

THE  
LOVE OF CHRIST

ALWAYS THE SAME.

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PART III.

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*By WILLIAM HUNTINGTON, S.S.*

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL  
AT PROVIDENCE CHAPEL, LITTLE TITCHFIELD STREET,  
AND THE CITY CHAPEL.

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Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

JOHN XIII. 1.

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L O N D O N :

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1810.



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LOVE OF CHRIST, &c.

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To the Rev. Mr. HUNTINGTON.

Leicester, May 1st, 1810.

MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIEND,

AGREEABLY to your request I send you some little account of the way in which it hath pleased the Lord to lead me, to bring me to know him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent. This is the true God and eternal life.

I was about nine or ten years of age when I received the first impressions in my mind about futurity. I was convinced that I daily sinned against God; and sin I knew would be punished in another world. This wrought so upon me, that I foreboded nothing but misery, and was continually pondering over this my wretched state. The thoughts of dying filled me with slavish and tormenting fear all the day long, and my heart could take no rest in the night; so that at times sleep had almost departed from me. When I thought of heaven I could not conceive what it could be, though I believed it to be a place of happiness appointed for those who were

good, as I had been taught, and that hell was a place of torment, and a receptacle for the wicked; and I concluded that, whenever I died, this miserable state would most surely be my portion. I oftentimes strove hard to put these troublesome thoughts far off, but I could not; they followed me up so close, that my life was frequently a burden to me, and my fear and distress kept continually increasing. But I durst not mention what I felt to any one, for I thought there was not such another wicked, miserable object as myself upon the face of the earth; for I was always thinking about the devil, and wondering in myself what sort of a being he was. I wished much not to think of these things; but, as I could not drive them out of my mind, I began to think how wrong it was; and, being greatly distressed about it, not knowing what to do, I once asked a person if it was good to be always thinking about the devil, but durst not explain my meaning; and the answer I received left me as much in the dark about it as I was before I put the question. Sometimes these impressions were considerably worn off, when I was in hopes they were quite gone, and for a few weeks went on more easily and quietly: then again they would return upon me with more force than ever; in so much that I was bowed down therewith, and often went mourning all the day long.

I remember being one day in this sad state

when my father sent me into the field, I believe it was to count some sheep, which were in a close about a quarter of a mile from home. As I was going, in my way I met a very large dog, and a most voracious animal he appeared to be. As soon as he saw me he began to bark, and ran towards me, exceedingly fierce, and looked extremely vicious. I stood trembling before him, expecting every moment that he would seize me. But I heard a man whistle, who I suppose was the owner of the dog. He immediately became more temperate, and went off growling at me, but looked as if he was unwilling that I should escape feeling the sharpness of his teeth and the strength of his jaws. As soon as I could I made my escape from this terrible spot, from whence I had not gone far before it came suddenly into my mind that this dog was appointed of God to meet me, and to worry me on account of my sin; this filled me with great horror of mind; and, although I had escaped the violence of the dog, yet I thought that some disaster or other would, sooner or later, overtake me. And for many months was in continual fear, go where I would, that some evil would befall me to take away my life; but God, who is rich in mercy, preserved and kept me from all evil. "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord," Isa. lv. 8. I verily believe that God's thoughts toward me,

from all eternity, were "thoughts of peace and not of evil," Jer. xxix. 11. For, since it hath pleased the Lord to call me by his grace, I have many times looked back upon my past life, and have seen how God's eye was always over me for good, and how he has preserved me, while in a state of nature, from many dangers which my own foolishness led me into, as it is written in Jude, "Preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:" twice, in particular, I ran myself into very great danger, but my life was preserved, so that no harm happened unto me; "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds, so that he cannot pass," Job xiv. 5. I generally arose very early in the morning, as my business was to fetch up the cows, to assist in milking, and then to take them into the field again. As soon as I awoke in the morning I began thinking of my sinful state, till I have been so miserable that I envied the happiness of every creature I saw, because every one appeared to be more comfortable than myself: I wished that there was no hereafter, or that I could sink into non-existence; but I kept all these things to myself, and had therefore no way of being eased but by weeping, which I frequently did when alone in the fields or other places; and, that none might perceive the trouble I was in, as soon as I got to any water I washed my face, and put on as cheerful a look

as I could, being afraid to acquaint any one of this my deplorable state of mind. After meeting the dog, as before stated, I went in continual fear, considering it as a bad omen ; and I often secretly wished that God would shew me some token for good, which (blessed be his name) a little time after he condescended to do, as will be shewn in the sequel.

About this time an aunt of mine called at my father's, and said that she had brought four nuts, that were of a very particular sort, which she wished us children to set, and gave to each of us one. I immediately began to think that God had all power ; and, although we might set the nuts, yet, unless it was his will, they could not grow, as all vegetation was from him. One day, being all at home together, we agreed to go into the garden, and each put their own nut in the ground ; and, that there might be no mistake afterwards, we put a stick at each place, differing in size, according to our age. After we had done I retired to a place by myself, and my thoughts were as follows ; “ Now, if it should please God to grant that my nut should grow, and the others should not, it shall be a sign betwixt me and God, that I shall not come to an untimely end in this world, nor go to that place of misery I so much dread in the world to come ; but, if my nut should perish in the earth, and the other three grow, it shall be a sure mark against me,

that all which I fear shall come to pass, and my doom be inevitably fixed in this life, and in that which is to come." I waited with great anxiety to see the result of this matter, because, according to my view, the fate of this nut was to decide my own. I frequently went to see if there was any appearance of it above ground, my mind being often very much agitated about it. After waiting for a long time, I one day went, with my sister and two brothers, to look at the nuts again. At the place where the first was set there was no appearance of it, nor of the second was there any thing to be seen: when we came to the third, which was my own, it had sprung nearly two inches above the earth; we then looked for the fourth, of which however there was nothing to be seen: so that none of them grew to a tree but mine; and, although it is now more than eighteen years ago, I well remember the feelings I had at the time; for, though I knew nothing of God, nor could form any right conceptions of him, yet my heart was filled with gratitude for his goodness, and I many times wept with joy, and fell upon my knees to thank him, and blessed and praised his holy name. I have since paid many a visit to this tree, and whilst standing by it have been led to look back to so memorable a circumstance, and have frequently thought upon it until my soul has been melted within me, admiring the condescension and great goodness of God to



his children in such matters. I was for some time afterwards more satisfied, my mind being greatly alleviated by this circumstance; and whenever I looked at the tree I felt much quietude, as I considered it a token for good.

