

The Loaded Wagon

by C.H. Spurgeon

C.H. Spurgeon powerfully illustrates how sin burdens God despite His abundant mercies, urging deep repentance and recognition of sin's grievous offense against the Divine.

Scripture: Amos 2:13, Job 38:31-33, Psalm 104:19, Isaiah 40:12, Genesis 1:31, Romans 3:23, Psalm 51:4

Topics: "Sin and Its Consequences", "God's Mercy and Judgment", "Repentance"

Description

In "The Loaded Wagon," C.H. Spurgeon vividly portrays the immense burden sin places upon God despite His abundant mercies. Drawing from Amos 2:13, Spurgeon challenges believers to recognize the grievous nature of sin and its offense against God's holiness and love. He highlights specific sins that provoke God's wrath and calls for heartfelt repentance. This sermon is a compelling reminder of the seriousness of sin and the need for gratitude and obedience to the gracious God who sustains all.

Transcript

"Behold, I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves."

Amos 2:13.

THE other Sunday morning we went into the corn fields to glean with Boaz and Ruth. And I trust that many of the timid and faint-hearted were encouraged to partake of the handfuls which are let fall on purpose for them by the order of our generous Lord. We go, today, to the gate of the harvest field with another object—to see the wagon piled up aloft with many sheaves, come creaking forth—making ruts as the toiling horses drag it from the field. We come with gratitude to God, thanking Him for the harvest, blessing Him for so much of favorable weather and praying Him to continue the same till the last shock of corn shall be brought in and the farmers everywhere shall shout the "Harvest Home."

What a picture is a wagon loaded with corn for you and of me, as loaded with God's mercies! From our cradle up till now, every day has added a sheaf. What more could He do for us than He has done? He has daily loaded us with benefits. Despite the sad affliction in the North, we are nationally a favored people. Both in Providence and in gracious privilege, He has blessed us above all people that are upon the face of the earth. While other countries have been crushed by tyrants, ravaged by war, or left in the thick darkness of superstition, we are free—we are blessed with the light of Heaven—we have the Gospel in our streets, the Bible in our houses, and the Sunday as our choicest heritage.

O England! You are like a farm wagon creaking under the mercies of God! Brothers and Sisters, we are each of us like the cart that is pressed down because it is full of sheaves. The innumerable mercies of God are piled upon us high as the mountains, nor can our memory recount the tokens of the tenderness and loving kindness of the Most High. Let us adore His goodness and yield Him our cheerful gratitude.

Alas—and how many times shall I repeat that pathetic interjection—alas! alas! Alas—that such a metaphor should be capable of another reading? That while God loads us with mercy, we should load Him with sin? While He continually heaps on sheaf after sheaf of favor, we also add iniquity unto iniquity, till the weight of our sin becomes intolerable to the Most High, and He cries out by reason of the burden, saying, "I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves."

Our text begins with a "Behold!" and well it may. "Beholds" are put in the Bible as sometimes a hand is put in the margin of old books, to indicate to the reader something worthy of notice. Or, again, "Beholds" are put in the Scriptures as signs are put out in front of houses of business to attract attention. There is something new, something important, something deeply impressive and worthy of attention, wherever we see a "Behold" in Sacred Scripture. I see this "Behold" standing as it were, like a maiden upon the steps of the house of Wisdom, crying, "Turn in here, O you that are wise, and listen to the voice of God while He speaks to you."

Let us open our eyes that we may see. Let us fix both our eyes intently that we may "behold," and may God make a way through our eyes and ears to our heart—so that deep repentance and self-abhorrence may take hold upon us— because of our evil conduct towards our gracious God.

Now, it is to be understood, dear Friends, before we proceed farther, that our text is but a figure, since God is not to be oppressed by man. All the sin that man can commit can never disturb the serenity of His perfections, nor cause so much as a wave upon the sea of His everlasting calm. He does but speak to us after the manner of man and bring down the sublimities and mysteries of Heaven to the feebleness and ignorance of earth. He talks to us as a great father may talk to his little child, and He uses images which are rather adapted to human frailty than to Divine infinity.

