

A Night among the Stars — Justification.

Gen. 15; Rom. 4.

Night Scenes of Scripture

Seventeen Bible Night Scenes, illustrating and elucidating various truths of the Gospel.

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Chapter 10.

A Night among the Stars — Justification.

Read the fourth chapter of Romans because it is the divine commentary in the New Testament upon this remarkable scene in Abraham's history in the Old. And, further, it lets us know for what purpose God was so careful to record this incident in Abraham's life. It is a most important incident in his life, because it is the moment in which Abraham gets positively linked with God in a double way — (1) By the discovery of what God was in Himself, through what He says to him; and (2) he also discovers the purposes of God concerning himself, as he never did before. Furthermore, he gets an intelligent sense of the ground on which God was going to fulfil the promise that He made to him. Certainly God had made a promise to him before (Gen. 12: 1-3), but the ground whereon it was to be fulfilled he did not know. You will notice presently that God now shows him how that promise is to be fulfilled.

The fourth of Romans tells us that this record of Abraham's having righteousness imputed to him was written not for his sake only, "but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (ver. 24). There is a great difference between that which Abraham was called on to believe, and that which you and I are called on to believe. Abraham was called on to believe God as to what He would do for him. God said what He would do, and Abraham believed Him. You and I are called on to believe on God, not as to something that He will do, but as regards something which He has done. And you will find that the moment you believe what God has done — the moment you believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead — you get into touch with the God of resurrection, and you will know what peace is as you never knew it before.

Now, there is many a serious person today that has not peace with God. They very likely wish they had it, but they have it not. They would like to have the assurance of forgiveness, but they have not got it. They would like to be able to read their title clear to mansions in the sky, but they cannot do it yet; and what is the reason? It is twofold: they have not been brought through ,race to believe implicitly, first of all, the Word of God; and secondly, to rest on the work of

Christ. Now these two things, in the history of our souls, must be, if there is to be peace, and the happy knowledge of God. You will have to listen to God, and to believe God.

I sometimes hear people say, "I cannot believe the gospel; it is too good to be true." Then you cannot believe God. They reply: "I cannot believe the gospel you preach. It is too good to be true. You tell me I am a sinner in my sins, and yet say I can be saved without doing anything for myself." That is just what God's gospel says. The law told me the things I ought to do, but which I could not. The law told us what we ought to do, and what we ought to be, and we neither did what it commanded us to do, nor were what we should be. The only effect of the law, therefore, is this — it puts a man in distress. If you understand what the law is — applied spiritually — it will put you into deep distress of conscience, because you get the sense — I am not fit for God. The law says, "Be ye holy," and I am not holy. The law says I must be righteous, and I am not righteous. The law says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself" (Luke 10: 27); and I know perfectly well that I have not done thus. There are penalties attached to a broken law, and we are put into deep distress as a consequence.

But what is the gospel? It is the revelation of what God is. The law was the declaration of what you ought to be, and you know perfectly you are not what it says you should be. I know perfectly well I am not. No man is. The law was the revelation of what the creature ought to be, in his walk here on earth, but he is not it. The gospel is the revelation of what God is in the absolute goodness, love, holiness, and righteousness of His nature, made known in the Person of His Son, and through the work of His Son; and the result of its reception is blessed indeed. By the gospel you learn that you are free to enjoy God, to believe Him, to trust Him, to delight in Him. In fact, the company of the Lord is the sweetest thing to your soul, and what brings you to that? The gospel. It shows us what God is in His own nature, and how He has acted in Christ; and, that in righteousness, He has brought blessing and pardon to us just where, and as we are, sinners in our sins. That is grace, and the knowledge of it is what the gospel brings to us.

This fifteenth chapter of Genesis is very interesting, as showing that there is progress in the soul, for I do not doubt that there is progress in Abraham's soul here. He had heard the call of God before — I quite admit — in the twelfth chapter, and he came out from Ur of the Chaldees. He obeyed the Lord. He was called to go forth, and he did so; but still he never learned what it was to be a justified man before God. Now the gospel not only calls you out of the world to God, and not only forgives you, but it meets you fully as to your state, and you learn by it what it is to be justified before God — that is, that you stand before God as though there could be no possibility of anything being laid to your charge — nay, more, that you are before Him in a state and condition that suits Him — that suits His own heart, and His own nature. That is exactly where the gospel leads us now.