But it was not long before I got back again to my old place, and felt as uneasy and miserable as ever, for my mind was in continual agitation about what would become of me in another world; so that what I felt within embittered all things which were without, and caused me many times to sigh, and wish I had never been born. And, although at this time I did not know that there was such a thing as extempore prayer, yet at times, when I felt sorely distressed, I have kneeled down and uttered a few expressions, as descriptive of my feelings as I could; and I have sometimes felt easier in my mind, though I knew nothing about God; for, if ever I attempted to think of him, I was immediately confused, and lost in wonder; for I could not conceive what a being he was, but I felt that which filled me with slavish and tormenting fear; and, when I could not think of words to express my feelings, which was frequently the case, I have many times wept bitterly, and thought, if the Lord would but forgive me, I would strive to do better in future; but, whenever I formed such resolutions, they were no sooner made than broken; so that, instead of getting better, I waxed worse; for what

can free-will do, when the sinner is taken captive by the devil at his will, and this strong man armed keeps the palace, till Christ, who is stronger than himself, comes and casts him out? But, as I grew up in life, I was determined, if possible, to put away these gloomy thoughts, and to take pleasure in the things of this life, and enjoy myself as other people did, for I thought that no one was like me ; and in a great measure I accomplished my purpose, eagerly pursuing after every vanity that my mind led me to, and which came in my way, as far as my capacity enabled me. Yet, amidst it all, I oftentimes was very unhappy, for I could not keep conscience quiet ; and frequently I felt very great remorse, though unwilling to come to books, and striving hard to put off the evil day. I frequently declared my resolution not to have any thing to do with religion until I was advanced in years, saying I would then attend to it ; and it is an unspeakable mercy that God did not give me up to my perverse will and a reprobate mind, Rom. i. 28 ; for, as I set at nought all his counsel, and would none of his reproof, he might justly have laughed at my calamity, and mocked when my fear came, Prov. i. 25, 26. I loved darkness rather than light, because my deeds were evil, John iii. 20. But God had mercy on me, and subdued my perverse will, shewing forth all long suffering, and compelling me to come in. " Thy people

shall be willing in the day of thy power," Psalm cx. 3. And he gave me repentance unto life ; " Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not ; but afterwards repented and went," Matt. xxi. 28, 29.

I was never very daring, bold, or openly profane, nor a loose, wicked liver, as some are ; but have always been what the world calls a steady, moral youth. Yet some few things I was very fond of, and much charmed with such as plays, dancing, cards, horse-races, &c. These were my delight, and I pursued them with great eagerness ; but from many of the grossest vices I was kept, for to me there always appeared something in them so very horrid, that I drew back. I had once two or three companions who strove hard to draw me into every impurity, and to harden me in sin ; but conscience so accused me at times that I could not get on, for their evil practices were of the baser sort, and their conduct so vile, that I could not join with them ; so I very soon left them altogether ; and it is a great mercy I made my escape, for, had I continued with them, I have no doubt but I should soon have become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin ; for childhood and youth are vanity, and Paul says that " Evil communications corrupt good manners," 1 Cor. xv. 33. However, I went on for some years in this way, and took as great delight as I could in the things which I have before mentioned, en-

deavouring to make myself happy in them: in this however I failed, for a guilty conscience is a worm that never dies, and I could never get from that: conscience followed me up close, and oftentimes, when what I had been engaged in was over, I began to reflect upon what I had been doing, and then felt very wretched; and I never found that satisfaction which I anticipated beforehand in any one vanity that I pursued, there being always something deficient. Then I used to look forward to some expected entertainment, which was to take place, and charm myself with the pleasing idea of enjoying that pleasure which I had not yet attained. But the last, let it be whatever it might, like the preceding one, always failed: so that, like all other pleasure takers, I had nothing but one continued succession of disappointments, and could find no rest or peace; "The wicked are like the troubled sea," and God is angry with them every day: "There is no peace, saith the Lord, unto the wicked," Isa. xlviii. 22. But these things have been of use to me; for, having passed through them, by the observations I have made, I can now clearly see that it is in this way Satan keeps all his subjects alive, and the world in perpetual motion to this day; for it is he that has filled it with vanities of divers sorts, suitable to the depraved desires and corrupt affections of men of every cast; so that, let their vitiated appetites lead them to whatever

they may, they have an opportunity of gratifying their sinful desires. I have often considered these things, and turned them over in my mind; and, by looking both into the profane and professing world, I can see the scriptures explained; many are deceiving themselves in a false profession, and others are kept in continual motion by a succession of vanities, which are intended to ensnare their souls; "As the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time," Eccl. ix. 12. I have often thought that, if they who are living in pleasure were deprived of these things, and had nothing of that sort to look forward to, they would sink in their minds, and go down like a moth; for by such things they are exhilarated in their spirits, their sensual appetites are gratified, their houses are far from fear, and the language of their heart is, "How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the most high?" Not considering, that if they sin the Lord marketh them, and will not acquit them from their iniquity; but, "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men are fully set in them to do evil," Eccl. viii. 11. These prosper in the world; but how awful will be their end if grace prevent not? "A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this; when the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity

do flourish, it is that they shall be destroyed for ever," Psalm xcii. 6, 7.