Just, then, as a cart has the axles bent and—to use an old Saxon word—as the wheels "scream" under the excessive load, so the Lord says that under the load of human guilt He is pressed down, until He cries out, because He can bear no longer the iniquity of those that offend Him. We shall now turn to the first point, this morning. O that the Holy Spirit may make it pointed to our consciences!

I. The first and most apparent truth in the text is, that SIN IS VERY GRIEVOUS AND BURDENSOME TO GOD.

Be astonished, O heavens and be amazed, O earth, that God should speak of being pressed and weighed down! I do not read anywhere so much as half a suggestion that the whole burden of creation is any weight to the Host High. "He takes up the isles as a very little thing." "He weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in balances." Neither sun, nor moon, nor stars, nor all the ponderous orbs which His Omnipotence has created, cost Him any labor whatever in their sustenance. The heathens might picture Atlas as stooping beneath the tremendous load of the world—but the eternal God, who bears up the pillars of the universe, "faints not, neither is He weary."

Nor do I find even the most distant approach to a suggestion, that Providence fatigues its Lord. He watches both by night and day. His power goes forth every moment. It is He who brings forth Mazzaroth in

his season and guides Arcturus with his sons. He bears up the foundations of the earth! And He holds the cornerstone thereof. He causes the day-spring to know its place, and sets a boundary to darkness and the shadow of death. All things are supported by the power of His hand, and there is nothing without Him. If He withdrew His might, back to annihilation must all things go.

Just as in a moment, foam subsides into the wave that bears it, and is lost forever, so would the universe depart if the eternal God did not daily sustain it. Nor has this incessant working diminished His strength, nor is there any failing or thought of failing. He does all things, and when they are done they are as nothing in His sight. But strange, oh, passing strange, marvelous, miraculous among miracles, sin burdens God, though the world cannot! And iniquity presses the Most High, though the whole tremendous load of Providence is as the small dust of the balance.

Ah, you careless men, sons of Adam, you think sin a trifle. And as for you, you sons of Belial, you count it sport and say, "He regards not. He sees not. How does God know? And if He knows, He cares not for our sins." Learn from the Book of God that so far is this from being the truth, that your sins are a grief to Him, a burden and a load to Him, till, like a cart that is pressed down with sheaves, so is He pressed down by human guilt.

I think this will be very clear if we meditate for a moment upon what sin is, and what sin does. Sin is the great de-spoiler of all God's works. It was sin that turned an archangel into an archfiend, and angels of light into spirits of evil. It was sin that looked on Eden and withered every leaf in its garden and blasted all its flowers. Before sin had come, the Creator said of the newly made earth, "It is very good." But when sin had entered, it grieved God at His very heart that He had made such a creature as man. Nothing can despoil the beauty in which God delights so much as sin, for sin mars His image and erases His superscription.

Moreover, sin makes God's creatures unhappy, and shall He not, therefore, abhor it? God never designed that any creature that He made should be miserable. He made the creatures on purpose that they should be glad. He gave the birds their songs, the flowers their perfume, the air its balm. He gave to nature the smiling sun, and even to night its coronet of stars, for He intended that smiles should be His perpetual worship, and that joy should be the atmosphere which His creatures breathed. But sin has made God's favorite creature a wretch, brought down His most glorious offspring, made in His own image, to become naked and poor and miserable and lost.

Therefore God hates sin and is pressed down under it, because it makes the objects of His love unhappy at their heart. All the unhappiness that we have this morning comes directly or indirectly from sin. Iniquity is the mother of every human pang. Oh, how well may God hate it when He sees His own dearly beloved children made to wear furrows on their brow and tears in their eyes, because of this vile, this abominable thing called sin.

Moreover, remember, Beloved, that sin attacks God in all His attributes. Sin attacks Him on His Throne and stabs at His existence. What is sin, Sinner? Is it not an insult to God's wisdom? God bids you do His will. When you do the contrary it is because you do as much as say, "I know best what is good for me." You do in effect declare that infinite wisdom is in error, and that you, the creature of a day, can judge better than your God what shall be the path of happiness for you. Sin impugns His goodness. By sin you actually declare that God has denied you that which would make you happy, which is not the part of a good, tender, and loving Father.

