

Heavenly Worship

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon reveals that heavenly worship centers on the Lamb of God, whose sacrifice and victory inspire the redeemed multitude to sing a new song of praise and fellowship.

Scripture: Revelation 14:1-3, Romans 9:11-21

Topics: "Heavenly Worship", "Election and Salvation"

Description

In this profound sermon, C.H. Spurgeon explores the vision of heavenly worship centered on the Lamb of God as revealed in Revelation 14. He expounds on the identity and character of the worshippers, the significance of the Lamb's victorious posture, and the new song they sing. Spurgeon emphasizes the certainty of salvation for the elect and encourages believers to approach Christ boldly in prayer. This message offers rich theological insight and practical encouragement for living in joyful communion with Jesus.

Transcript

"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps; And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders; and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."—Revelation 14:1-3.

THE SCENE of this marvellous and magnificent vision is laid upon Mount Sion; by which we are to understand, not Mount Sion upon earth, but Mount Sion which is above, "Jerusalem, the mother of us all." To the Hebrew mind Mount Sion was a type of heaven, and very justly so. Among all the mountains of the earth none was to be found so famous as Sion. It was there that patriarch Abraham drew his knife to slay his son; it was there, too, in commemoration of that great triumph of faith, Solomon built a majestic temple, "beautiful for situation and the joy of the whole earth." That Mount Sion was the centre of all the devotions of the Jews.

"Up to her courts, with joys unknown,

The sacred tribes repaired."

Between the wings of the cherubim Jehovah dwelt; on the one altar there all the sacrifices were offered to high heaven. They loved Mount Sion, and often did they sing, when they drew nigh to her, in their annual pilgrimages, "How amiable are thy tabernacles O Lord God of hosts, my King and my God!" Sion is now desolate; she hath been ravished by the enemy; she hath been utterly destroyed; her vail hath been rent asunder, and the virgin daughter of Sion is now sitting in sackcloth and ashes; but, nevertheless, to the Jewish mind it must ever, in its ancient state, remain the best and sweetest type of heaven. John, therefore, when he saw this sight might have said, "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood in heaven, and with him an hundred and forty and four thousand having his Father's name written in their foreheads: And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder; and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."

This morning I shall endeavour to show you, first of all, the object of heavenly worship—the Lamb in the midst of the throne; in the next place we shall look at the worshippers themselves, and note their manner and their character; in the third place we shall listen to hear their song, for we may almost hear it; it is like "the noise of many waters and like great thunder;" and then we shall close by noting, that it is a new song which they sing, and by endeavouring to mention one or two reasons why it must necessarily be so.

I. In the first place, then, we wish to take a view of THE OBJECT OF HEAVENLY WORSHIP. The divine John was privileged to look within the gates of pearl; and on turning round to tell us what he saw—observe how he begins—he saith not, "I saw streets of gold or walls of Jasper;" he saith not, "I saw crowns, marked their lustre, and saw the wearers." That he shall notice afterwards. But he begins by saying, "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb!" To teach us that the very first and chief object of attraction in the heavenly state is "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world." Nothing else attracted the Apostle's attention so much as the person of that Divine Being, who is the Lord God, our most blessed Redeemer: "I looked, and, lo a Lamb!" Beloved, if we were allowed to look within the vail which parts us from the world of spirits, we should see, first of all, the person of our Lord Jesus. If now we could go where the immortal spirits "day without night circle the throne rejoicing," we should see each of them with their faces turned in one direction; and if we should step up to one of the blessed spirits, and say, "O bright immortal, why are thine eyes fixed? What is it that absorbs thee quite, and wraps thee up in vision?" He, without deigning to give an answer, would simply point to the centre of the sacred circle, and lo, we should see a Lamb in the midst of the throne. They have not yet ceased to admire his beauty, and marvel at his wonders and adore his person.

"Amidst a thousand harps and songs,

Jesus, our God, exalted reigns."

He is the theme of song and the subject of observation of all the glorified spirits and of all the angels in paradise. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb!"