I was brought up to the Church of England, and a very strict attendant on her services I was; yet for many years I ignorantly worshipped I knew not what; and one thing used to distress me exceedingly, which was this, I never could stay my mind upon the prayers, so as to attend to the service long together; and oftentimes my thoughts were, like the fool's eyes, wandering to the ends of the earth, and would be on the most trifling, foolish, vain, obscene, and wicked things; much more so than ever they were at any other time: this I could not account for, but was very much troubled about it, and strove hard to prevent it. When I was about fourteen years of age several places were sought after, to fix me in some trade: but even in this thing I can see that the way of man is not in himself. Applications were made to different people; but I could not accomplish my purpose. "God hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of our habitation," Acts xvii. 26. The business I am fixed in was not sought after, but I came to it in an unexpected manner: "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps," Prov. xvi. 9. I have many times looked back as far as I can remember, and in many things can see the hand of God towards me for good, and a train of concurring circumstances in his providence, in

which the Lord has led me about; and I believe the intention of the Most High in them all has been, that I should be taught and instructed thereby. "Thou shalt remember all the way that the Lord thy God hath led thee," Deut. viii. 2. After I had left home I still continued to go to church, where the preaching far exceeded that which I had before been accustomed to hear. I paid the minister very great attention; and often resolved, whilst I was hearing the discourse, that I would in future lead a different life. But as soon as the sound of the word was out of my ears there was an end to my religion. And for some years I kept on in this way, refraining from no one vanity which I could take pleasure in, for I was determined, if possible, to cast off all fear; and at times I strove to be very courageous: but still what I felt within oftentimes overcame all, and brought me down very low. My convictions were very strong at times, and I felt great remorse of conscience for what I had done, which caused me to be very gloomy; and I was often much dejected in my spirits on account of my sin. Thus I went on for a long time, sinning and repenting, repenting and sinning. But what I felt within distressed me most; for it appeared to me to be much worse than any outward transgression I ever committed, I was so filled with wicked and abominable thoughts; and, although I had never been addicted to profane swearing in the worst of

my days, yet now my mind began to be filled with oaths and curses all the day long ; though, blessed be the Lord, I never was permitted to utter with my lips what I felt working in my heart, yet such blasphemous thoughts passed through me, that I was frequently a terror to myself. Oh, the many miserable days that I have had of this sort ! when I attempted to pray or read, or to think of any thing that was good, my mind would then be more infested with these wicked thoughts than at other seasons, which sorely distressed me. But I shall pass over this part for the present, as I intend to touch upon it again.

I was very fond of the minister I sat under, and very attentive to the things I heard, for his discourses were in general very alarming, as he treated largely upon the miseries of the wicked in the world to come : I think I may with propriety call it the ministry of death and condemnation. The terrors of the law were perpetually preached, and he expatiated much upon the torments of hell ; all outward sin was very much exclaimed against, and holiness of life strongly enforced : this scripture was frequently repeated, “ Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,” and a number of scriptures were brought forth descriptive of the miserable state of those who died in sin. These discourses wrought much upon me ; and at the age of seventeen I set about a reformation and a thorough amendment of life, hoping thereby to



please God : much of what I heard had a tendency to set me to work in my own strength, under which I laboured for a long time : but this bodily exercise profited nothing ; for ministers telling poor helpless sinners what they should do, instead of pointing them to Christ Jesus, from whom alone help is to be had, is setting them to labour in vain, which I found to my cost. Indeed it is setting a double task of bricks to be made without giving straw for the work. But this legal way of preaching agreed with my legal feelings, and I soon got into a great profession ; but all my business lay in making clean the outside, at which I was very diligent, abstaining from all outward things, and endeavouring to break off my sins by righteousness. To work I went, and an abundance of dead works were performed. I sometimes felt a strong inclination after those abominations wherein I had formerly lived ; and the difficulty I found in leaving off my old practices I ignorantly conceived to be the warfare between flesh and spirit ; I therefore kept on mortifying the deeds of the body ; and a most valiant soldier I flattered myself I was ; for at length I gained the victory so far, that I followed no outward thing that could be condemned. And herein I believe my conduct was unimpeachable ; and in this reformation I rested, being puffed up with a vain mind ; and, having heard the liberty of the gospel sometimes spoken of, but never ex-

plained, being at ease in the flesh, I imagined I stood in that liberty; and my vain, presumptuous confidence I mistook for faith, and thought myself to be a christian indeed; and I verily believe that thousands of professors rest here, as I once did. I attended different prayer meetings, read the scriptures, and was very attentive to every part of religious worship as far as I knew; I said many prayers, and performed all the good works I could; and, according to my ability, I bestowed alms, yea, even beyond my power, for I sometimes gave all I had away, and fretted that I had not more to give. I think no poor creature was ever more puffed up with blind zeal than I was, and a prouder Pharisee, I verily believe, there never did exist; like those of old, I trusted in myself that I was righteous, and despised others. I was so full of religion, that I could talk about it at any time, and to any one; and strove hard to drag every one into a profession that came in my way; but, had I gained a thousand profelytes, their being converted to such a faith as mine then was would have been of no avail; for, like me, they would only have been twofold more the children of hell, Matt. xxiii. 15. For Christ declares to the Pharisees, "Verily I say unto you, that publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you," Matt. xxi. 31. However, I went on for some time in this way, being swept and garnished with this external shew of religion

and holiness ; whereas inwardly I was full of all uncleanness, and knew no more about a broken heart or a contrite spirit, nor of real sorrow on account of sin, than Satan himself ; nevertheless, I was not always easy in my mind : for at times I felt so much evil working within, that I knew not what to think of myself ; and this so pulled down my vain confidence, that I frequently felt very low, and was oftentimes much distressed, and did not think so highly of my religion ; as, from what I felt, I very much suspected that all was not right with me ; and this dissatisfaction kept increasing upon me, till I thought there was something more in real religion than I was yet acquainted with. I got more and more restless, and was exceedingly distressed, fearing I was deceived, and that my religion would prove nothing worth. This I know is a dreadful state to be in ; “ For, if a man thinketh himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself,” Galat. vi. 3. One day, being at my work, and pondering over these matters in my mind, I became so disconsolate and distressed, that I knew not what to do, for I feared that all was wrong. At this time I had some strong impressions on my mind to go in prayer to the Lord, and make known to him all my distress. So I left my work, retired to a secret place, and put up a few petitions, which, to the best of my remembrance, were as follows,—“ O Lord, I have sinned against

thee, but thou art merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in goodness: thou searchest the heart and triest the reins, and all things are naked and open unto thee; thou knowest the state I am in, and the distress which I feel, fearing I am not right before thee: suffer me not to be deceived, I beseech thee, O Lord; and, if my religion is what thou thyself hast taught me, be pleased to make it known, and comfort me in it; but, if it is what thou hast not taught me, and will fail me when I come to die, reveal this also unto me; and, if it be thy most blessed will, let the first passage of scripture I ever see from this time be descriptive of my case, that I may thereby know what is my true state before thee. Pardon and forgive my sin, and make me what thou wouldst have me to be. I ask all in the name, and for the sake, of Jesus Christ. Amen.”—How long time elapsed before I looked into the Bible I do not recollect; but I remember one night, being very unhappy, and thinking of what I had prayed for, I took it up to read, and the first words I saw were these, “Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter, for thy heart is not right in the sight of God,” Acts viii. 21. On reading these words I sunk in my soul, and God quickened me to feel that I was lost, and shewed me the wretched state I was in; and in one moment such horror of mind seized me, that I felt as if I was going to drop into the bottomless pit; my heart