A generous God denies nothing to His creatures but that which is harmful. But inasmuch as you think sin to be pleasant and profitable, you cast a slur upon the benevolence and loving kindness of God. And when He is such a God, so full of tenderness that His very name is "Love," this is no slight burden to His holy soul, to feel when He perceives you think you could do better for yourself than He is willing to do—and that He has cruelly robbed you of pleasure and denied you that which would be for your good. Sin cuts at the Lord's wisdom with one hand and at His goodness with the other.

And see, sin also abuses the mercy of God. When you, as many of you have done, sin with the higher hand because of His long-suffering towards you—when, because you have no sickness, no losses, no crosses, therefore you spend your time in revelry and obstinate rebellion—what is this but taking the mercy which was meant for your good and turning it into mischief? It is no small grief to the loving Father to see His substance spent with harlots in riotous living. I tell you it is no slight thing to the Father of the prodigal to see Him wish to fill his belly with the husks the swine eat. This touches Him at the very quick. He cannot endure it, that His children should be thus degraded as to turn even the mercy which would woo them to repentance, into a ground why they should sin the more against Him.

Besides, let me remind the careless and impenitent this morning, that every sin is a defiance of Divine power. In effect it is lifting your puny fists against the majesty of Heaven and defying God to destroy you. Every time you sin, you know that sin will lead to your soul's destruction. If, then, you beard the Omniscient One even to His face, and while under the hand that can crush you, you dare to revolt and to transgress, you do as much as dare and defy the Lord to prove whether He can maintain His Law or not. Is this a slight thing, that a worm, the creature of a day, should defy the God of Ages, the God that fills and upholds all things by the Word of His power?

Well may He be weary when He has to bear with such provocations and insults as these! Mention what attribute you will, and sin has blotted it. Speak of God in any relationship you choose, and sin has cast a slur upon Him. It is evil, only evil, and that continually. In every view of it, it must be offensive to the Most High. Sinner, do you know that every act of disobedience to God's Law is virtually an act of high treason? What do you do but seek to be God yourself, your own master, your own lord? Every time you swerve from His will, it is to put your will into its place. It is to make yourself a God and to undeify the Most High.

And is this a little offense, to snatch from His brow the crown and from His hand the scepter? I tell you it is such an act that Heaven itself could not stand unless it were resented. And if this crime were suffered to go unpunished, the wheels of Heaven's commonwealth would be taken from their axles and the whole frame of nature would be unhinged. Such a treason against God shall certainly be punished.

And to crown all, sin is an onslaught upon God Himself, for every sinner is an atheist at heart. Let his religious profession be what it may, he has said in his heart, "No God." He wishes that there were no Law and no Supreme Ruler. He desires that God might be forgotten. God is not in all his thoughts. Is this a trifle? To be a deicide? To slay God? To desire to put Him out of His own world? For the creature to declare war against the God that made him and to wish that God might cease to be—is this a thing to be winked at? Can the Most High hear it and not be pressed down beneath its weight?

Ah, I pray you do not think that I would make a needless outcry against sin and disobedience. It is not in the power of human imagination to exaggerate the evil of sin, nor will it ever be possible for mortal lips, though they should be touched like those of Elijah, with a live coal from off the altar, to thunder out the ten-thousandth part of the enormity of the least sin against God. Think, dear Friends! We are His creatures

and yet we will not do His will! We are fed by Him. The breath in our nostrils He gives to us, and yet we spend that breath in murmuring and in rebellion.

Once more, we are always in the sight of our Omniscient God, and yet the Presence of God is not enough to compel us to obedience. Surely, if a man should insult the law in the very presence of the lawgiver—if the king were insulted to his face—that were not to be tolerated. But this is your case and mine. We must confess, "Against You, You only, have I sinned and done this evil in Your sight." And we must remember that we are doing all this and we know what we are doing. We are not sinning like the Hottentot. We are not pulling God's Law to pieces like some blind New Zealander.

We, in England, sin against extraordinary light and sevenfold knowledge. And is this a light thing? Can you expect that God shall wink at us and pass by such offenses as these? Oh that these lips had language, that this heart could burn for once! If I could declare the horrible infamy of sin it would make the blood chill in even a haughty Pharaoh's veins, and proud Nebuchadnezzar might bow his head in fear. It is a horrible thing, indeed, to have rebelled against the Most High. God have mercy upon His servants and forgive them.