Christian, here is joy for thee; thou hast looked, and thou hast seen the Lamb. Through thy tearful eyes thou hast seen the Lamb taking away thy sins. Rejoice, then! In a little while, when thine eyes shall have been wiped from tears, thou wilt see the same Lamb exalted on his throne. It is the joy of the heart to hold daily fellowship and communion with Jesus; thou shalt have the same joy in heaven; "there shalt thou see him as he is, and thou shalt be like him." Thou shalt enjoy the constant vision of his presence, and thou

shalt dwell with him for aye. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb!" Why, that Lamb is heaven itself; for as good Rutherford says, "Heaven and Christ are the same things; to be with Christ is to be in heaven, and to be in heaven is to be with Christ." And he very sweetly says in one of his letters, wrapped up in love to Christ. "Oh! my Lord Christ, if I could be in heaven without thee, it would be a hell; and if I could be in hell, and have thee still, it would be a heaven to me, for thou art all the heaven I want." It is true, is it not Christian? Does not thy soul say so?

"Not all the harps above
Could make a heavenly place,
Should Christ his residence remove,
Or but conceal his face."

All thou needest to make thee blessed, supremely blessed, is "to be with Christ, which is far better."

And now observe the figure under which Christ is represented in heaven. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb." Now, you know Jesus, in Scripture, is often represented as a lion: he is so to his enemies, for he devoureth them, and teareth them to pieces. "Beware, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver." But in heaven he is in the midst of his friends, and therefore he

Looks like a lamb that has been slain,
And wears his priesthood still."

Why should Christ in heaven choose to appear under the figure of a lamb, and not in some other of his glorious characters? We reply, because it was as a lamb that Jesus fought and conquered, and, therefore as a lamb he appears in heaven. I have read of certain military commanders, when they were conquerors, that on the anniversary of their victory they would never wear anything but the garment in which they fought. On that memorable day they say, "Nay, take away the robes; I will wear the garment which has been embroidered with the sabre-cut, and garnished with the shot that hath riddled it; I will wear no other garb but that in which I fought and conquered." It seems as if the same feeling possessed the breast of Christ. "As a Lamb," saith he, "I died, and worsted hell; as a Lamb I have redeemed my people, and therefore as a Lamb I will appear in paradise."

But, perhaps, there is another reason; it is to encourage us to come to him in prayer. Ah, believer, we need not be afraid to come to Christ, for he is a Lamb. To a lion-Christ we need fear to come; but the Lamb-Christ!—oh, little children, were ye ever afraid of lambs? Oh, children of the living God, should ye ever fail to tell your griefs and sorrows into the breast of one who is a Lamb? Ah, let us come boldly to the throne of the heavenly grace, seeing a Lamb sits upon it. One of the things which tend very much to spoil prayer-meetings is the fact that our brethren do not pray boldly. They would practice reverence, as truly they ought, but they should remember that the highest reverence is consistent with true familiarity. No man more reverent than Luther; no man more fully carried out for the passage, "He talked with his Maker as a man talketh with his friend." We may be as reverent as the angels, and yet we may be as familiar as children in Christ Jesus. Now, our friends, when they pray, very frequently say the same thing every time. They are Dissenters; they cannot bear the Prayer Book; they think that forms of prayer are bad, but they always use their own form of prayer notwithstanding; as much as if they were to say that the bishop's form would not do, but their own they must always use. But a form of prayer being wrong, is as much wrong

when I make it as when the bishop makes it; I am as much out of order in using what I compose myself continually and constantly, as I am when I am using one that has been composed for me; perhaps far more so, as it is not likely to be one-half so good. If our friends, however, would lay aside the form into which they grow, and break up the stereotyped plates with which they print their prayers so often, they might come boldly to the throne of God, and need never fear to do so; for he whom they address is represented in heaven under the figure of a Lamb, to teach us to come close to him, and tell him all our wants, believing that he will not disdain to hear them.

And you will further notice that this Lamb is said to stand. Standing is the posture of triumph. The Father said to Christ, "Sit thou on my throne, till I make thine enemies thy footstool." It is done; they are his footstool, and here he is said to stand erect, like a victor over all his enemies. Many a time the Saviour knelt in prayer; once he hung upon the cross; but when the great scene of our text shall be fully wrought out, he shall stand erect, as more than conqueror, through his own majestic might. "I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion." Oh, if we could rend the veil—if now we were privileged to see within it—there is no sight would so enthrall us as the simple sight of the Lamb in the midst of the throne. My dear brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus, would it not be all the sight you would ever wish to see, if you could once behold him whom your soul loveth? Would it not be a heaven to you, if it were carried out in your experience—"Mine eye shall see him, and not another's?" Would you want anything else to make you happy but continually to see him? Can you not say with the poet—

"Millions of years my wondering eyes

Shall o'er my Saviour's beauty rove,

And endless ages I'll adore

The wonders of his love?"

