

THE SEED OF ISRAEL, JUSTIFIED IN CHRIST

Preached at Zion Baptist Chapel, Bedworth on Wednesday evening, March 31st, 1847

"Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD, shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory" Isa.45:24,25

The Scripture abounds with testimonies to the essential deity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Some of these testimonies are expressed, as for instance: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" (Heb.1:8). "And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim.3:16). There we have the express testimony of the Holy Ghost to the essential divinity, and eternal Godhead, of the Lord Jesus Christ; but there are other testimonies of the Scripture, rather implied than expressed, as, for instance, all those passages that speak of certain acts peculiar to the Godhead ascribe these to the Lord Jesus Christ, such as the act of creation: "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth." "Upholding all things by the word of his power." The Lord told his disciples that to him were committed all things in heaven and earth.

Again, passages in the Old Testament which speak of Jehovah, are quoted in the New Testament as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus our text, in the connection, we find certain things said of "the LORD," that is Jehovah, the word being printed in capitals, certain things are said of "the LORD," which, in the New Testament, are applied to Jesus Christ. For instance, the 23rd verse, "I have sworn by

myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." We find the apostle Paul, in his Epistle to the Philippians, quotes this testimony as referring to the Lord Jesus Christ: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (chap.2:9-11). We find the apostle Paul quoting, also, the same testimony in the Epistle to the Romans: "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God" (chap.14:11). He having said, in the preceding verse, "For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ." So, again, with respect to the words before us, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." We find the apostle Paul quoting these words in the first chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, referring to Jesus Christ: "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord" (verses 30,31).

Thus we have the testimony of the inspired apostle Paul, that the words before us are applicable to the Lord Jesus Christ, "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength: even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." In considering these verses, I shall, as the Lord shall enable me, I. First, Speak of the solemn determination and declaration of Jehovah, that, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

II. Secondly, The result and fruit of this solemn determination and declaration of Jehovah, "Even to him shall men come," saying, "surely in the LORD have I righteousness and strength."

III. Thirdly, The fate of those that are incensed against Jesus Christ, who are not of the seed of Israel, therefore not justified, and never shall glory in him: "And all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed."

I. The solemn determination and declaration of Jehovah, that, "In the LORD Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." The Lord, here, has clearly determined who it is, and who it is alone, that shall be justified. Who it is, and who it is alone, that shall glory in the Lord, he has not left this matter to chance, nor the will of man, nor of flesh; he has declared by his own lips of unerring truth, that it is the seed of Israel only who shall be justified in the Lord, and shall glory in his name. Who are we to understand by the seed of Israel? The apostle tells us, "For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." (Rom.9:6) It is not professing Israel that come in for the blessing; but those chosen out of professing Israel; the objects of God's electing choice, eternal love, and distinguished favour: these only are justified in the Lord; and these, and these only will be brought in God's time and way to glory in him, and him alone.

But how comes it to pass, that the seed of Israel are said only to be justified in the Lord? Because they never can be justified by anything in self. How can God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, look on sin? He cannot! What can God accept, in the matter of justification, except that which is pure, spotless, and undefiled? Man being a fallen

creature, a depraved monster of iniquity, every thought, every imagination, every word, and every action is tainted throughout with inherent and indwelling sin. How can man with his present nature approach Jehovah, gain access to, or bring before him a righteousness that will satisfy the demand of infinite justice, and be acceptable to a God of spotless holiness and unimpeachable veracity? How can he bring before Jehovah, as the Jehovah of Israel, such a righteousness that God can be well pleased with? Man being such a depraved creature, such a vile wretch, so utterly sunk in filth, carnality and wickedness, that unless God provide a way of justification, independent of the creature, there could be no justification; therefore no salvation. God cannot save man consistent with his holy law and righteous attributes, without his being righteous; without his having a righteousness with which his holy and pure eyes are well pleased.

If God had not been pleased in his infinite mind to have devised such a plan, and in his own time and way executed what he had devised, that all the seed of Israel should be justified in the Lord, not a seed would have been saved, but the whole human race must have perished in the flames of eternal perdition, under the wrath of him who is a consuming fire: but there is a seed of Israel, an elect remnant, a blessed seed, loved of God, and chosen from all eternity in the Son of his love. He has determined that, in the Lord, all this seed shall be justified, that they shall stand complete in Jesus; that his obedience shall be theirs; that there shall not be found a flaw, a spot, a wrinkle, or speck upon them, because they stand clothed in the spotless obedience of the God-man.