Possibly you may say to me: "How can I, a sinner, stand before God? How can I come in before God in a condition suitable to His heart, and nature, and throne?" There is only one answer. It is this: There is a Man in the presence of God, perfectly suitable to God, and that is the One, who, first of all, went into death, that He might discharge the liability that lay upon you and me, and deliver us from the state in which we were. You see you need justification, and justification in Scripture is connected with a risen Christ — not merely a living Christ, nor a

dying Christ, but a *risen* Christ — raised from the dead by the power of God. That is what the fourth of Romans so beautifully brings out, and no soul has peace until it sees that; nor can it have peace, because you have to learn this, that everything is wrapped up in Christ. When you learn what Christ is, who He is, what He has done, and where He now is, I think your soul will rest in peace with God. You will have the sweet sense that Christ is living for you before God, as He was once for you in death, when He was upon the cross.

Abraham, in the night scene now coming before us, learned what justification was, and it is very beautiful to notice how he learned it. He had been exposed to a great temptation in the previous chapter. The king of Sodom — a man of the world — had offered to patronise him; and very few of us, let me tell you, are above being patronised by the world. It is only, the man of faith that will refuse to be patronised by the king, for the king wanted to make him rich. But Abraham says: "I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth, that I will not take from a thread even to a shoe-latchet, and that I will not take anything that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich" (Gen. 14: 22, 23). He would not even take a string. What a nice state he is in! He has done with the world. He will get on. If you break with the world, my friend, you will get on.

What is the result of this refusal of reward from the world? Let us see. "After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abraham in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: *I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward*" (Gen. 15: 1). What a lovely word to encourage a man! The Lord draws near to you. You have had a great temptation, and you have resisted it. You receive a blessing. Do you know that? You have met some temptation — for the devil always strews the path with temptations: all along the road he drops them, and sets traps for you — and you have been able to say, No! You will find that the Lord will give you a blessing. He says here, "Fear not, Abram." Beautiful words! Are you troubled? Fear not! Are you anxious? Fear not! Are you in distress of soul? God says, Fear not."

These two lovely words you find strewed like diamonds throughout the pages of inspiration. You cannot go far through God's Book without finding the Lord drawing near to some trembling, timid soul, with these words, "Fear not!" You and I were afraid of God once; we shunned Him — we feared Him. I do not mean in the right sense. We shunned Him, and got as far away from Him as we possibly could, but He comes near and says, "Fear not: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Did Abraham lose anything by saying "No" to the king of the world? Not he. "I am thy shield," says God, and if you get God as your shield, the devil can throw as many of his darts as he likes, but they will have no effect. My friend, if you have God for the shield of your soul, you are very safe.

Elsewhere we are told to "take the shield of faith"; but that is not the thought here. If you have moral courage enough to say "No" to the world, God says, I will put myself between you and what is antagonistic to you; I am thy shield, and more — I am "thy exceeding great reward." If God be your shield, you are protected. If He be your reward, you are well off. Abraham refused the world, and what did he get instead? The Lord for his portion.

People sometimes think it would be a sorrowful thing to give up the world. Abraham may teach you differently. He got far more than he gave up. Young people usually think it would be a

great mistake to give up the world. Abraham would not take as much as a shoe-latchet from it, and he was an immense gainer thereby. He had done with the world. It could not satisfy him; and it can never satisfy you.

