

The Visitor's Pulpit.

Jesus.

SERMON DELIVERED BY REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their sins.—Matthew 1: 21.

I shall ask the exercise of your patience while I consider seven things in reference to this transporting name. It is an ointment poured fourth, and its scent is varied so as to contain the essence of all fragrances. These seven things will be seen very plainly by you if you continue to look at the text and its connection.

First, we shall remark that THE NAME OF JESUS IS A NAME DIVINELY ORDERED AND EXPUNDED.

According to the text, the angel brought a message from the Lord, and said, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus." It is a name which, like Him who bears it, has come down from heaven. Our Lord has other names of office and relationship, but this is specially and peculiarly his own personal name, and it is the Father who hath thus named Him. Rest assured, therefore, that it is the best name that He could bear. God would not have given Him a name of secondary value, or about which there would be a trace of dishonor. The name is the highest, brightest, and noblest of names; it is the glory of our Lord to be a Saviour. He is not a Saviour of our own setting up, but God the everlasting Father hath set Him forth for our deliverer and Saviour, saying, "Thou shalt call His name Jesus."

It is a name which the Holy Ghost explains for He tells us the reason for the name of Jesus—"For He shall save His people from their sins." "Saviour" is the meaning of the name, but it has a fuller sense hidden within, for in its Hebrew form it means "the salvation of the Lord," or "the Lord of salvation," or "the Saviour." The angel interprets it, "He shall save," and the word for "he" is very emphatic. According to many scholars, the divine name, the incommunicable title of the Most High, is contained in "Joshua," the Hebrew form of Jesus, so that in full the word means "Jehovah Saviour," and in brief it signifies "Saviour." It is given to our Lord because "He saves"—not according to any temporary and common salvation—from enemies and troubles, but He saves from spiritual enemies, and specially from sins. The word "save" is very rich in meaning; its full and exact force can hardly be given in English words. Jesus is salvation in the sense of deliverance, and also in that of preservation. He gives health. He is all that is salutary to His people; in the fullest and broadest sense He saves His people. The original word means to preserve, to keep, to protect from danger, and to secure. The grandest meanings generally dwell in the shortest words, and in this case the word "save" is a well where the plummet is long in finding a bottom.

Moreover, in addition to expounding this name, the Holy Spirit, by the evangelist Matthew, has been pleased to refer us to the synonym of it, and so to give us its meaning by comparison. Let me read you the next verse. "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us." If when our Lord was born and named "Jesus" the old prophecy which said that He should be called Emmanuel was fulfilled, it follows that the name "Jesus" bears a signification tantamount to that of "Emmanuel," and that its virtual meaning is "God with us." Indeed, brethren, He is Jesus, the Saviour, because He is Emmanuel, God with us; and as soon as He was born, and so became Emmanuel, the incarnate God, He became by that very fact Jesus, the Saviour.

OUR LORD WAS ACTUALLY CALLED BY THE NAME OF JESUS BY MAN.

To this I call your special notice. "She (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou (Joseph) shalt call His name Jesus." The God of heaven by His angel appoints the child's name, but His reputed father must announce it. Both Joseph and Mary, according to the divine command, united in calling the child by the appointed name. See; then, that the name which is chosen of God is fully accepted by instructed men. Those who are taught of God joyfully recognize that Christ is salvation, and without a question give Him the well-beloved name of Jesus, the Saviour.

Here note that the name Jesus, Saviour, was given to our Lord by two simple hearts as soon as ever He was revealed to them. They only needed to be told who He was and what He was come for, how He was born, and what was the object of His incarnation, and they at once accepted the divine message, and named the babe by the name of Jesus. And, brethren, all of us to whom Christ is revealed at all, call Him Jesus the Saviour. Many there be who think they knew our Lord, but since they only speak of Him as a prophet, a teacher, or a leader, and care not for Him as a Saviour as we are clear that they are in ignorance, to His chief character. His first name, His personal name, they know not. The Holy Spirit cannot have revealed Christ to any man if that man remains ignorant of His saving power. He who does not know Him as Jesus, the Saviour, does not know Him at all. Certain anti-Christian Christians are craftily extolling Christ that they may smite Jesus; I mean that they cry up Jesus as Messiah, sent of God, to exhibit a grand example and supply a pure code of morals, but they

cannot endure Jesus as a Saviour, redeeming us by His blood, and by His death delivering us from sin. I am not sure that they follow His example of holy living, but they are very loud in extolling it, and all with the purpose of drawing off men's thoughts from the chief character and main object of our Lord's sojourn among us, namely, the deliverance of His people from sin. If men knew our Lord they would call Him Jesus the Saviour, and regard Him not merely as a good man, a great teacher, a noble exemplar, but as the Saviour of sinners.