funk within me ; I was quite chilled, and afterwards broke out into a cold sweat ; my strength of body seemed to be all gone from me ; and, if I had not sat down, I believe I should have dropped on the floor. I then perceived that religion was heart-work, to which I had been an utter stranger, and had been deceiving myself in a false profession ; and I felt the wretched, fallen, lost state I was in by nature, and that “ Original sin is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man that is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth contrary to the spirit, and therefore in every person born into this world it deserveth God’s wrath and damnation.” Article the 9th. I now experienced the difference between legal convictions and those which are produced under the powerful quickening operations of God’s spirit ; “ you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.” I believed his threatenings denounced against me as a sinner, and trembled at his word, which says, “ the soul that sins shall die,” and is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, Heb. iv. 12. “ All things that are re-proved are made manifest by the light, for whatsoever doth make manifest is light,” Eph. v. 13. I had been alive without the law ; but when the commandment came sin revived, and I died. I

now saw the spirituality of God's law, which discovered to me my lost and fallen state, and what an infinite distance there was betwixt me and a holy God, and how far short I fell of the law's demands ; " The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, fold under sin ;" and " Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the law to do them." Formerly I had no other knowledge of sin than by actual transgressions ; but now I found that these corrupt fruits sprung from a corrupt fountain, an evil and depraved nature, which originated in the fall ; " By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation ;" therefore this condemnation was entailed upon me in man's fall ; for, " by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," Rom. v. 12. The rebukes of God in my conscience, and his wrath revealed against my sin, pulled down my self-righteous spirit. " When thou, Lord, with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth," Psa. xxxix. 11.

" By the law is the knowledge of sin ;" this discovered to me my corruption and the concupiscence of my heart. " But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence ; for without the law sin was dead," Rom. vii. 8. And I believe all that the law can do is to discover sin, and condemn the

sinner; as the Apostle says, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful," Rom. vii. 13. It condemns the sinner, and is called the ministration of death and condemnation, 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. It shews the aboundings of our transgressions; "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound," Rom. v. 20. And "it was added because of transgressions," Gal. iii. 19. The distress and anguish I felt on account of my sin, are, I believe, what Paul calls the terrors of the Lord; for, death and judgment were uppermost in my thoughts, and "the yoke of my transgressions was bound by his hand," Lam. i. 14. So that my heart continually meditated terror; and for some years I had no rest because of my sin, as David says, "For mine iniquities are gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me," Psa. xxxviii. 4. But God, who discovered to me my sin, did not suffer me to hate nor to shun the light, but to come to it, and expose my conscience to the force of truth. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God," Prov. iii. 21. I kept up a very strict attendance at church, and often heard a great deal said about open and profane sin. But my wound lay within, and sorely dis-

treffed I was ; which made me listen very attentively to the minister, hoping to hear my feelings brought forth ; but in this I was generally disappointed, for my case was not touched upon ; so far from it, that I frequently returned with an increased burden, for he set before me an impossible task, holding forth the law as the only rule of life, and setting me to work in my own strength ; at which I laboured very hard, and I may say fared hard too, for all fulness of grace is in Christ, not in the law ; and God ministereth not his spirit by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith ; therefore setting poor helpless sinners to work for life instead of pointing them to Christ, who is “ the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth,” Rom. x. 4, is binding heavy burdens upon men’s shoulders which are grievous to be borne, Mat. xxiii. 4. Such preaching keeps troubled souls back, rather than helping them forwards. Christ says, “ Ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered,” Luke xi. 52. “ The law worketh wrath, for where no law is there is no transgression,” Rom. iv. 15 : it “ gendereth to bondage,” Gal. iv. 24. The preaching of the law contracts, instead of enlarging the heart, which was the effect it always had upon me ; and, though the ministry which I sat under was called the gospel, yet there was little else brought forth but the works of the law ; and Paul calls



the gospel the ministry of the spirit. These discourses upon the law communicated nothing but wrath and bondage to fear, and have often sent me away in great anguish and bitterness of soul, with a distressed and disconsolate mind. "While I suffer thy terrors," says David, "I am distracted," Psalm lxxxviii. 15. I laboured hard to keep the law, and work out a righteousness of my own, but all in vain; "I," saith the Lord, "will declare thy righteousness and thy works, for they shall not profit thee," Isa. lvii. 12. They are but as filthy rags at best, and God says, "Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works," Isa. lix. 6. And this I found, that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified;" whilst in Christ all that believe are freely justified from all things: "By his knowledge," says God, "shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities;" and "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory;" as it is also written, "Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength," Isa. xlv. 24. I heard much about vows, promises, and resolutions; and I made many; and at this fruitless toil laboured for some years, striving against sin in my own strength, whereby I was kept in continual bondage and agitation of mind, for the law was set before me as my rule, holiness of life enforced, and a progressive sanctification insisted upon; in all

which I found myself very deficient, and never could come up to the rule I heard laid down, for I was daily offending in thought, word, and deed, and he that offends but in one point is guilty of all, Jam. ii. 10. So far was I from having that holiness of temper which I heard of (for the question was often asked, "What are your tempers," &c. ?) and those good frames and feelings, that in myself I daily found that which was quite the reverse of all this, being full of fury and fretfulness, bitter in spirit, filled with rebellion, enmity, malice, wrath, peevishness, discontent, and envy, with every other evil working within : and so far was I from feeling myself more and more sanctified, so as to be free from these things, that I appeared to get more vile, and my corrupt nature shewed itself in every shape ; which leads me to think that such preachers are physicians of no value, who set men to look for such attainments in themselves, instead of leading them to Jesus Christ, in whom they are all to be found ; "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption," 1 Cor. i. 30. Those who teach such things keep poor souls in bondage, and "the labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city," Eccl. x. 15. I have often returned home from hearing a sermon bowed down with distress and grief, lamenting my short-comings ; then I used