The moment he has taken this decided step of "refusing," and "choosing" (see Heb. 11: 24, 25), God says to him, "Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Now see how Abraham advances. He catches the mind of the Lord immediately. He is going to bless me, he thinks, and he says to the Lord, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" He takes his right place. God had drawn near to him, in the richness of grace, and Abraham takes his right place before God — in the fulness of need and faith. "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" is always the language of faith. Some of us thought we had need of something to bring to God. There are some in this room who have thought till this hour that they must bring something to God in order to get God's blessing, and secure salvation, and the knowledge of life and peace. They have been struggling for long to bring Him something, and have never managed it. Do what Abraham did. He is "the father of all them that believe" (Rom. 4: 11). He is the leader of the host of the saved. He is the first man whose conversion is related in Scripture. He is a typical man — a representative man as regards conversion. You had better do what he did. What was that? When the Lord drew near to him in grace, and goodness, and with purposes of blessing in His heart, he took the place of being ready for blessing and said, "Lord God, what wilt thou give me?" He takes his right place.

Are you willing to be blessed by God, or do you think that you must bring something to the Lord? Are you to be a receiver, or a giver? Do as Abraham did. Now note the next step here. "And, behold, *the word of the Lord came unto him.*" Observe that. I press that greatly. It is listening to God. You will never get clear in your soul till you listen to God, and God only, and hear what He says. "And the word of the Lord came to him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir" (ver. 4). God promised him an heir. He was to have a son. He had heard about him before. The son had been intimated in days gone by (Gen. 12: 2, 3), but now he gets the divine assurance that the son shall come. God takes him outside, and directs him to look toward heaven. It is again a night scene, and one of the most interesting. The shades of evening had fallen, the earth was quiet, so to speak, when the Lord brings this man forth, who had great desires in his heart for a son and heir, and he hears from the Lord that he is to have a son. He knew he was an old man, and that his body was "now dead, when he was about an hundred years old" (Rom. 4: 14), and that his wife, Sarah, was only ten years his junior. It must have struck him with great force, when God led him forth and said, "Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (ver. 5).

Picture the darkness of that Eastern night, relieved by the brightness and clearness of light shed by those millions of silvery, twinkling worlds overhead. Abraham looks north, south, east, and west, and with amazement scans the glittering firmament as God says, "Tell the stars, if thou be able to number them." Of course he could not number them. Who could? Obeying his orders, he looks, and the next thing he hears is, "So shall thy seed be." That was a stupendous statement. And what do I read now? "*And he believed in the Lord;* and he counted it to him for righteousness" (ver. 6). It says in the fourth of Romans, regarding this circumstance, that "Abraham *believed* God" (ver. 3). In the historical account we find Abraham "believed in the

LORD." In the same chapter of the Romans we read that we shall be justified if we believe "on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead" (ver. 25). Is there a difference? Yes. You believe God, you believe in Him, and you believe *on* Him. All three are found in Scripture, and you say, What is the difference? When I believe God, I believe what He says, *i.e.*, His word. If I believe *in* Him, I believe what He is in Himself; I trust Him; I can rely on Him. If I believe *on* Him, I believe what He does. That is very simple.

God is to be believed. I hear people say sometimes, I cannot believe. It is not a question what you believe, but whom you believe. The point is, Can you believe God? Alas! when God speaks to you about His blessed Son, and says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," you cannot believe Him. When God tells you "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," you say, I do not think He could mean me. Is it not strange? You can believe anybody but God. Are you convicted of the gravity of your unbelief? I hope so. Now, "Abraham *believed* God." May you do so too. If you have been convicted of unbelief in days gone by, may your heart from this hour be able to say, I will be like Abraham.

God said to him, "So shall thy seed be," and "he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." Now what was that? Abraham had no righteousness of his own. Neither have you nor I, and if you think you have anything to fit you for the presence of God, it is an immense mistake. Did you never read the scripture, "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away"? (Isa. 64: 6.) There is not one who would come here, let alone come to God, in filthy rags. I have heard many poor men say they could not go to a gospel meeting because their clothes were not fit. That was an excuse, but not a good one. But observe that it is our righteousnesses, not our sins, which are as filthy rags. That is what God labels them. Your nicest thoughts, sweetest ways, best actions, aye, the very finest you ever did, are as "filthy rags." If you think they will clothe you before God, sin is attached to all of them.