And if a single glimpse of him on earth affords you profound delight; it must be, indeed, a very sea of bliss, and an abyss of paradise, without a bottom or a shore, to see him as he is; to be lost in his splendours, as the stars are lost in the sunlight, and to hold fellowship with him, as did John the beloved, when he leaned his head upon his bosom. And this shall be thy lot, to see the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

II. The second point is, THE WORSHIPPERS, WHO ARE THEY? Turn to the text, and you will not, first of all, their numbers—"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand." This is a certain number put for an uncertain—I mean uncertain to us, though not uncertain to God. It is a vast number, put for that "multitude which no man can number," who shall stand before the throne of God. Now, here is something not very pleasant to my friend Bigot yonder. Note the number of those who are to be saved; they are said to be a great number, even a "hundred forty and four thousand," which is but a unit put for the vast innumerable multitude who are to be gathered home. Why, my friend, there are so many as that belonging to your church. You believe that none will be saved but those who hear your minister, and believe your creed; I do not think you could find one hundred and forty-four thousand anywhere. You will have to enlarge your heart I think; you must take in a few more, and not be so inclined to shut out the Lord's people, because you cannot agree with them. I do abhor from my heart that continual whining of some men about their own little church as the "remnant"—the "few that are to be saved." They are always dwelling upon strait gates and narrow ways, and upon what they conceive to be a truth, that but few shall enter heaven. Why, my friends, I believe there will be more in heaven than in hell. If you ask me why I think so, I answer, because Christ, in everything, is to "have the

pre-eminence,” and I cannot conceive how he could have the pre-eminence if there are to be more in the dominions of Satan than in paradise. Moreover, it is said there is to be a multitude that no man can number in heaven; I have never read that there is to be a multitude that no man can number in hell. But I rejoice to know that the souls of all infants, as soon as they die, speed their way to paradise. Think what a multitude there is of them! And then there are the just, and the redeemed of all nations and kindreds up till now; and there are better times coming, when the religion of Christ shall be universal; when he shall reign from pole to pole with illimitable sway; when kingdoms shall bow before him, and nations be born in a day; and in the thousand years of the great millennial state there will be enough saved to make up all the deficiencies of the thousands of years that have gone before. Christ shall have the pre-eminence at last; his train shall be far larger than that which shall attend the chariots of the grim monarch of hell. Christ shall be master everywhere, and his praise sounded in every land. One hundred and forty-four thousand were observed, the types and representatives of a far larger number who are ultimately to be saved.

But notice, whilst the number is very large, how very certain it is. By turning over the leaves of your Bible to a previous chapter of this book, you will see that at the 4th verse it is written, that one hundred and forty-four thousand were sealed; and now we find there are one hundred and forty-four thousand saved; not 143,999, and 144,001, but exactly the number that are sealed. Now, my friends may not like what I am going to say; but if they do not like it, their quarrel is with God's Bible, not with me. There will be just as many in heaven as are sealed by God—just as many as Christ did purchase with his blood; all of them, and no more and no less. There will be just as many there as were quickened to life by the Holy Spirit, and were, “born again, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” “Ah,” some say, “there is that abominable doctrine of election.” Exactly so, if it be abominable; but you will never be able to cut it out of the Bible. You may hate it, and gnash and grind your teeth against it; but, remember, we can trace the pedigree of this doctrine, even apart from Scripture, to the time of the apostles. Church of England ministers and members, you have no right to differ from me on the doctrine of election, if you are what you profess by your own Articles. You who love the old Puritans, you have no right to quarrel with me; for where will you find a Puritan who was not a strong Calvinist? You who love the fathers, you cannot differ from me. What say you of Augustine? Was he not, in his day, called a great and mighty teacher of grace? And I even turn to Roman Catholics, and, with all the errors of their system, I remind them that even in their body have been found those who have held that doctrine, and, though long persecuted for it, have never been expelled the church. I refer to the Jansenists. But, above all, I challenge every man who reads his Bible to say that that doctrine is not there. What saith the 9th of Romans? “The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth: It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger.” And then it goes on to say to the carping objector—“Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor?” But enough on this subject.