This is our first point but I cannot teach it to you. Only God can teach it by His Spirit. O that the Holy Spirit may make you feel that sin is exceedingly sinful, because it is grievous and burdensome to God.

II. Secondly, SOME SINS ARE MORE ESPECIALLY GRIEVOUS TO GOD. The connection of our text will help you to see the force of this observation. There is no such thing as a little sin, but still, there are degrees of guilt, and it were folly to say that a sinful thought has in it the same extent of evil as a sinful act. A filthy imagination is sinful—wholly sinful and greatly sinful—but still the act has attained a higher degree of provocation.

Now, there are sins that especially provoke God. In the connection of the text we read that licentiousness does this. The people seem, from the 7th verse, to have gone to a very high degree of fornication and lecherousness. This sin is not uncommon in our day. Let our midnight streets and our divorce courts be the witness. Perhaps the saddest proof that society is far from pure is found in the fact that seducers and fornicators, if they are but gentlemen, may enter respectable society. Brand the miscreants, I say. If the woman is shut out as a harlot, what shall be done unto the lustful maker and cherisher of harlots? If Hell burns hotter at one time than another, it is for those who make what should have been a temple of the Holy Spirit into an instrument of rebellion against both man and God.

Oppression, too, according to the text, is another great sin. The Prophet speaks of selling the poor for a pair of shoes. And there are such who would grind the widow and the orphan to the last extreme and make their laborers toil for nothing. How many business men we have who never knew what "hearts of mercy" were? Men form themselves into societies, and then exact an outrageous usury upon loans from the unhappy men who fall into their hands. Cunning legal quibbles and crafty evasions of just debts often amount to heavy oppression and are sure to bring down the anger of the Most High.

Then again, it seems that idolatry and blasphemy are most certainly offensive to Him and have a high degree of heinousness. He says that they drank the wine of false gods, so if any man set up his belly as his god, or his gold, or his wealth, and lives to these, instead of living to the Most High, he has offended by idolatry.

Especially is blasphemy a God-provoking sin. For blasphemy there is no excuse. As George Herbert says, "Lust and wine plead a pleasure. There is gain to be pleaded for avarice, but the cheap swearer from his open sluice lets his soul run for nothing." There is nothing gained by it. There can be no pleasure in cursing—blasting one's limbs and damning one's soul—this must be offending for offending's sake, and therefore this is a high and crying sin. God does pardon it, He is willing to pardon it now—but it nevertheless weighs upon His heart and He cannot suffer it to go unpunished unless it be repented of.

Some sins make the Lord very weary of man. Now, I do not know who you are, many of you this morning, but I have no doubt there are some among you to whom this word may be a personal accusation. Do I address the lecherous, or the oppressive, or the swearer? Do I address the profane? Ah, Soul, what a mercy God has borne with you for so long. The time will come, however, when He will say, "Ah, I will ease Me of My adversaries," and how easily will He cast you off and appoint you an awful destruction.

Again, while some sins are thus grievous to God for their peculiar heinousness, many men are especially obnoxious to God because of the length of their sin. That gray-headed man—how many times has he provoked the Most High? Why, those who are but lads have cause to count their years, and apply their hearts unto wisdom because of the length of time they have lived in rebellion. But what shall I say of you that have been half a century in open war against God—and some of you sixty, seventy—what if I said near upon eighty years? Ah, you have had eighty years of mercies and eighty years of forgetfulness. Eighty years of bounty, and eighty years of ingratitude and insult! O God, well may You be wearied by the length and number of man's sins!

Furthermore, God takes special note and feels a special weariness of sin that is mixed with obstinacy. Oh, how obstinate some men are! They will be damned. There is no helping them. They seem as if they would leap the Alps to reach perdition, and swim through seas of fire that they may destroy their own souls. I might tell you cases of men that have been sore sick of fever, malaria, and cholera. They have recovered from all—but have only recovered their health to return to their wallowing in the mire.

Some of them have had such troubles in business, thick and threefold. They were once in respectable circumstances, but they spent their living riotously and they became poor. They still struggle on in sin. They are growing poorer still—most of their clothes have gone to the pawn shop. But they will not turn from the gin shop and the haunt of vice. An- other child is dead! Ah, has that man yonder a dead child at home? And the wife is sick and nothing but starvation looks the family in the face!