The very expression, "In the LORD," requires some explanation; we may gather several things therefrom: First, The seed of Israel is in eternal union with the Lord, the God-

man Mediator. If you observe, the text declares, the seed of Israel is justified "in the LORD," not by the Lord, though they are so justified by the Lord, and through the Lord, yet it is "in the LORD," leading up our thoughts and fixing our eyes on that eternal union, which existed before all worlds, whereby the church had her standing in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by virtue of this eternal union; it is through this unalterable standing in him, she finds she stands acquitted and accepted in the beloved, as the Word declares, justified in him, his obedience being imputed to her, all that he has, has been sovereignly computed and put to her account, just the same way that a wife has possession of what is her husband's, coming into possession of his name and property, taking all that he has; so the church, by eternal union to her Covenant Head, has all that his loving heart can bestow; all he has is truly hers, as we read, "All things are your's... And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (1 Cor.3:21 and 23).

But the words, "in the LORD," admit of farther meaning, they imply, also, belief in the Lord. It is by faith in Jesus that we are justified from all things, from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses. (Acts 13:39) The seed of Israel is not only justified in the Lord, by virtue of eternal union with him, but is justified, also, by faith in his name, by believing him to be the true God and eternal life: by receiving him as the gift of God; having a living faith flowing out towards him, whereby he is embraced in the heart and conscience, revealed, made known, and set up in the soul as the hope of glory: not only so, but the words, "in the LORD," lead our minds and thoughts into communion with him. Thus the soul is not only justified by eternal union, but by faith in his name; that from this faith flows communion with him, the sweet refreshings of his presence, and the flowings in of his eternal love, the sprinkling of his atoning blood, the manifestation, and revelation of his glorious spotless

righteousness. In this sense, by virtue of eternal union to him, by virtue of living faith, by virtue of sweet communion flowing out of this into their heart, all the seed of Israel are justified in the Lord. What a complete answer to all law charges; how it sets the sinner free from every accusation that can be brought against him. As Paul says, "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died" (Rom.8:34).

As though it were a sufficient answer for all, when this glorious truth is received into the heart, under the direction of the Spirit of God, the soul enjoys a measure of Christ's sweetness, glory, and power; then it is, and then alone, he has a taste of real happiness, solid enjoyment, and true peace. It is God's eternal purpose, that the seed of Israel shall not only be justified in the Lord, acquitted from all charge, and stand complete in him, but that they should, also, glory in the Lord. In order that the seed of Israel should glory in the Lord, it is absolutely necessary that they should cease to glory in self. By nature, we are all prone to glory in self, few but what love to glory through that cursed principle of self-esteem and self-exaltation. Nothing but the mighty power of God can put down those cursed principles. We are prone to this pride, and it is strengthened and matured in a fallen sinner's heart. It is the work of the Spirit in the sinner's conscience to pour contempt on all the pride of man, to open up the depth of the fall, to bring to light all his hidden corruptions, to unbosom and lay bare all the evils of his heart, to upturn the deep corruptions of his fallen nature before his astonished eyes, that he may learn with true humility of soul, brokenness of heart, and contrition of spirit before God, to loathe and abhor himself in dust and ashes, as a monster of iniquity. If a man has not been taught by the strong hand of God in his soul to abhor, loathe, and cry out against himself as one of the vilest wretches that crawls on God's earth, he has never learned to glory in the Lord Jesus

Christ.

When the Lord Jesus Christ reveals to his soul a sense of his love, unfolds a sight of his glory before his astonished eyes, and a measure of his love and blood is received into the soul, he is brought to look out of himself, and from all he has, to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Lord," he says, "I never dare rely on any one thing or glory therein, only in thee."