If a command comes to you to appear before her Majesty Queen Victoria, you know you must obey, and the first thing you say is, I must get a Court dress; I must have a dress that suits the presence of the one into whose august audience I am called. There is a regulation as to what the dress must be, and you would of necessity pay heed to it. Friend, God wants you in His presence. He wants to have you for ever and ever. Mark this, if you are to be there, you must have a dress that will suit Him. Your righteousness will not do, for it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one." Again: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3: 10, 12). Then you may turn to me, and say, If that be the case, are all men lost? Yes, all men are lost. Every man is lost till Christ saves him.

But, I hear you saying, surely every man should do good deeds. Good deeds! My dear friend, the Holy Ghost says, "There is *none* that doeth good." You may be moral, benevolent, and charitable, all of which is very well among men, but when you have to do with God you must have a nature, a life, and a righteousness which suit God. There has only been one Man in this world whose heart, and life, and ways have been suitable to God, and that is the One who now sits on His throne tonight, the Lord Jesus, blessed be His name. Before He went yonder, to adorn that throne as the ascended Man in glory, He went into death, that He might atone for the sin of the man who could not put away his own sin. He went into death, in infinite grace, and

God in righteousness has taken Him out of death and put Him yonder, where He becomes the righteousness of every one who believes in Him.

How did Abraham become righteous? By faith. How can you become righteous? By faith. Did Abraham acquire righteousness by works? Listen to these words in the fourth of Romans: "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." He had no righteousness. What God said he believed. He took God at His word. He gave God credit for doing as He said He would, and as a result God said, You are a righteous man, Abraham. And is that the way you and I are justified? In principle exactly so. We are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 3: 24). Listen: "By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3: 20). What does the law give? The knowledge of sin. What does grace give? justification through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. From the law there comes a sentence of condemnation. What the gospel gives you is a present and eternal salvation. I prefer the gospel. Do you cling to the law still? You will rue it. Listen again: "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (Rom. 3: 19). Has your mouth been stopped yet? You surely cannot talk about what you do, and what you are. If "all the world" is "become guilty before God," you are guilty. Perhaps you have never yet pleaded "guilty." You will have to after a while. I pleaded guilty long ago, and God has justified me.

But probably you will say, Must I not do something towards salvation? Well, do you think you ought to do something? Listen: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." If you work, it is not grace to get payment for your work. If I work for a man, I do not think it any grace that he should pay me for it. If the one for whom you usually work knows that you need money, and sends it to you, though, through illness or accident, you do no work for it, that is grace. Carefully note the principle of the passage: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4: 4, 5). Thank God, Abraham and I stand upon the same ground. Abraham! how did you get justified? God told me what He was going to do, and I believed Him. And you might say to me, How did you get justified? By faith, just the same as Abraham. God told me what He had done; that His Son had gone into death for my sins, and that He had raised Him from the dead, and I believed Him. We are justified by faith.

Every believer is on the same ground before God. Notice that, for it has ever been true that to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." In proof of that, the scripture before us turns us to David's history: "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (vers. 6-8). The gospel goes further than merely giving pardon, for it says that the Lord will not impute sin to you — that is, He will not reckon sin against those who have believed. He might forgive you, and you might not have the sense of being justified before God. But when you learn that through faith in Jesus, and by virtue of association with Him, you now stand before God in Him, and as He is, at the

right hand of God, you occupy new ground altogether. You learn that righteousness is imputed to you if you believe on Him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and, therefore, being justified by faith, you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gospel for us is exactly on the same lines as it came to Abraham in this starry night scene. He takes God at His word. The Lord imputes his faith to him for righteousness, of which he had none in himself. He stands reckoned as a righteous man because of his faith in God. He rests upon what God was about to do, we on what He has done; but the principle of our justification is exactly the same.