So, beloved, you see that the name chosen of God is given to Him by all those who know Him, and to whom His gospel is entrusted, and given heartily, zealously, boldly. Yes, all of us call Him Jesus if we know Him, and we are resolved to publish His name abroad as long as we live. If He was Jesus in the cradle, what is He now that He is exalted in the heavens? As Emmanuel, God with us, His very incarnation made Him Jesus, the Saviour of men; but what shall I say of Him now that beyond His incarnation we have His atonement, and above His atonement His resurrection, and beyond that His ascension, and to crown all, His perpetual intercession? How grandly does the title befit Him now that He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them! If in the arms of the Virgin He is the Saviour, what is He on the throne of God? If wrapped in swaddling bands He is Jesus, what is He now that the heavens have received Him? If in the workshop of Nazareth, and sitting in the temple among the doctors, He was the child Jesus, the Saviour, what is He now that His infancy and childhood are over, and He is exalted far above all principalities and powers? If He was Jesus when on the cross, presenting Himself as an offering for His people, what is He now that He hath by one sacrifice perfected forever them that are set apart? What is He now that He sits at the right hand of God, "expecting till His enemies are made His footstool?"

THE NAME HAD BEEN TYPICALLY WORN BY ANOTHER, BUT IS NOW RESERVED FOR HIM ALONE.

There had been a Jesus before our Jesus. I allude to Joshua, and you know that in our version the name Jesus is twice used where Joshua is really meant. The first is Acts 7: 4, 5, where we read of the fathers who entered in with Jesus into the possession of the Gentiles, evidently meaning Joshua; and the second in Hebrews 4: 8 "If Jesus had given them rest." Joshua is the Hebrew form and Jesus the Greek form, but Jesus and Joshua are the same word. There was one, then, of old, who bore this famous name of Jesus, or Joshua, and was a type of our Jesus. What did Joshua do? When Moses could not lead the people into Canaan, Joshua did it; and so our Jesus accomplishes what the law never could have done. Joshua overcame the enemies of God's people; though they were very many and very strong, and had cities walled to heaven and chariots of iron, yet in the name of Jehovah, as the captain of the Lord's host, Joshua smote them. Even so doth our glorious Joshua smite our sins and all the powers of darkness, and utterly destroy our spiritual enemies. Before Him Amalek is smitten, Jericho falls, and Canaanites are put to rout, while He giveth us to triumph in every place. Moreover Joshua conquered an inheritance for Israel, took them across the Jordan, settled them in a land that flowed with milk and honey, and gave to each tribe and to each man to stand in his lot which God had ordained for him. Precisely this is what our Jesus does, only our inheritance is more divine, and on each one of us it is more surely entailed. Though Joshua could not give to the people the heavenly Sabbatismos, or rest of the highest kind, yet he gave them rest most pleasant to them, so that every man sat under his own vine and fig tree, none making him afraid; but our glorious Joshua has given us infinite, eternal rest, for He is our peace, and they that know Him have entered into rest. Joshua, the son of Nun, caused the people to serve the Lord all his days, but he could not save the nation from their sins, for after his death they grievously went astray; our Joshua preserves to Himself a people zealous for good works, for He ever liveth and is able to keep them from falling. No more doth Joshua lift sword or spear on behalf of Israel, but Jesus still rideth forth, conquering and to conquer, and all His people have victory through His blood. Well is His name called Jesus.

We read of another Jesus in the Books of Ezra and Zechariah. The form which the word there takes is Joshua or Joshua. He was the high priest who came at the head of the people on their return from Babylon. He is spoken of by the prophet Zechariah in terms which made him a fit representative of each of us. But, behold, Jesus of Nazareth is now the only high priest; and having presented His one sacrifice forever, He remains a priest according to the power of an endless life. He heads the march from Babylon, and He leads His people back to Jerusalem.