II. This leads me to the second branch of our subject, to shew in what way the seed of Israel is brought and justified experimentally in the Lord, and to glory in him. It seems to me they are appointed to trust in the Lord: "Even to him shall men come." Who are these men? Are they not men of the seed of Israel; regenerated men and women; redeemed of the Lord, regenerated by the Holy Ghost, and made alive to God, by his special teaching in the conscience? These men belong to the seed of Israel, God's own blessed, redeemed, regenerated family. Now the Lord's solemn declaration, and determination is, "To him," that is the Lord Jesus Christ, "shall men come." It does not rest in the will of the creature. It is God's solemn determination, his eternal declaration, that all the seed of Israel shall be justified in the Lord, and shall glory in him. It is, also, God's solemn, unalterable declaration, that "to him shall men come." It does not rest, therefore, in the will of the creature: it hangs wholly and solely on the sovereign determination of God himself.

How does he bring it about? By a special work of grace in the heart. How do these men come? Under the teaching, drawing, and leading of the blessed Spirit of God in their soul. Where does the blessed Spirit find them? Does he find them willing to come, willing to leave all those things that men, by nature, love, and to which they cleave? No! It must be the special work of God himself in the heart and conscience, to bring about this solemn declaration: "To him

shall men come." He brings it about by shewing us plainly, in ourselves, we are lost. Until a man feels in himself lost and undone, he will never come to Jesus Christ: for he is the Saviour of the lost. Until we feel lost he is no Saviour to us. When we feel lost, cut up by God's holy law, all our righteousness opened up as filthy rags, see no way of escape from the horrible pit; and the Lord is pleased to open up to us the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, his atoning blood, his perfect obedience, his justifying righteousness, and dying love; laying these things with some degree of sweetness and power on the soul, we come.

Why do we come? Because the blessed Spirit works in us to will and do of his good pleasure; he enables us to come, under his blessed teachings, leadings, and actings. In what character do we come? "Even to him shall men come." Under what character do we come? As having any goodness, any righteousness, or holiness, of our own? If we come with any goodness, holiness, piety, or religion of our own, we do not come aright; the Lord will not receive this, look upon, or accept it at our hands. We must come, having no righteousness of our own; all our righteousness opened to our eyes, and laid on our conscience as filthy rags. We must come guilty; with the burden of guilt on our conscience that we cannot remove; guilt enough to sink our souls to hell. We must come, feeling the burden of our transgressions; that we have exceeded, that our sins are innumerable as the stars in the sky, that they are of an aggravated nature, and nothing short of God's mercy can pardon such wretches. We must come persuaded, and feeling that none else in heaven and earth can do our souls good. We must come as Esther, when she went to the king: "If I perish, I perish" (chap.4:16). I must go to him if I die. This is the state of those who come, not having anything to lay before him; they come receiving out of his fulness that which he is pleased to bestow.

The Lord's people come to him tempted with a thousand doubts and fears, whether they shall be accepted by him; whether such a holy, righteous, and blessed Jesus can cast an eye of pity on them: if they were better, holier, or to amend their lives; to present something worthy of his acceptance; they think then they might be received: but to go to him, full of everything hateful in his holy and pure eyes, nature seems to revolt from it; yet they are compelled by the necessity of the case, having nowhere else to go, no one else to look to.

They come to him because he is their only hope, the only resource for guilty, sin-burdened souls. They come to him also sorely tempted; feeling the power of sin working in them continually. They come, feeling the abounding of iniquity in their carnal minds, the vilest lusts, and filthiest corruptions. They come, assaulted by Satan's blasphemies poured into their carnal minds, with all sorts of wicked thoughts against God and godliness, all vile suggestions, with their heart and mind at times full of confusion, nothing in themselves but misery and wretchedness, yet they come, and they see and feel, as the Lord is pleased to open up to their view, such a suitability, a sweetness, sanctifying, glorifying, and creative grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, that they feel if he will but receive them, look on, and smile on their souls; if he will but whisper some soft word of encouragement in their heart, thus: Fear not, I have loved thee. "Fear not I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine," (Isa.43:1) they feel, in a moment, every crooked thing made straight, and every rough place plain. Their hearts rejoice in him with joy unspeakable and full of glory. They come, not merely compelled to come through the necessities of their case, not merely with a heavy load of guilt; they come, seeing in him riches unspeakable; these riches, unspeakable,

are exactly adapted to all their wants. Their eyes are illuminated by the Spirit of God; they see in him beauty unspeakable, a suitability they cannot describe, yet felt in every corner of their heart. These come to him, feeling he alone can do their souls spiritual good.