to resolve to be more circumspect, watchful, and observant, and that I would guard against every transgression and every evil with which I had before been overcome; vow and promise that I never would commit the like again, but in future would be more diligent: but, alas! sin was too strong for me, and I was soon overcome. Christ declares, "Without me ye can do nothing," John xv. 5. I broke through all my promises, and then sunk into the deepest distress; and have set to vowing again in the same way, till I have been ready to bind myself down with oaths; but, as Job says, "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands ever so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me," Job ix. 30, 31; and so I found it, till this bitter and woful experience made me completely sick of this wretched way of going on: and now, if ever I hear a man setting people to make vows, my soul hates what they advance, knowing that they who are at such a work will have no better success than I had; and whoever sets them at it are turning the blind and the lame out of the way; and that which is lame is not to be turned out of the way, but rather to be healed. Christ is the repairer of the breach, and the restorer of paths to dwell in, and in him is peace and truth; as saith the prophet, "Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of

peace and truth," Jer. xxxiii. 6. All fulness is in the Saviour. If ever I made a vow, as soon as I had done it Satan set upon me again with the same temptation I had been protesting against, and never left me till I had broken through all my promises; so that I never kept one vow that I had made, but as soon as I had broken them I was truly wretched and miserable. I verily believe that the whole of it is Satan's own work; he first sets us to make a vow, and then tempts us to break it, and afterwards turns accuser, on account of both.

I procured several books, in which were many forms of prayer adapted to different cases; but I met with none that were altogether suitable to my state; for frequently, when I began to repeat them, I durst not go on, knowing that what I was uttering with my mouth, and what I felt in my heart, were widely different, so that I could get no satisfaction from these, though I said many every day. Besides, I seldom failed repeating the morning and evening service, from the common prayer book, every day as I was at my work; indeed I had learnt prayers to repeat upon every occasion all the day long, for I attended at different prayer meetings, where I have heard men pray with such eloquence, that I would have given a world to have expressed myself like them: but I was far enough from being able so to do; I could only look on and wonder at

others, and concluded that none were so ignorant as myself. One day, as I was reading, I came to this scripture, "and I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications," Zech. xii. 10; which dwelt so much upon my mind, that I began to leave off my forms of prayer, and endeavoured to call upon God as well as I could; but I was often in such confusion and trouble, that I could only utter a few broken unconnected expressions, and sometimes was not able to speak a word, on which account I was greatly distressed, but found much relief from these two scriptures, "Teach us what we shall say unto him, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness," Job xxxvii. 19; from which it appears there could be little or nothing said. And Paul says, the spirit helps our infirmities with groanings that cannot be uttered. The Lord knows the way that we take, and all our desire is before him. And, although many times I could not express my feelings, yet I have groaned, being burdened, sighed and wept; and he that searcheth the heart knoweth what is the mind of the spirit, for the spirit maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. Finding I could not meet with any forms of prayer suitable to my feelings, I left them all off, and have not made use of them from that day to this; but have called upon

the name of the Lord, in extempore prayer, as he hath enabled me.

I laboured under a fore and most distressing temptation for many years, which was, blasphemous thoughts against the Most High ; and none that I have ever passed through since has given me so much distress, it being of all others the most horrid. Oh the days and months of misery I have experienced, being bowed down with grief on account of it ! I would not go through it again for all the world, and I hope in the Lord I never shall ; for I have many times suffered so much, as to be almost worn out with trouble, having no rest either by day or by night, so that people about me have asked what was the matter ; my distress being so great, that I could rest in no place ; and so dejected, that I was the picture of misery, for my mind was almost distracted. Indeed I have many times feared I should lose my senses, and be left to speak out what I felt within. I cannot express a thousandth part of the troubles I have gone through of this sort, which I never durst mention to any creature living for many years, thinking that no one besides me either was, or ever had been, tempted to blaspheme in this way. And I was the more inclined to keep this matter to myself from an idea that, if it was known how wicked I was, every one would look upon me with disdain, and I

should wander about as a vagabond upon the earth; that no one would have any connection with me; nay, so far from it, that they would shun me, as being unfit for any society but the devils themselves. This temptation to blaspheme haunted me, go where I would; and oftentimes, when I took up the scriptures to read, to meditate, or attempted to pray, or was in company or conversation with those that feared the Lord, my mind would be more infested than ever, inso-much that I knew not what to do, for I think, if possible, thousands of these fiery darts have passed through my mind in a few minutes. At length I got so bad, that I began to fear I should, in my hurry and great agitation of mind, be left, sometime or other, to utter involuntarily what I felt within. To avoid this, every time it came upon me I began to repeat, as fast as I could, "Blessed be the Lord, blessed be the Lord." Even while I kept speaking thus numberless oaths and curses would dart through my mind, till I have been like one desperate; and have sometimes gone on in this way all the day long, dreading the approach of night, for when I went to bed I was worse off than ever. Various are the means which I have made use of to put these wicked thoughts out of my mind; and many times, when in great anguish and bitterness on account of them, I pulled my hair till the tears have ran down my cheeks with pain, and I have

been tossing to and fro, longing for the morning light. But I frequently rose in this distress, and passed through a dismal day, retiring again, with an increase of burden, to pass through another wearisome night; "So was I made to possess months of vanity; and wearisome nights were appointed for me," Job vii. 3. Frequently, when I have attempted to pray against them, as soon as I have kneeled down, in one moment my mind would be filled with such horrid blasphemy, that I have jumped up in the greatest horror, being a terror to myself, and have stood and wept bitterly, not daring to open my mouth to call upon the name of the Lord, lest I should be forced to speak what I felt passing within. Such days as these are the bitterest that I ever passed through, and I have had many of them. These two passages, in the sixteenth chapter of the Revelation, were continually upon my mind, and I greatly feared lest they should be fulfilled by me; "And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God," verse 9; "and blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds," verse 11. I thought my days would soon be at an end; and, when I got to that place of torment, that Satan would compel me to blaspheme; concluding, from what I felt, that it was one part of their employment who are confined in those dismal regions; and these