Justification is presented in three ways in the Epistle to the Romans. In the third chapter we get the complete ruin of man detailed, and then the statement, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (ver. 23). That is our condition by nature. Then we are told that we are "*justified freely by his grace* (God's grace) through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (ver. 24). In the first verse of the fifth chapter of Romans we read — "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the ninth verse of the same chapter we have — "Much more then being now *justified by his blood*, we shall be saved from wrath through him." So you see justification spoken of in these three ways. Are there then three ways of justification? No. There are three parties to justification. Do you know who they are? God, Christ, and yourself. And what is God's part in it? Listen: "Being justified freely by *his grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Grace is the spring of it all. It all comes from God. And what is the next thing? Being now *justified by his blood*" — the blood of Jesus — we shall be saved from wrath through him." That is Christ's side — "his blood" — His death. And what is your side and mine? It is faith. Righteousness shall be imputed to us "if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being *justified by faith*, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 4: 24, 25, Rom. 5: 1). What is your side and mine? Faith! God's side is *Grace*. That is the spring. It all flows from Him. And Jesus' side? *Blood*. His death is the instrumental means and basis — the groundwork of our justification. Your side and mine is *Faith!* And what is that? It is the hand put out to take the blessing which God's grace offers, and Jesus' blood secures. justification, therefore, is *by grace, through blood, and on the principle of faith* — not works.

But there is more instruction in the scene before us as to the basis of the soul's blessing. The Lord says to Abraham, "I am the LORD, that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it" (ver. 7). To this Abraham replies, "*Whereby* shall I know that I shall inherit it?" (ver. 8.) What evidence can I have that I shall inherit the land, is the thought of his heart. The Lord says to him, "Take *me*" — He does not say "Take *thee*" — "an heifer of three years old, and a she-goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon" (ver. 9). Why these five animals? Would not one have been sufficient for God? I believe one would have been enough for God, but the five were needed for Abraham, and for us as learners of his lesson. I believe the truth brought out here is to show us that God's way of blessing is always based on death. Sacrifice is the instrumental means whereby you and I can be justified, and whereby God has been glorified in respect of sin.

Only death can put away sin. Death came by sin — the sin of the first man — and sin can only be put away by death — the death of the last Adam. There must be sacrifice. The groundwork of our blessing is the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore God bids Abraham take these victims. But you might say, Why the five? Five is always the number in Scripture that is coupled with weakness. The weakness of man, and the weakness of the soul. There are five people in this room tonight, and all five rest on Jesus, but have different measures of apprehension and enjoyment. Do you think that each one is as happy as the other? I never knew two people to be equally happy. I find some happy, and others happier still. We certainly ought to enjoy Christ, but our enjoyment will depend on our appreciation of Him; and that is the point here, I take it.

Now, observe these five animals were of different relative values. There was the heifer, the she-goat, the ram, the turtle-dove, and the pigeon. The heifer was much more valuable than the she-goat; but the turtle-dove, and the pigeon, what were they in value as compared with the heifer. Each victim presents Christ in death, but Christ differently apprehended; Christ, not as God estimates Him, but as you and I estimate Him. There may be five souls in this hall tonight, I repeat, resting on the work of Jesus, and but one having a clear, full grasp of Christ. You will find that person brimful of "joy and peace in believing" with sweet and precious views of Christ, and deep enjoyment of Christ. I come to the one who was only converted last night perhaps, and I find that he has but a very feeble sense of the value of the work of Jesus. One sees the heifer, the other the pigeon, so to say.

Now tell me, Are the souls who are most advanced more truly and certainly saved than those who know little about Christ? Not a bit of it! The most advanced is not a bit more safe than the one who is only just beginning his journey. He may be happier, but he is not safer. Friend, if you tonight can say, I really believe on, and rest in Jesus, then you are saved. If you have found Christ, and have rested your guilty soul on Him, and His wondrous work — even if you know very little about Him — you are as safe as the most advanced Christian. The man of a day's knowledge of the Lord is as safe as the man with fifty years' experience. They have both found the same Saviour. Ah! but, you say, I do not appreciate Christ as I should. True, but God appreciates Him at His true value, that is the point, and He accepts you on His estimate of Christ, not yours. I value the Lord Jesus greatly, but God values Him infinitely more. Our value of Him does not regulate our acceptance, though it may, and does affect our joy. It is God's estimate of the work of Christ in which the believer is set before Him, and according to which he is accepted and blessed.