How do they come? With cries, groans, and tears rolling down their cheeks; heart-breaking sobs gushing from their breasts. They come to him pleading with him his own promise. They come to him by night and by day as he is pleased to work these supplications in their souls. They come to him fixing their eyes on him, feeling well nigh spent, that he will be pleased to apply his smile in their behalf to their souls, that he will be pleased to manifest his presence, shed abroad his love in their heart, and assure them they are eternally his. Now, if you find these things going on in your soul, you have a scriptural testimony that you belong to the seed of Israel, of whom it is said, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

There may be those here, who cannot believe they are justified in the Lord; they have not the assurance of faith to believe their sins are pardoned, that they stand complete in Christ by faith; neither can they glory in him. Now, I may have some poor soul here who has not seen or enjoyed these refreshing communications of Christ, that lead the soul to glory in his name. Have we not a scriptural evidence in this one feature, they come to him? Does not the Lord say none come to him except the Father draw him? Is not this like what Peter says: "To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious" (1 Pet.2:4)? This is the Spirit's work in the conscience of a sinner, no man ever has, ever will come, except he is drawn of God, made willing in the day of his power; and does not the Lord Jesus Christ say, "Him that cometh to me I will in no

wise cast out" (John 6:37)? Does he not say, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matt.11:28)? How encouraging these promises, these invitations are to all poor sin-burdened creatures, who are feelingly encouraged, invited, and sometimes enabled to come to him, to lay themselves at his feet, to wrestle with him, and supplicate his majesty, to pour out their hearts before him, telling him with tears, sighs, fervent groans, and heartbreaking sobs, that nothing but his love can satisfy them, and nothing but his blood purge their conscience. His love brings heaven into their souls.

Depend upon it, empty professors of religion know nothing in their souls feelingly, of coming to the Lord in this way. It is peculiar to the quickened family of God, wrought in their hearts by the power of his Spirit. The fulfilment of this gracious word, from God's own lips, of unerring truth, "Even to him shall men come," and then, when they have come, the Lord is pleased to draw them nearer to himself, to bless their soul with some discoveries of his goodness, mercy, and love. Then they can say, "In the LORD have I righteousness, and strength." Here we have three steps: First, God's solemn declaration, his unalterable determination, that "in the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." The second step, the result and fruit of this solemn determination on the part of God, that they shall come unto him; and the third step, springing out of that, is the language which they are enabled, as the Lord gives it into their hearts, to take into their lips, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength."

None can say this, except those that come to him; none can say this, except those into whose hearts he has spoken it, to whose soul the Lord has appeared, to whom he has afforded, a manifestation of his grace and favour, "In the LORD,"

surely, shall one say, "have I righteousness and strength." That one whom the Lord himself has been pleased thus to teach, the Lord draws, surely, it is God's "Amen!" his eternal verity. These people, whom the Lord thus leads, draws, and teaches, shall say in the Spirit, in the assurance of faith, as the Lord enables them, "In the Lord alone have I, guilty, wretched, miserable, fallen, wicked, vile, I, righteousness and strength."

Now, no man will be able to say, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength," until he has seen a complete end of his own misery, his trials, his temptations, and perplexities; a man shall have to wait there, before he can say, feelingly say, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength." So, again, if we are so conceited, have such lofty ideas of ourselves, are such self- righteous Pharisees, so unwilling to part with our own supposed goodness, depend upon it, that where the grace of God in the heart is in exercise, there will be such deep discoveries in the man that he will loathe himself, such a thorough turning over and up, that he shall see what a creature he is in the eyes of a holy God; then, before he can feelingly say "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength," he must be led to see all his own righteousness is as filthy rags, that he can trample it under his feet with a solemn determination to look on, and rest only in the Lord, saying, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength."