But they have gone on still with a high hand and an outstretched arm. This is obstinacy, indeed. Sinner! God will let you have your own way one of these days, and that way will be your everlasting ruin. But God is weary of all here who have thus set themselves to do mischief, and who against warnings, and invitations and entreaties, and light, and knowledge, have determined to go on in sin.

The context seems to tell us that ingratitude is intensely burdensome to God. He tells the people how He brought them up out of Egypt. How He cast out the Amorites. How He raised up their sons for Prophets and their young men for Nazarites. And yet they rebelled against Him! Oh, dear Friends, this was one of the things that pricked my heart when I first came to God as a guilty sinner—not so much the peculiar heinousness of my outward life, as the peculiar mercies that I had enjoyed. How many of us have been detestably ungrateful! What a life has our life been!

Oh, how generous God has been. Why there are some of us who never had a want. All our wants have been supplied. God has never cast us into poverty, nor left us to infamy, nor given us up to evil example.

He has kept us moral, and made us love His House even when we did not love Him. And all this He has done year after year. What poor returns have we made! To you, His people, what joy He has given, what deliverances, what love, what comfort, what bliss—and yet after all this, to think that we should sin to His very face! Oh, well may He be as a cart that is pressed down, that is full of sheaves!

O my Hearers, I know I address some to whom this may come home very pointedly. What? When you were nearly drowned, were you snatched from the jaws of death? What? Were you rescued from sickness? Were you blessed with that godly mother, and did that companion plead with you? Have you a tender conscience? Do you feel that you cannot sin as others do, for something checks you? All this is God's love. But if you will still rebel against Him, despite all this, well may He arise in His wrath and shake Himself in His hot displeasure. He will not always strive with man. Justice shall soon have its day.

Let me observe, before I leave this point, that it seems from our text that the Lord is so pressed, that He even cries out. Just as the cart, when laden with the sheaves, groans under the weight, so the Lord cries out under the load of sin. Have you ever heard those accents? "Hear, O hearers and give, O earth: for the Lord has spoken, I have nourished and brought up children and they have rebelled against Me." Hear again—"Turn you, turn you from your evil ways. For why will you die, O house of Israel?" Better still, hear it from the lips of Christ, softened down to our own ears—"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you that kill the Prophets and stone them which are sent unto you. How often would I have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings and you would not!"

Sinner, God is cut to the heart by your sin! Your Creator grieves over that which you laugh at. Your Creator cries out in His Spirit concerning that which you think to be a trifle. "O do not this abominable thing which I hate!" For God's sake do it not! We often say "for God's sake," without knowing what we mean. But here, see what it means—for the sake of God—that you grieve not your Creator—that you cause not the Eternal One, Himself, to cry out against you. Cease you, cease you, "from your evil ways. For why will you die, O house of Israel?" I now leave those two points to pass on very briefly to the next.

III. While it is true that sin is grievous to the Lord, it magnifies His mercy when we see that HE BEARS THE LOAD. As the cart is not said to break, but is only pressed, so is He pressed, and yet He bears. That hymn we sung just before the sermon has more in it than hard hearts will feel—

"Lord and am I yet afire, Not in torments, not in Hell? Still does Your good Spirit strive— With the chief of sinners dwell? Tell it unto sinners, tell, I am, I am out of Hell."

If you and I were in God's place, should we have borne it? No, within a week we should have burned the universe with fire, or trod it to powder beneath our feet. If God were like modern lawgivers—and here I find no fault with them, for the law of a commonwealth must be unyielding—but if the Law of Heaven were as swift to punish as the law of man, where would we be? I do not find you rising up to plead for the man who murdered his children, and from some fancied injury shot his fellow man. We seem to say by a unanimous verdict, "The wretch is guilty, let him be punished."

What a universal howl has been going up this week against an offender who once stood fair in the midst of us, but who turned aside long ago unto iniquity. What man pleads for him? Who stands up and says, "Let William Roupell go unpunished"? Yet, here is God, and here are we whose offenses are ten times more heinous against God than any man's offenses can be against man—and yet He spares us. Remember, He has all the while full power to punish. He has but to wish and it is done—to lift His finger and we are crushed before Him.