Two things have to be borne in mind. It is *the word of God* that connects your soul with the Lord, and it is *the work of Christ* by which you are redeemed, and brought to God. Abraham knew he should inherit the land on the ground of sacrifice. This is exactly in principle what the fourth of Romans gives us as the ground of our knowledge of justification. Jesus has been among the dead, and God has raised Him up from among the dead. He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." All the offences were borne by Him, blotted out, and washed away in His precious blood. On the ground of that finished work of His, we are forgiven and justified by God. We stand in all the credit and value of the work of the Lord Jesus Christ — not as we appreciate it, but as God appreciates it.

Our appreciation of Christ must ever be feeble, because we are finite. God's appreciation of His work is infinite, and we stand in His own infinite appreciation of the work by which He has been glorified. We stand accepted before God according to His own estimate of the work of His beloved Son. He has "made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1: 6). He was delivered for our offences — therefore we are delivered from them. He was raised again for our justification — therefore we are justified, and He becomes our righteousness.

A very blessed consequence becomes, therefore, our present possession. "Being justified by faith, *we have peace* with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5: 1). This is peace with regard to all the past — peace with regard to sin. But there is more than that, for it is added, "By whom also we have access by faith into this *grace wherein we stand*, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (ver. 2). If I look back, I have *peace*; if I look up, *grace*; and if I look to the future, *glory*. That is a fine canopy to be under. There are three segments in the arc of the Christian's firmament. These are the three: Peace, as regards the past; Grace, for the present; and Glory, for the future. No judgment? Nay. No condemnation? Nay. You are justified by faith in Jesus and His work, and God will never bring the work of His Son into judgment; for, mark it well, it is by the work of His Son, and by that alone, that you are justified.

It is important to see that not only has the believer justification from all offences, but also that he has "justification of life" (Rom. 5: 18). We are possessors now of eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ. We have life on the other side of death. I think many a person has learned justification from offences, who has not learned that he possesses justification of life. I live before God in the life of my Saviour. That is where we have peace, rest, joy, and delight in the presence of our Lord.

God give you, my friend, this rest; and if, as in our picture, the fowls come down upon the sacrifice, do as Abraham did — "He drove them away." And what are the fowls? They are the doubts and the suggestions of the devil — the doubts of the day. "And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away." My friend, let nothing come in to intercept the view of your soul of that precious work which the Lord Jesus Christ accomplished on the cross. Drive these fowls away; they are the doubts — the fears — the uncertainties, which spring up in the heart of the believer if he is not careful. If you are beset by them, merely do as Abraham did. "Resist the devil," says Scripture, "and he will flee from you." What do you mean by the fowls? you ask. They are the devil really. That is the figure under which he is presented in the thirteenth of Matthew, where the Lord speaks of the birds of the air picking up the seeds by the wayside. That is how the Lord expresses the fact that the devil takes away the word of God out of the heart, lest the sinner "should believe and be saved." Every evil thought suggested, and every doubt of any kind as regards Christ and the value of His work, is of the devil. Abraham drove the fowls away. You and I must do the same, and "resist the devil."

God give you rest, and joy, in His Son, and the knowledge of what it is to be justified by Him from all offences, and that you are the possessor of "justification of life."

Thy works, not mine, O Christ,

Speak gladness to this heart

They tell me all is done,
They bid my fear depart.
To whom save Thee,
Who can alone
For sin atone,
Lord, shall I flee?

Thy pains, not mine, O Christ,
Upon the shameful tree
Have paid redemption's price
And purchased peace for me.

Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ,
Can heal my, bruised soul;
Thy stripes, not mine, contain
The balm that makes me whole.

Thy cross, not mine, O Christ,
Has borne the awful load
Of sins, that none in heaven
Or earth, could bear but God.

Thy death, not mine, O Christ,
Has paid the ransom due;
Ten thousand deaths like mine
Would have been all too few.