Nothing is more easy, nothing more common than for men to talk of being justified in Christ, they use boasting language, that in the Lord they have this righteousness; yet, if we look at their lives, and watch their conversation, how little is seen of godly sorrow for sin, how little they know of brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, how little do we see in them of a deep acquaintance with the corruptions of nature, what

little slight appearance of holy awe, or tendency even to godly fear; there is little fruit, very little desire to produce fruit: it is evident there is very little circumspection in their walk: they are not living as under the eye of him who searches the heart and trieth the reins. These fruits of the Spirit always appear where there is a work of grace in the soul.

A man may say "in the LORD, I have righteousness;" but he must give me better evidence than saying it, else we are not bound to take that man at his word. We may rest assured he cannot say feelingly, and experimentally, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength," till he is put out of conceit of his own. When, by the eye of faith, he sees a glory and beauty in Jesus as made over to him, by the hand of a good and living faith, the blessed Spirit is pleased to engage our soul, to bring into our heart some sweet discoveries of his perfect obedience, and in the language of living faith, then we say "In the LORD have I righteousness." Depend upon this, we can do nothing, can have righteousness in no other, and from no other source, that will do our souls any good. But suppose a person says, I have righteousness and strength in the Lord; as long as he has any strength of his own, he will never have any strength in the Lord, for the strength of Jesus is made perfect in our weakness. Therefore, it implies, that the individual that uses these words aright has all his strength completely brought into weakness. Oh, what a painful lesson we have to learn, in order to find all our strength is weakness.

There was a time when some of us thought we had strength, and could resist Satan, and overcome the world; endure persecution, bear the reproach of man, mortify and keep down pride, and the evils of our heart. Have we found ourselves able to carry out this fancied strength? Have we

been able to accomplish this resolution? What has been our experience in this matter? That we have discovered more and more our own weakness; that we cannot stand against one temptation. The least gust blows us down: our besetting lusts, our vile passions, and the wicked desires of our hearts, so inveigle our eyes and thoughts, so intertwine themselves round our affections, that we are gone in a moment, except God himself holds us up. Have we not found we have no power to believe, hope, love, pray or bring forth any one spiritual act, except God himself so far work in us to will and to do of his good pleasure?

Thus we learn our weakness, not doctrinally, or in our judgment; but surely and experimentally feeling ourselves the very weakest of the weak, so we are taught to feel ourselves the very vilest of the vile. There is a growing acquaintance with these things; as the Lord leads a man deeper down into the knowledge of his corruptions it makes him more and more out of conceit with his righteous, pious, holy self, the more the Lord leads a man into the knowledge of temptation, his besetting sin, the power of his corruptions, the workings of his vile nature; in all this work, he knows and learns more deeply, and painfully, what a poor, helpless, weak, powerless wretch he is; and, as the Lord is pleased to unfold before his eyes, the strength, power, and fulness lodged in Jesus Christ; draws him, leads him, brings him, encourages him, and enables him to come to this fulness, pleading with the Lord to make his strength perfect in his weakness; by the hand of faith he draws supplies out of that fulness which is in Jesus Christ; he learns in the Lord that he not only has righteousness but strength.

I believe we learn in the Lord we have righteousness, before we learn that in the Lord we have strength. We learn our vileness before our weakness; our sinfulness before our

emptiness. We learn we are lost, utterly lost, before we learn we cannot stand against sin; that truly our heart is as weak as water. As the Lord enables the soul to look to Jesus, hang on his name, his fame, his Word, his promise, from time to time, his blessed strength is communicated, breathed into his soul; so the Lord works in him to will and do of his good pleasure; then the poor worm Jacob threshes the mountains, beats the hills, and makes them fly before him as chaff.

When the Lord strengthens him, he can stand against temptation, overcome sin, bear persecution, subdue the evils of his heart, and fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil. When the Lord leaves him, he is like Samson with his locks cut, sinks into all evil, and feels the helplessness of his fallen nature. Whatever he might have felt before; whatever light, power, and love may have flowed into his soul, let the Lord remove his gracious presence, and the strong man sinks down into a babe; and he that in the strength of the Lord could thresh the mountains, falls down before the Lord as weak and helpless as a little child. Thus the Lord teaches us even painfully, and solemnly, that in him alone have we righteousness and strength. Thus he teaches us to look to him, hang on him, centre all the hope of our soul in him alone, who is mighty to save; who is able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.