One hundred and forty-four thousand, we say, is a certain number made to represent the certainty of the salvation of all God's elect, believing people. Now, some say that this doctrine has a tendency to discourage men from coming to Christ. Well, you say so; but I have never seen it, and blessed be God I have never proved it so. I have preached this doctrine ever since I began to preach; but I can say this,—ye shall not (and I am now become a fool in glorying) ye shall not find among those who have not preached the doctrine, one who has been the instrument of turning more harlots, more drunkards, and more sinners of every class, from the error of their ways, than I have, by the simple preaching of the doctrine of free

grace; and, while this has been so, I hold that no argument can be brought to prove that it has a tendency to discourage sinners, or bolster them up in sin. We hold, as the Bible says, that all the elect, and those only, shall be saved; all who go to Christ are elect. So that if any of you have in your heart a desire after heaven and after Christ; if you carry out that desire in sincere and earnest prayer, and are born again, you may as certainly conclude your election as you can conclude that you are alive. You must have been chosen of God before the foundation of the world, or you would never have done any of these things, seeing they are the fruits of election.

But why should it keep any one from going to Christ? "Because," says one, "if I go to Christ I may not be elect." No, sir, if you go, you prove that you are elect. "But," says another, "I am afraid to go, in case I should not be elect." Say as an old woman once said, "If there were only three persons elected, I would try to be one of them; and since he said, 'He that believeth shall be saved,' I would challenge God on his promise, and try if he would break it." No, come to Christ; and if you do so, beyond a doubt you are God's elect from the foundation of the world; and therefore this grace has been given to you. But why should it discourage you? Suppose there are a number of sick folk here, and a large hospital has been built. There is put up over the door, "All persons who come shall be taken in:" at the same time it is known that there is a person inside the hospital, who is so wise that he knows all who will come, and has written down the names of all who will come in a book, so that, when they come, those who open the doors will only say, "How marvellously wise our Master was, to know the names of those who would come." Is there anything despiriting in that? You would go, and you would have all the more confidence in that man's wisdom, because he was able to know before that they were going. "Ah, but," you say, "it was ordained that some should come." Well, to give you another illustration; suppose there is a rule that there always must be a thousand persons, or a very large number in the hospital. You say, "When I go perhaps they will take me in, and perhaps they will not." "But," says someone, "there is a rule that there must be a thousand in: somehow or other they must make up that number of beds, and have that number of patients in the hospital." You say, "Then why should not I be among the thousand; and have not I the encouragement that whosoever goes shall not be cast out? And have I not again the encouragement, that if they will not go, they must be fetched in somehow or other; for the number must be made up; so it is determined and so it is decreed." You would therefore have a double encouragement, instead of half a one; and you would go with confidence, and say, "They must take me in, because they say they will take all in that come; and on the other hand, they must take me in, because they must have a certain number: that number is not made up, and why should not I be one?" Oh, never doubt about election; believe in Christ, and then rejoice in election; do not fret about it till you have believed in Christ.

"I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand." And who were these people, "having his Father's name written in their foreheads?" Not Bs for "Baptists," not Ws for "Wesleyans," not Es for "Established Church:" they had their Father's name and nobody else's. What a deal of fuss is made on earth about our distinctions! We think such a deal about belonging to this denomination, and the other. Why, if you were to go to heaven's gates, and ask if they had any Baptists there, the angel would only look at you, and not answer you; if you were to ask if they had any Wesleyans, or members of the Established Church, he would say, "Nothing of the sort;" but if you were to ask him whether they had any Christians there, "Ay," he would say, "an abundance of them: they are all one now—all called by one name; the old brand has been obliterated, and now they have not the name of this man or the other; they have the name of God, even their Father, stamped on their brow." Learn then dear friends, whatever the connection to which you belong, to be charitable to your brethren, and kind to them, seeing that, after all, the name you now hold here will be forgotten in heaven, and only your Father's name

will be there known.