words used to cut me to the heart, "They shall fret themselves, and curse their King and their God, and look upward," Isa. viii. 21. O the misery which I have had, and the tears that I have shed, on account of this horrid temptation, which I conceive to be the masterpiece of Satan ! and surely he never injected into the mind of any man worse than I have felt. Nothing ever bowed me down and distressed me like these "fiery darts of the wicked," Eph. vi. 16. I had never heard any one hint at such things, nor had I ever read of any thing of the sort, until one Sunday evening, after returning from church, a friend of mine took me with him to call upon an acquaintance of his, who, before we left the house, put a book of yours into his hand, which he lent me to read. I took it home, and never met with any book before that suited me so well, though there was a good deal in it I did not understand ; yet some parts were very suitable to me, as it pointed out that which none had ever done before : I read it over and over again ; and, when I returned it, borrowed another, which was, 'The Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer.' This proved a treasure indeed, being abundantly blessed to me ; and I blessed the author of it a thousand times over before I ever saw him. It was the first book I ever read that pointed out my case, and from it I received the first help I ever got in my distress. One Sunday morning I retired into a

garden to peruse it; and, when I came to the 106th, and following pages, where you mention that horrid temptation that came upon you, I was much amazed to find the very things related which I had so long laboured under, and which were so heavy a burden to me. My distressing case was exactly pointed out, and my heart began to glow with gratitude to God that I had met with a book so descriptive of my feelings: it was joyful news indeed to me to read the account, as I had never read the like before, nor had I heard any thing of the kind spoken of; so that I had concluded no one had ever felt these things but myself. I kept reading on till my heart was so full that I burst into tears, and wept for joy. I walked up and down in the garden, praising the Lord with my whole heart, and many times cried out, "Bless the author of this book!" I cannot express the relief which I found; my burden seemed to be quite gone, and my heart and affections went up in gratitude to God, while tears of thankfulness flowed very copiously, and I kept on blessing and praising the name of the Lord for his goodness, that I had found one who had experienced the same things which I had felt. "The author of this book," said I, "whoever he be, has laboured under the same sore and distressing temptation that I have, and he has obtained mercy; and, as the Lord hath shewed mercy to him, it may be that he will exercise the

same towards me." I felt encouragement to hope, and thanked God with all my heart.

It was now church time, and, as my master called me to go, I was obliged to obey. But before I returned home again I had lost all those sweet feelings which I had had in the morning; for what I heard at the church was as opposite to the matter contained in the book as the East is from the West. In the course of the week this dreadful temptation returned upon me again as violently; and, to add to my distress, it was in a moment darted into my mind that this was the unpardonable sin; whereupon I sunk in my feelings lower than ever; what I felt I cannot express; I however concluded that all was over with me, and I was inevitably lost. The unpardonable sin was always uppermost in my mind; and sometimes it lay so heavy upon me, that I was scarcely able to go about my business; then again the weight of it would in a measure wear off for a time; but the first effectual relief I got was when hearing you preach from these words, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence," Psalm. xci. 3. Whilst you were speaking from these words my burden was quite removed, and I saw clearly that I had not committed the unpardonable sin. In the course of the sermon you mentioned this blasphemous temptation, observing that there were but very few of the Lord's

people, who were sharply tried, but were exercised with it; and that the next thing which Satan suggested to the mind was, that this was the unpardonable sin; and then you shewed plainly what the unpardonable sin was, and that this temptation was not it. O what comfort did I receive whilst hearing this discourse! My hope was strengthened, and I returned from Providence Chapel rejoicing in my heart, being relieved from the heaviest burden that can come upon the mind of man. Still, however, the temptation to blaspheme was not completely removed, for oftentimes afterwards I was sorely harassed with it, though I prayed against it night and day, till at length I began to despair of ever getting rid of it, and thought it was of no use at all praying against it, and that I must give it up: but one day, when I was walking alone, and was very pensive, pondering it over in my mind, these words struck me very forcibly, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting," Matt. xvii. 21. I looked in the bible for these words, to see upon what occasion they were spoken; and when I found them I took encouragement, and kept on praying against this blaspheming devil; and blessed, for ever blessed, be the Lord, he was pleased, in his own time, condescendingly to hear my poor petitions, and answer my prayers, and delivered me from this snare of the fowler. "Christ spake a parable, that men ought always

to pray and not to faint.”—“ If we ask any thing according to his will he heareth us;”—“ and shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them ? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily,” Luke xviii. 7. 8 ; and, blessed be his name, I have not for some years past been much exercised in this way ; and whenever I am it does not distress me now as it used to do. But nothing that I ever heard or read alleviated my mind so much as a letter of yours in the *Living Testimonies*, page 316 ; by which I perceived that these fiery darts came from Satan ; and it was so blessed to me, that since I first read it I have never been so cast down and distressed about it as I was before, being persuaded, as you therein observe, that it was the devil’s own sin ; and my soul “ escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowler, the snare was broken and I escaped,” Psalm cxxiv. 7. Blessed be the Lord, who hath not given me a prey to his teeth.

After reading the *Kingdom of Heaven*, &c. I had a great desire to purchase some of your books ; but how it was to be brought about I knew not ; for, being an apprentice, I had no means of getting money ; however, I came to this determination, that the next time I saw my father I would ask him to give me a guinea ; and, if he refused, I would then ask for the loan of one till I was out of my time, when I would re-

pay him: accordingly, when he came to see me, I asked of him this favour, and, after interrogating me upon the subject, being informed that the author of the books was not a methodist, he gave me the guinea, and I purchased books with it as far as it would go; and by reading these I soon began to disrelish all my former ones: so that ‘The whole Duty of Man,’ ‘Allen’s Alarm,’ ‘Ruffel’s Sermons,’ and several others which I had of the same linsley-woolsey sort, grew out of favour and out of fashion with me; and I have never looked at them since, nor do I ever intend so to do. One Sunday morning I rose very early, and read a part of ‘The Moral Law not injured,’ &c. Here I found my mind greatly instructed, and was much comforted; at seven o’clock I set off to a prayer meeting, which I had for some time attended. On my return home I walked with an elderly man, who had been to the same place, and was called a father in Israel. In the simplicity of my heart, I asked him whether he had ever heard a Mr. Huntington preach, or had read any of his works. He said he had both heard you, and had seen some of your books, which were very dangerous. On hearing this I was very much surpris’d; but he went on, “He is a man of a very bad spirit, and the books have a dangerous tendency.” This stopped all further conversation, except my observing that I had read some of them, and liked them better than