III. But there are those that have different thoughts concerning Jesus. We have read, for all who are incensed against him they shall be ashamed. Thirdly, the fate of those who are incensed against Christ. Let us just look at the solemn determination and declaration of God. That there is a seed, an elect seed, called the seed of Israel, of whom God has said that in the Lord they shall be justified, acquitted from all law charges, and presented before God without spot or blemish, or any such thing. God has said, "In the LORD

[alone] shall all the seed ... glory." If they boast, rejoice, pray, or speak, it shall be in him; all that they have or are comes from, and centres in him. They come by prayer, supplication, ardent cries, longing desires, and fervent pleadings; they come to him to satisfy the desire of their soul, that he would love them, bless them, and speak to their heart. Such as these he enables to say, in the Lord have I, poor I, lost I, guilty I, righteousness and strength.

Then there are those characters who are very different: there are those that see no beauty in Jesus that they should desire him, they feel no need of him, never see his suitability, never stimulated with his love, never behold his glory, taste of his favour, or enjoy his presence; on the contrary, their heart is filled with infernal enmity against him, and all that are his. Of these, we read, without exception, they shall be ashamed. As far as we are brought, by the Spirit's strong hand in our soul, to look to, and come to Jesus, and at times feel him precious, just so far we have the mind of Christ, just so far God's thoughts are our thoughts, and his ways our ways. Here, while we are cast into the mould of God, what God says is pleasing to us, and what we do is pleasing to God, there is a union and communion between God and the believing soul who is brought to look to Jesus, feel him precious, glory in him, and in him alone.

But there are others, who are rebels to God and godliness, who are even incensed against him: their infernal pride and devilish enmity of their carnal mind is stirred up by the very thing that is sweet and suitable to God's redeemed family. Many are incensed against him because he is God; against his deity, because he is the eternal God. It seems to stir up the infernal enmity of some because they cannot bear that Jesus should be Jehovah. They are incensed against him because he is God over all, blessed for ever. They "shall be

ashamed." Some are incensed at his sovereignty: because he died for the sheep and not for the goats; because he laid down his life for his friends, and not for his enemies. It is true, they dare not altogether use their blasphemous, scurrilous language against him; but they are incensed against those that contend for these discriminating doctrines of God's grace.

Others are incensed against him because he will be glorified in the hearts of his willing people; because he will not suffer their righteousness to stand on a level with his own: that he will not accept of creature righteousness; but hold it open, all mangled and marred before the eyes of angels. Others are incensed against him because he does not take into glory their marred, mangled, and filthy rags; others because he will shed abroad his love in the hearts of, and will manifest himself unto the sheep of his pasture, as he does not unto the world. When the Lord's people hear speak of the manifestation of the love of Christ to the souls of sinners, they are not incensed against it; they long for it themselves, and think those people happy that have it, and covet more of these smiles, and long to drink of the same cup. Those enemies that are incensed against him cannot bear to hear the Lord Jesus Christ visits these souls with the sprinklings of his blood, and the smiles of his love shed abroad in their heart: these discriminating favours, these tender mercies, these gifts that he sends, stir up the enmity of their ungodly heart.

The work of grace in the soul is so humbling in its teaching, whereby it makes the creature nothing, brings to nought and stains the pride of all human righteousness, that they are incensed against it. He relieves himself by speaking a word in secret against the poor and needy. Another is incensed against him because he thus deals with the heart and

conscience of those that fear his name. How many are incensed against the ordinance of baptism? It stirs up the mind, because the Lord Jesus Christ appointed this way as his ordinance. Those, then, that despise it, despise him; those that are incensed against it, are incensed against him. All that I can say is, it provokes the enmity of their carnal mind, that, whatever men may say, he will be justified in the hearts of them that believe; that he will take whom he pleases, leave whom he pleases, save whom he pleases, will work in the heart of his own people when and where he pleases.

This incenses many that cannot bear the sovereign dealing of the Lord Jesus Christ. All that are incensed against him shall be ashamed and confounded with confusion of face, and everlasting contempt, when God bids them depart from his presence as evil doers; the Lord Jesus Christ will say, "I never knew you: depart from me" (Matt.7:23). All those shall then be ashamed, because they have been incensed against him. Thus we see what a difference there is between those the Lord leads, and brings to fear and love his great name, and those that are left under natural, infernal, and bitter enmity.