One more remark here, and we will turn from the worshippers to listen to their song. It is said of all these worshippers that they learned the song before they went there. At the end of the third verse it is said, "No man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth." Brethren, we must begin heaven's song here below, or else we shall never sing it above. The choristers of heaven have all had rehearsals upon earth, before they sing in that orchestra. You think that, die when you may, you will go to heaven, without being prepared. Nay, sir; heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people, and unless you are "made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light," you can never stand there among them. If you were in heaven without a new heart and a right spirit, you would be glad enough to get out of it; for heaven, unless a man is heavenly himself, would be worse than hell. A man who is unrenewed and unregenerate going to heaven would be miserable there. There would be a song—he could not join in it; there would be a constant hallelujah, but he would not know a note: and besides, he would be in the presence of the Almighty, even in the presence of the God he hates, and how could he be happy there? No, sirs; ye must learn the song of paradise here, or else ye can never sing it. Ye must learn to sing—

"Jesus, I love thy charming name,

'Tis music to my ears."

You must learn to feel that "sweeter sounds than music knows mingle in your Saviour's name," or else you can never chaunt the hallelujahs of the blest before the throne of the great "I AM." Take that thought, whatever else you forget; treasure it up in your memory, and ask grace of God that you may here be taught to sing the heavenly song, that afterwards in the land of the hereafter, in the home of the beautified, you may continually chaunt the high praises of him that loved you.

III. And now we come to the third and most interesting point, namely, THE LISTENING TO THEIR SONG. "I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps;" singing—how loud and yet how sweet!

First, then, singing how loud! It is said to be "like the voice of many waters." Have you never heard the sea roar, and the fulness thereof? Have you never walked by the sea-side, when the waves were singing, and when every little pebble-stone did turn chorister, to make up music to the Lord God of hosts? And have you never in time of storm beheld the sea, with its hundred hands, clapping them in gladsome adoration of the Most High? Have you never heard the sea roar out his praise, when the winds were holding carnival—perhaps singing the dirge of mariners, wrecked far out on the stormy deep, but far more likely exalting God with their hoarse voice, and praising him who makes a thousand fleets sweep over them in safety, and writes his furrows on their own youthful brow? Have you never heard the rumbling and booming of ocean on the shore, when it has been lashed into fury and has been driven upon the cliffs? If you have, you have a faint idea of the melody of heaven. It was "as the voice of many waters." But do not suppose that it is the whole of the idea. It is not the voice of one ocean, but the voice of many, that is needed to give you an idea of the melodies of heaven. You are to suppose ocean piled upon ocean, sea upon sea,—the Pacific piled upon the Atlantic, the Arctic upon that, the Antarctic higher still, and so ocean upon ocean, all lashed to fury, and all sounding with a mighty voice the praise of God. Such is the singing of heaven. Or if the illustration, fails to strike, take another. We have mentioned here two or three times the mighty falls of Niagara. They can be heard at a tremendous distance, so awful is their sound. Now,

suppose waterfalls dashing upon waterfalls, cataracts upon cataracts, Niagaras upon Niagaras, each of them sounding forth their mighty voices, and you have got some idea of the singing of paradise. "I heard a voice like the voice of many waters." Can you not hear it? Ah! if our ears were opened we might almost cast the song. I have thought sometimes that the voice of the Aeolian harp, when it has swollen out grandly, was almost like an echo of the songs of those who sing before the throne; and on the summer eve, when the wind has come in gentle zephyrs through the forest, you might almost think it was the floating of some stray notes that had lost their way among the harps of heaven, and come down to us, to give us some faint foretaste of that song which hymns out in mighty peals before the throne of the Most High. But why so loud? The answer is, because there are so many there to sing. Nothing is more grand than the singing of multitudes. Many have been the persons who have told me that they could but weep when they heard you sing in this assembly, so mighty seemed the sound when all the people sang—

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow."

And, indeed, there is something very grand in the singing of multitudes. I remember hearing 12,000 sing on one occasion in the open air. Some of our friends were then present, when we concluded our service with that glorious hallelujah. Have you ever forgotten it? It was indeed a mighty sound; it seemed to make heaven itself ring again. Think, then, what must be the voice of those who stand on the boundless plains of heaven, and with all their might shout, "Glory and honour and power and dominion unto him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

On reason, however, why the song is so loud is a very simple one, namely, because all those who are there think themselves bound to sing the loudest of all. You know our favourite hymn—

"Then loudest of the crowd I'll sing,

While heav'n's resounding mansions ring

With shouts of sov'reign grace."

And every saint will join that sonnet, and each one lift up his heart to God, then how mighty must be the strain of praise that will rise up to the throne of the glorious God our Father!