any books I ever saw. After this I lent the Kingdom of Heaven, &c. to an acquaintance of mine, who was older than myself, and had been much longer in a profession, hoping it might be of use to him, as he always seemed bowed down to the earth with trouble. But, on returning it, he merely remarked that he thought it was too full of levity. By which I perceived that the book had not found favour in his eyes, though I esteemed it as one of my greatest treasures. But when I saw what a cool reception it met with it rather damped me, though I held my peace, and pondered the matter over in my heart; for in times past I used to wonder how such things could be, as I could not understand them. But I now perceive that there is no union betwixt the bond family and the sons of the free woman; they are two separate people, and never can be brought together: what one delights in the other hates; one serves God in the newness of the spirit, the other in the oldness of the letter; and whenever the best robe is brought forth, to adorn the prodigal, these elder sons are always angry; "The children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed," Rom. ix. 8. The bond woman and her son is to be cast out, for he shall not be heir with the son of the free woman.

Soon after this affair I read the Justification of a Sinner, which was much blessed to me; in-

deed I was benefitted, more or less, in the perusal of every book I had, what I experienced being therein described. And I daily searched the scriptures, to see if these things were so; and I found, as far as I had gone in experience, and according to what little light and judgment God had given me into his word, that they were written agreeably to it, and that the author of them was a partaker of the same spirit as those holy men of old, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; and as the Bible, the books, and what I felt within, coincided with each other, I moved on agreeably to what I felt; and by reading the scriptures and these books I got that knowledge and satisfaction, and those helps, in the troubled state I then was in, that I never got from any preacher, go where I would; for I was sinking under a sense of God's wrath and fore displeasure; therefore they, who had never felt these things, were of no use to me, for he that knows nothing of a wounded spirit can never speak to the feelings of one that God hath quickened. But your books described my case; therefore we were well agreed; and I believe that those who read and then reject them know little or nothing about the matter. However, herein I am of David's mind, "Let them curse, but bless thou," Psalm cix. 28; and I have cause to bless the Almighty that I ever saw them. I seldom went to any other place of worship than the esta-



blishment; and, whenever I did, I got no more satisfaction in hearing the dissenters than the minister I attended in the church, for in both places there was a famine, for want of the bread of life. My distress was great, feeling the lost and perishing condition I was in; and what I wanted to hear was, how such an one as I could be saved; but Christ was not set forth as the Saviour of the lost, so that what I heard oftener increased my burden than lightened it, for such legal preaching only makes the heart of the righteous sad, by putting darkness for light, and light for darkness. There was no casting up, nor preparing the way, nor removing the stumbling-blocks, as God hath commanded, Isa. lvii. 14. I was like the woman with the issue of blood, who had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, Mark v, 26. When I heard a text read I frequently thought there was something contained in the words suitable to me; and, if it was expressive of distress and trouble, then my expectations were raised very high, hoping to hear something to do me good; as I was waiting to step in if the waters were troubled, Jer. v. 7; but, alas! alas! my expectations were cut off, and I was left sinking in my troubles far enough below any thing that I heard touched upon. Sometimes I returned home quarrelling with the minister, being vexed in my spirit; at other times

I came away distressed beyond measure, writing bitter things against myself, and thought surely the fault was altogether in me; and I was sinking under a burden almost too heavy for me to bear, for truly it was grievous, a long string of duties being pointed out, but no leading of the mind to Christ, upon whom help is laid, and where alone strength is to be found. These things bowed down my soul; for all that was said in general seemed to make against me, and nothing was brought forth that I could take hold of, or that gave me any help in the way. "Can that which is unfavoury be eaten without salt?" Job vi. 6; "Or doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass; or loweth the ox over his fodder?" Job vi. 5. No; the gospel trumpet is to be blown, and the promise is, that they shall come who are ready to perish. It is the outcasts which are to be gathered in; and none are capable of inviting these guests but they who are appointed to it by God himself. It is a faithful witness that delivers souls, and "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy;" therefore he that is destitute of these things is not made instrumental in bringing souls to Christ. There is no life, therefore no power; it is the spirit that quickeneth; "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them," Isa. viii. 20; I long spent money for that which was not bread, and my labour for that which sa-

tisfieth not, Isa. lv. 2; but this has been, and still is, of great use to me; for by it God shewed me the insufficiency of a form of godliness without the power, and he threw down all my sandy foundations upon which I was wont to build; and himself led me in a right way, that he might bring me to a city of habitation. And, as soon as it pleased God to bring me to hear the truth, I forsook them altogether, having had enough of it. The wise man tells us, "to forsake the foolish and live, and go in the way of understanding," Prov. ix. 6. And Christ says, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; but a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers," Jer. x. 15. And so I have found it many times, when I have gone to hear different ministers, for the gospel which I had received was not like what they taught; therefore what I have gone through has been of great use to me in this respect, that I can now see the foundation upon which numbers build, and where they stand; and I know that they are resting short of the promise; for what God has taught me has been to bring me off from such a religion as they are in possession of. And it has grieved me much, when I have gone at times to hear what is called the gospel, to see whole congregations set down short of the kingdom; and I have thought of the Saviour's words, "Wo unto

you, for ye are as graves that appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them," Luke xi. 44. And I know that they are not aware of the deception, for I have seen many elevated with a discourse which has grieved me to the heart. But I have always found that, if a word be spoken against such preaching, the people are angry, and such refuse to come in; "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof? Jer. v. 31. Why our Lord says, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch," Matt. xv. 14. God is a sovereign; and the scriptures inform us that with him is strength and wisdom; "the deceived and the deceiver are his," Job xii. 16.