How many servants wait around Him ready to do His bidding? As the Roman consul went out, attended by his lic-tors carrying the axe, so God is ever attended by His executioners, who are ready to fulfill His sentence. A stone, a tile from the roof of the house, a thunderbolt, a puff of wind, a grain of dust, a broken blood vessel, and it is over—and you are dead and in the hands of an angry God. Indeed, the Lord has to hold in the followers of His wrath and restrain the servants of His anger, for the heavens cry, "Why should we cover that wretch's head?" Earth asks, "Why should I yield a harvest to the sinner's plow?" The lightning and thunder say, "Let us smite the rebel," and the seas roar upon the sinner, desiring him as their prey.

There is no greater proof of the Omnipotence of God, than His long-suffering. It shows the greatest possible power for God to be able to control Himself, to be able to keep in an anger which naturally must boil, and restrain a fury which else must burn. Sinner, yet He bears with you. The angels have been astonished at it—they thought He would strike. But yet He bears with you. Have you ever seen a patient man insulted? He has been met in the street by a villain who insults him before a mob of boys. He bears it. The fellow spits in his face. He bears it still. Now he strikes him. He endures it quietly.

"Give him a charge," says one. "No," says he, "I forgive him all." The fellow knocks him down and rolls him in the ditch, but he bears it still. Yes, and when he rises all covered with mire, he says, "If there is anything that I can do to befriend you, I will do it now." Just at that moment the wretch is arrested by a sheriff's officer for debt. The man who has been insulted takes out his purse and pays the debt and says, "Now you may go free." Look! The wretch spits in his face after that!

Now you say "Let him feel what you can do. Let the law have its way with him." Is there any room for patience now? So would it have been with man. It has not been so with God. We have done much worse than this and He has acted much more nobly. And still, I say, He bears it all. Though like the cart, He is pressed under the load of sheaves, yet like the cart the axle does not break. He bears the load. He bears with impenitent sinners still.

IV. And this brings me now to pass over to the fourth head, on which I would have your deepest attention. Many here present, I fear, have never repented of sin. You have never seen it in the light of grieving God, or else methinks you would not wish to grieve Him. But, perhaps some of you feel how evil a thing rebellion is, but you want to know how you can get rid of it.

This is our fourth head. Not only does God still bear with sin, but GOD, IN THE PERSON OF HIS SON, DID

BEAR AND TAKE AWAY SIN. These words might have deep meaning if uttered by the lips of Jesus, "I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves." Here stood the great problem. God must punish sin, and yet He would have mercy. How could it be? Lo! Jesus comes to be the Substitute for all who trust Him. See how they pile on Him the sheaves of human sin! There are MY sheaves of sin—

"My soul looks back to see, The burden You did bear, When hanging on the cursed tree, And hopes her guilt was there." Here are your sheaves, my Hearer—the sheaves of all His chosen, the sins of all who shall believe in Him! "The Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all." Yes, the Scripture has it, "He is the propitiation for our sin and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." There they lie, heaps on heaps, till He is pressed down like the wagon that groans as it moves along. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." See Him, He did "sweat as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground." "He that eats bread with Me has lifted up His heel against Me."

They sold Him for thirty pieces of silver, a goodly price did they value Him. Nevertheless, He is taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare His generation? Herod mocks Him and makes nothing of Him. Pilate jeers Him. They have smitten the Prince of Judah upon the cheek. "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair. I hid not My face from shame and spitting." They have tied Him to the pillar. They are beating Him with rods, not this time forty stripes save one—there is no "save one" with Him, for the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and "with His stripes we are healed."

Look at Him, like a cart pressed down with sheaves He goes through the streets of Jerusalem. Well may you weep, you daughters of Jerusalem, though He bids you dry your tears. They hoot Him as He walks along bowed beneath the load of His own Cross which was the emblem of your sin and mine. They have brought Him to Golgotha. They throw Him on His back, they stretch out His hands and His feet. The accursed iron penetrates the most tender parts of His body, where most of the nerves congregate. They lift up the Cross. O bleeding Savior! Your time of woe is come! They dash it into the socket with rough hands, the nails are tearing through His hands and feet.