But note next, while it was a loud voice, how sweet it was. Noise is not music. There may be "a voice like many waters." and yet no music. It was sweet as well as loud; for John says, "I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps." Perhaps the sweetest of all instruments is the harp. There are others which give forth sounds more grand and noble, but the harp is the sweetest of all instruments. I have sometimes sat to hear a skilful harper, till I could say, "I could sit and hear myself away," whilst with skilful fingers he touched the chords gently, and brought forth strains of melody which flowed like liquid silver, or like sounding honey into one's soul. Sweet, sweet beyond sweetness; words can scarcely tell how sweet the melody. Such is the music of heaven. No jarring notes there, no discord, but all one glorious harmonious song. You will not be there, formalist, to spoil the tune; nor you, hypocrite, to mar the melody; there will be all those there whose hearts are right with God, and therefore the strain will be one great harmonious whole, without a discord. Truly do we sing—

"No groans to mingle with the songs

That warble from immortal tongues."

And there will be no discord of any other sort to spoil the melody of those before the throne. Oh! my beloved brethren, that we might be there! Lift us up, ye cherubs! Stretch your wings, and bear us up where the sonnets fill the air. But if ye must not, let us wait our time.

“A few more rolling suns at most,

Will land us on fair Canaan's coast;”

and then we shall help to make the song, which now we can scarcely conceive, but which yet we desire to join.

IV. We now close with a remark upon the last point: WHY IS THE SONG SAID TO BE A NEW SONG? But one remark here. It will be a new song, because the saints were never in such a position before as they will be when they sing this new song. They are in heaven now; but the scene of our text is something more than heaven. It refers to the time when all the chosen race shall meet around the throne, when the last battle shall have been fought, and the last warrior shall have gained his crown. It is not now that they are thus singing, but it is in the glorious time to come, when all the hundred and forty and four thousand—or rather, the number typified by that number—will be all safely housed and all secure. I can conceive the period. Time was—eternity now reigns. The voice of God exclaims, “Are my beloved all safe?” The angel flies through paradise and returns with this message, “Yea, they are.” “Is Fearful safe? Is Feeble-mind safe? Is Ready-to-Halt safe? Is Despondency safe?” “Yes, O king, they are,” says he. “Shut-to the gates,” says the Almighty, “they have been open night and day; shut them to now.” Then, when all of them shall be there, then will be the time when the shout shall be louder than many waters, and the song shall begin which will never end. There is a story told in the history of brave Oliver Cromwell, which I use here to illustrate this new song. Cromwell and his Ironsides before they went to battle bowed the knee in prayer, and asked for God's help. Then, with their Bibles in their breasts, and their swords in their hands—a strange and unjustifiable mixture, but which their ignorance must excuse—they cried, “The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge;” and rushing to battle they sang—

“O Lord our God, arise and let

Thine enemies scattered be,

And let all those that do thee hate

Before thy presence flee.

They had to fight up hill for a long time, but at last the enemy fled. The Ironsides were about to pursue them and win the booty, when the stern harsh voice of Cromwell was heard—“Halt! halt! now the victory is won, before you rush to the spoil return thanks to God;” and they sang some such song as this—“Sing unto the Lord, for he has gotten us the victory! Sing unto the Lord.” It was said to have been one of the most majestic sights in that strange, yet good man's history. (I say that word without blushing, for good he was.) For a time the hills seemed to leap, whilst the vast multitude, turning from the slain, still stained with blood, lifted up their hearts to God. We say, again, it was a strange sight, yet a glad one. But how great shall be that sight, when Christ shall be seen as a conqueror, and when all his warriors, fighting side by side with him, shall see the dragon beaten in pieces beneath their feet. Lo, their enemies are fled; they were driven like thin clouds before a Biscay gale. They are all gone, death is vanquished, Satan is cast into the lake of fire, and here stands the King himself, crowned with many crowns, the victor of the victors.

And in the moment of exaltation the Redeemer will say, "Come let us sing unto the Lord;" and then, louder than the shout of many waters, they shall sing, "Hallelujah! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." Ah! that will be the full carrying out of the great scene! My feeble words cannot depict it. I send you away with this simple question, "Shall you be there to see the conqueror crowned?" Have you "a good hope through grace" that you shall? If so, be glad; if not, go to your houses, fall on your knees, and pray to God to save you from that terrible place which must certainly be your portion, instead of that great heaven of which I preach, unless you turn to God with full purpose of heart.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/ch-spurgeon/heavenly-worship/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net