His name shall be called Jesus, for He alone is a Prince and a Saviour, and truly saves His people from their sins. Other saviours do but mock the hopes of mankind; they promise fairly, but they utterly deceive; this holy child, this blessed, glorious God with us, has truly brought us salvation, and He saith, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth, for I am God, and beside me there is none else." This Jesus of Nazareth, the king

of kings, is the one and only Saviour. He, and none but He, shall save His people. He shall save by His own act and deed, He and not another. Singly and alone He shall save His people. Personally, and not by another, in His name and on His behalf, He shall, by Himself, purge away sin. He shall do all the work, and leave none undone; He shall begin it, carry it on, and complete it, and therefore is His name called Jesus, because He shall completely and perfectly save His people from their sins. The name has been, in a minor sense, applied to others aforesaid, but now none else may wear it, since there is no other Saviour, and none other name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved.

The fourth point grows out of the wording of the text.

THIS NAME JESUS IDENTIFIES OUR LORD WITH HIS PEOPLE.

"He shall save His people." It does not say God's people, for then it would be understood as meaning only the Jews; or it would have been supposed to refer to some good and holy persons who belonged to God, apart from the Mediator; but "He shall save His people"—those who are His own, and personally belong to Him. These are evidently a very peculiar people, a people set apart as Christ's own treasures; they are a people that belong to God incarnate—Emmanuel's people. These He saves. Who are they but His elect, whom His father gave Him or ever the earth was? Who are they but the numbered sheep that will be required at His Hands by the great Father, that He should render them back by tale and number, saying, "I have kept those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine." Yes, for the Lord knoweth them that are His, and He preserves them unto His eternal kingdom and glory. "He shall save His people."

Now the question arises, who are His people? We are eager to know who they are; and we are glad to find that His people, be they who they may, need to be saved, and shall be saved, for it is written, "He shall save His people." It is not said, "He shall reward His people for their righteousness," nor is it promised that He shall "save them from becoming sinners," but, "He shall save His people from their sins." Do you want saving, brethren? Has the Holy Ghost taught you that you need salvation? Let your hearts be encouraged. This is the character of all His people; He never had a chosen one who could do without washing in the Saviour's blood. If you are righteous in yourself you are not one of His people. If you were never sick in soul you are none of that folk that the Great Physician has come to heal; if you were never guilty of sin you are none of those whom He has come to deliver from sin. Jesus comes on no needless errand, and undertakes no unnecessary work; if you feel yourself to need saving then cast yourself upon Him, for such as you are He came to save.

Notice, yet again, the very gracious but startling fact that our Lord's connection with His people lies in the direction of their sins. That is a text—did you ever meditate upon it?—"Who gave Himself for our sins according to the Scriptures." As Martin Luther says, He never gave Himself for our righteousness, but He did give Himself for our sins. "Sin is a horrible evil, a deadly poison, yet it is this which gives Jesus His title when He overcomes it. What a wonder to think upon? The first link between my soul and Christ is, not my goodness, but my badness; not my merit, but my misery; not my standing, but my falling; not my riches, but my need. He comes to visit His people, yet not to admire their beauties, but to remove their deformities; not to reward their virtues, but to forgive their sins. O ye sinners, I mean real sinners, not you that call yourselves so because you are told; you are such, but you who feel yourselves to be guilty before God, here is good news for you. O you self-condemned sinners, who feel that if ever you get salvation Jesus must bring it to you and be the beginning and the end of it, I pray you rejoice in this dear, this precious, this blessed name, for Jesus has come to save you, even you. Go to Him as sinners, call Him "Jesus," and cry, "O Lord Jesus, be Jesus to me, for I need thy salvation." Doubt not that He will fulfil His own name and exhibit His power in you. Only confess to Him your sin, and He will save you from it. Only believe in Him, and He will be your salvation.

The fifth point is very clear, and well worthy of note.

THE NAME OF "JESUS" IS ONE THAT INDICATES HIS MAIN WORK.

"Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save." He shall save from sin. Why do men write lives of Christ who know nothing about His main business and object? Why do some preach about Christ who do not know the very essence and heart of Him? Think of knowing Milton, but not as a poet, and Bacon, but not as a philosopher! There is no knowing our Lord, if He be not known as a Saviour; for He is that or nothing. Those who fall short of His salvation do not even know His name; how, then, should they know His person? His name is not called Jesus because He is our exemplar, though indeed He is perfection itself, and we long to tread in His footsteps; but His name is called Jesus because He has come to save that which is lost. He is Christ, too, or the anointed, but then He is Christ Jesus; that is to say, it is as a Saviour that He is anointed. He is nothing if He be not a Saviour. He is anointed to this very end. His very name is a sham if He do not save His people from their sins.

Now, Jesus doth save His people from sin; for, first, He doth it by taking all the sins of His people upon Himself. Do you think that a strong expression? It is warranted by the Scripture. "The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Then He saves them by paying the penalty due their sins. Where the sin lies the penalty falls. "The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." "He was made a curse for us." "Christ also hath suffered for us." He died, "the just for the unjust to bring us to God." He bore the wrath of God, which was due to us. He hath taken the sins and paid the penalty, and now cavaliers come in and say that we falsely teach that a man is to believe the dogma of atonement, and then he is saved and may live as he likes. They know better. They know that they misrepresent us, for we always teach that the great work of substitution and penalty-bearing by Christ, works in the person who partakes in its benefits, love to God, gratitude to Christ, and consequent hatred of all sin, and this change of heart is the very core and essence of salvation. This is how Christ saves his people from their sins—by rescuing them by the force of His love, out of the power, tyranny and dominion of sins, which hitherto had the mastery over them. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith"; this is the power that drives out the viper of sin from the human breast,—the precious blood of Jesus. He that hath believed in Jesus as his expiation and atonement, becomes thereby, through the power of the Holy Ghost, renewed in heart; he has new objects set before him, new motives sway him, and thus Jesus saves his people from their sins.

Sixthly, THIS NAME OF JESUS IS ONE WHICH IS COMPLETELY JUSTIFIED BY FACTS.

It was given him before he had done anything, while yet he was a babe, or ever His trembling feet had learned to tread the cottage floor at Nazareth, He was Jesus the Saviour. But is this name well deserved? Many a child has had a grand name, and his life has contradicted it. I recollect a grave on which there is the name of a child, "Sacred to the memory of Methusaleh Coney, who died aged six months." His parents were mightily mistaken when they called him Methusaleh. Many other names are equally inappropriate, and are proved to be so in the course of years. But this Jesus is a Saviour, a true Jesus. He bears a name which he well deserves. Come to the Christ and see there the many that once rioted in sin and rolled in the mire, but they are washed, but they are sanctified, and now they rejoice in holiness. Who purified them? Who but Jesus? He that saved His people from their sins has saved them. Go ye to dying-beds, and hear saints telling of His love, and speaking of the heaven which is already dawning in their souls. Some of these once could sit on the alabaster, and use the swearer's oath, but Jesus has cleansed them. Climb ye up to heaven, and behold the snow-white host, glittering like the sun in spotless purity. I ask them whence came they? The reply is that they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Seventhly, last of all,

THIS NAME IS CHRIST'S PERSONAL NAME FOREVER.

It is a home name. It is the name His father gave Him, it is the name His mother gave Him—Jesus, the child Jesus. We also belong to His family; for he that believeth in Him is His father, and mother, and sister, and brother, and that most dear and familiar name, by which He was known at home is ever in our mouths. He is the Lord, and we worship Him; but He is Jesus, and we love Him. Jesus is also the heart name, and is full of the ransic of love. They who loved Him best gave Him the name, especially His mother, who pondered everything about Him in her heart. It is the name which moves our affections, and fires our souls.

"Jesus, the very thought of thee With sweetness fills my breast."

Let your hearts go out towards Him in tender union. Jesus is His death name;—Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, was written on His cross. That is His resurrection name. That is His Gospel name, which we preach. It is the name which Peter preached to the Gentiles when he said, "This is Jesus of Nazareth by whom is preached to you the remission of sins." And this, beloved, is His heaven name. They sing to Him there as Jesus. See how it concludes the Bible. Read the Revelation, and read its songs, and see how they worship Jesus the Lamb of God. Let us go and tell of this name; let us continually meditate upon it; let us love it henceforth and forever. Amen.

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