He hangs in extremity, for God has forsaken Him. His enemies persecute and take Him, for there is none to deliver Him. They mock His nakedness. They point at His agonies. They look and stare upon Him with ribald jests. They insult His griefs and make puns upon His prayers. He is now, indeed, a worm and no man, crushed till you can scarcely think that there is Divinity within. The fever gets hold upon Him. His tongue is dried up like a potsherd and He cries, "I thirst!" Vinegar is all they yield Him.

The sun refuses to shine and the thick midnight darkness of that awful midday, is a fitting emblem of the tenfold midnight of his soul. Out of that thick horror He cries, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" Then, indeed, was He pressed down! Oh, there was never sorrow like unto His sorrow. All human griefs found a reservoir in His heart, and all the punishment of human guilt spent itself upon His body and His soul. Oh, shall sin ever be a trifle to us? Shall I laugh at that which made Him groan? Shall I toy and dally with that which stabbed Him to the heart?

Sinner, will you not give up your sins for the sake of Him who quivered for sin? "Oh," you say, "yes, if I could believe that He suffered for my sake." Will you trust your soul in His hands this morning? Do you do so? Then He died for you and took your guilt and carried all your sorrows, and you may go free, for God is satisfied, and you are absolved. Christ was burdened that you might be lightened. He was pressed with your sheaves, that you might find deliverance. I wish I could talk of my precious Master as He might speak of Himself. Or as John might speak, who saw Him and bore witness. He could tell in plaintive tones of the sorrows of the Man of Calvary. But such as I have, I give you. O that God would give you with it the power, the Divine Grace, the blessed compulsion to believe on Jesus, to believe on Jesus NOW!

V. For if not, and here is our last point, God will bear the load for a little while. But if Christ has not borne it for you and for me, then **THAT SAME LOAD WILL CRUSH US FOREVER AND EVER.**

I find that my text is translated by many learned men in a different way from the version before us—"I will press you as a cart that is full of sheaves presses your place." That is, just as a heavily loaded wagon pressed into the poor Eastern roads, and left there deep furrows—furrows you would hardly think of in a land where we understand road making so well. Just as deep ridges and ruts were cut into the Eastern roads by the loaded wagons, so will I crush you, says God, with the load of your sin.

This is to be your doom, my Hearer, if you are out of Christ. Does it need me to enlarge upon this terror? I think not. It only needs that you should make a personal application of the threat! Divide yourselves now. Divide yourselves, I say! Do you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? Then the threat is not yours. But if you believe not, whether you are standing in yonder aisle, or up there in those far-off galleries, I do advise you listen to me now, as if you were the only person here—a Christless soul must be a damned soul—a spirit that believes not in Christ is condemned already, because it believes not.

How shall you escape if you neglect so great a salvation? Thus says the Lord unto you, "Consider your ways." By time, by eternity, by life, by death, by Heaven, by Hell, I plead with you—believe in Him who is able to save unto the uttermost them that come unto Him. But if you believe not that Christ is He, you shall die in your sins. After death the judgment! Oh, the judgment, the thundering trumpet, the multitudes, the crowds. The books, the Great White Throne, the, "Come, you blessed," the "Depart, you cursed"! After judgment—to a soul that is out of Christ—Hell!

Who among us, who among US shall abide with the devouring flame? Who among US, who among US shall dwell with the everlasting burnings? I pray that none of us may. But we must unless we fly to Christ. Oh, I beseech you, my dear Hearer, fly to Jesus! I may never see your face again. Your eyes may never look into mine—but I shake my garments of your blood, if you believe not in Christ this morning. My tears entreat you, my lips would woo you. There is mercy for you! God has had patience with you. Let His long-suffering lead you to repentance. He wills not the death of any, but had rather that they should turn unto Him and live.

And this turning is simply this—trust Jesus with your soul, and He shall take your sin and you shall stand accepted in the Beloved. Will you? No, I know you will not—unless the Spirit of God shall constrain you. But at the least, if you will not, it shall not be for want of pleading and entreating. Come, it is mercy's welcome hour. I pray you, come! Jesus with pierced hands invites you, though you have rejected Him. You have stood against Him long—He knocks again— His undefeated, unconquerable love defies your wickedness and will have you.

Sinner, will you have Him or not? "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." God help you to come, God make you come, for Christ's sake. Amen.

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