There is a people the Lord loves: these people he has determined shall be justified in him; none shall be able to say anything against them; he has acquitted them, none shall find anything to bring to their charge when they stand before the bar of his righteous judgment; the Lord has determined they shall glory in the Lord all the day long; all their boast, joy, thanksgiving, they shall say, and they speak from the feelings of their heart, is in the Lord, and in him alone. The Lord leads these people; he has special dealings in their conscience; they come to Jesus, and receive these favours at his almighty hand, when he pleases to bestow them; then

they say, and then only, in this glorious Jesus, this God-man, Immanuel, God with us, have I righteousness and strength. Others, who on account of these things, proud professors, are incensed against him they may cover their enmity with great swelling words; but, in their hearts, they have enmity against this Man of Sorrows, they have an infernal dislike against his people and his ways; against his teaching and his readings in the hearts of his saints, their infernal enmity is ever going out.

The same God that has declared, "In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," the same lip of unerring truth, has declared, that all, without exception, however great, noble or dignified, religious, or irreligious, professors or profane; the Lord God Almighty has declared, with the lips of unerring truth, that, "All that are incensed against him shall be ashamed" and put to eternal confusion. The question is, on which side you stand? Whether incensed against him, hating, despising, abhorring him, or going out in tender affection towards him. Whether God's Spirit, by his almighty grace, and power has mercifully set us on the other side of the line, brought us to come to him, to believe on his name, to look to him, to know him in the power of his resurrection, and to glory in him?

I have only mentioned these different classes and characters; there are some, perhaps, who are just beginning to learn their need of Christ, in whose heart and conscience there are some convictions, to whom he is just beginning to reveal himself, not having clear views of Jesus, or the sweet manifestations of his love to their souls, yet have enough sin working in them to put them out of conceit of themselves; others have deeper discoveries of the evils of their heart, are brought to loathe themselves, on account of their corruptions, and their sin before God, in their heart, through

the blessed Spirit's teaching, are brought to Jesus, some Scriptures are opened up, some sudden coming in of the Lord their righteousness, seeing a precious suitability in Jesus to all their wants, coming to him sometimes by night and sometimes by day, sometimes in earnest desires of soul, sometimes in cries, sighs, and longings, sometimes in groanings, sobbings, and broken and contrite hearts.

There may be here, others who have come: he has received them, blessed their souls, shone into their hearts, and given them some testimonies that they are his, eternally his; they can say, and only say, as the Lord enables them, "In the LORD have I righteousness and strength;" this humbles them, and makes them little, low in their own eyes, and makes Jesus precious to their souls. So the others, doubtless, those who are incensed against him, dare not show their enmity, their thoughts are full of enmity, they cannot see any beauty in him, they despise him secretly; but all whom the Lord teaches, he brings to Jesus, they believe and trust in Jesus, these belong to the seed of Israel. Some have weak faith, some stronger. Some well nigh eaten up with doubts and fears, tried and tempted all day long; yet, with all their labouring, sighing, seeking, groaning, and humbling, they come to the Lord of life and glory, feeling

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

These seed of Israel, the Lord, in due time, will remove all their doubts and fears, comfort their troubled conscience, and enable them to boast and glory in the Lord, and on him alone depend. As far as the Lord teaches us, this will be more or less our daily experience, being nothing in ourselves, feeling our weakness, helplessness, and wretchedness. The Lord enables us to come, looking to Jesus Christ, that we

may receive out of his fulness. None of these will be sent empty away.

The Lord will bestow grace and mercy; he has all treasures of mercy for those that see and feel their need. He has said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Woe to those incensed against him, that cover over their enmity with swelling words, with lying tales, who despise his ordinances, his people, and his ways. Woe to those who whet their tongue like a sword, utter swelling words against the Lord Jesus Christ; who bend their arrows in their quiver that they may shoot against the Lord's tried and tempted people. Woe to those who exalt the creature, set up man's goodness, and man's free will, instead of the righteousness of Christ. Woe to all those who are incensed against him, however covered up and hiding their enmity. The same lips, of unerring truth, that said, "All the seed of Israel shall be justified," has also said, "All that are incensed against him shall be ashamed."