and wrath will enter. But we are sure that the wrath of God will never come at any person who has once got into these chambers, and has got the doors shut behind him. Well, then, shut the doors, and make all sure behind you by a covenant engagement; and do all you can for it. If you do not, a black and gloomy reckoning awaits you. But justice will try you strictly; if ye leave but a window unshut He will find you. Therefore make all sure in time.

3. And lastly, "*Hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment.*" Hide yourselves. Enter in. Hiding and entering in make all one thing. This makes all sure with God. Where will you hide yourselves? In Him; for there is no other hiding place than in Him. "*A man shall be a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of waters in a dry place, and as a shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*" [Isa. 32.2.] We shall add: they are chambers of defence, and well they are furnished. We would lay it at your door, that ye would be serious for yourselves and make all sure. Shut the doors behind you, and God will never bid you go out again. Rest you there till the dove come to the ark with the olive leaf in her mouth.'