A few months before I was out of my time I was one day standing at my work, very disconsolate and much cast down, being in great distress about my eternal state, and thinking that I should soon be removed from the situation I was then in, but to what part of the world I should be tossed I knew not; but I pictured things out to myself as dreadful as my imagination could paint them: and, whilst I stood pondering over this gloomy subject, this scripture came upon my mind as powerfully as though a voice had spoken it to me, "And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest,

and will bring thee again into this land, for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of," Gen xxviii. 15. I found such a change in my feelings, and such an heavy burden was taken from me, that I knew not what to think of it; I was like the child Samuel. It is said of him, "Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him," 1 Sam. iii. 7; I felt the power, though, like Peter, I "wist not that it was true which was done by the angel," Acts xii. 9. But I felt very comfortable, and was much relieved from my distress; and this kind promise has been fulfilled to me, as will be shewn as I proceed with the narrative. When I was out of my apprenticeship I wished much to go to London, having a great desire to hear you: but I had no prospect of being able to accomplish this. Afterwards I engaged myself to a gentleman in the country, who did not immediately want me; so that a door seemed now open in providence for me to go to town, where I staid for two months. "The desire of the righteous shall be granted," Prov. x. 24; and the Lord was with me as he had promised. I came to Providence Chapel on the Sunday morning, and you preached from these words, "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham," Jer. viii. 39. The works you spoke of were such as I had never heard from any pulpit,

yet I knew they were the things I had long wanted to hear: and, though some things made against me, yet there were others that were suitable; and I felt my heart move in affection towards you in such a way as I never had done before to any preacher living. I was quite amazed, and marvelled greatly, to hear you bring forth my feelings as you did; I was like Manoah and his wife when the angel appeared to them; "and the angel did wonderously, and Manoah and his wife looked on," Judges xiii. 19. I attended every time you preached, both at Providence and Monkwell Street meeting, and often heard things which I did not understand, as the experience you brought forth was far beyond any thing which I had attained to. But, when you spake of trouble and distress, I understood that part, and many times got a help by the way; so that, as Paul says to the Corinthians, I acknowledged you in part, 2 Cor. i. 14; and I believe I shall acknowledge you even to the end. For some weeks after I first heard you I was sorely distressed, for you stript me of a good deal of my religion, as I had plenty about me of what the prophet calls untempered mortar; and your preaching discovered to me the worthlessness of the greatest part of my profession. I had been daubed over with untempered mortar, and the Lord made use of your ministry to throw down this work. One night, as I was hearing you preach at Monkwell Street,

God rent this wall, as himself hath said, " I will rend it with a stormy wind in my fury," Ezek. xiii. 13; and down I went, and from the Tuesday evening until the Sunday following was distressed indeed. " So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall," Ezek. xiii. 14: and so it was with me; and the Lord fulfilled his own word, which says, " Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, the wall is no more, neither they that daubed it," Ezek. xiii. 15. And so it came to pass; for on the Sunday morning I came to Chapel, bowed down with an expectation that I should most surely be cut off: but oh no! this storm was not intended to destroy, but to strip me of that which was better lost than found. You preached that morning from these words, " And, though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers, and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, this is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left," Isa. xxx. 20, 21. On hearing the words my heart revived; and as you went on speaking from them it was much blessed

to me, for I understood what you said upon the bread of adversity and water of affliction, and God opened my eyes to see my teacher, and my ears to hear his word, according to the promise, "Thy teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more:" and, blessed be his name, they have not; for mine eyes have seen my teachers from that day to this. After hearing you I went no more among professors of any description; but, as God has enabled me, I have abode fast by the truth, and gone according to that light and judgment which he has given me to this day. It was about two or three Sundays after this that I heard you preach from Psalm xci. 3; when I received that comfort I have before mentioned, respecting my not having committed the unpardonable sin. During my stay in town I heard you preach several other discourses, from which I received a good deal of encouragement. "My word," saith the Lord, "shall not return void."

My time being expired, I was obliged to return to my situation in the country, though very reluctantly. During my stay at that place I spent my sabbath's alone, for the professors were of that sort with whom I felt no union; therefore I wished for no confederacy, but stood aloof from all, waiting upon God, and reading the scriptures and some part of your books; and I found the presence of the Lord with me. After I had been at this place about eight months I was obliged to leave



it, the person in whose employment I was having no further occasion for me. This man pretended a great deal of friendship towards me; "His words were smother than butter, but war was in his heart," Psalm lv. 21; for secretly he did me all the injury he could; and I think I may say of him what Joseph said to his brethren, "But, as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good," Gen. l. 20; and so it proved. I very soon obtained another situation, and at the time appointed went to it; the morning I set off I had twenty-five miles to walk, and in my way was greatly fatigued in body, much cast down in mind, and was in great bitterness of soul; for the adversary set before me all things in as gloomy a light as possible, and provoked me fore and made me to fret, 1 Sam. i. 6. In this dilemma I turned aside into a field, and sat down under a hedge, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept fore, 1 Sam. i. 10. Whilst I sat down I took some refreshment, blessed the Lord for what I had, and thanked him that he had helped me thus far. Whilst I sat in this place I felt a melting, softening frame come over me, and was very much relieved from my distress: I think I may say of this field as Jacob did when he was going to Padan-aram, and lighted upon a certain place, where he tarried all night, and God appeared to him in a dream, and when he awoke he said, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it

not," Gen. xxviii. 16. I rose up from my place, thanked God for his mercies, and then journeyed forward: but the situation in which I was now placed was by no means agreeable to me in this my distressed state of mind, therefore I soon returned to Leicester, where I had a great desire to stop, if it was the will of God; and I was the more anxious, because a few people met together for prayer, the reading of the scriptures and your works, with whom I felt union of heart; and the thoughts of being separated from them grieved me much. After waiting for some time, however, and no way opening for me to reside there, at length I engaged myself to go more than thirty miles distant: this I did with very great reluctance, as the thoughts of being removed troubled me not a little. Being one morning in great distress about it, I went in prayer to the Lord, and poured out my complaint before him, shewing him all my trouble, Psalm cxlii. 2; and making all my request known; and I humbly entreated of him this favour,—that, if it was his most blessed will, I might not be removed from hence, but that he would be pleased to provide for me in the way that seemed good unto him; as he knew my heart, and that the only reason why I desired to stay was, that I might have an opportunity of meeting with those who feared his name, (which I had long been deprived of) and how much I had suffered in other places on that account. The

good Lord condescended to hear my petition, and on that very day a situation was provided for me, my former engagement broken off, and God fixed me in the place where I solicited, and where he has kept me to this day; and the promise he gave me before my first removal was fulfilled; the Lord was with me, and kept me in all places whither I went: he was with me in London; he was with me when I waited upon him, and spent my sabbaths alone; he was with me and blessed me under the hedge; and he has never left me, but brought me again into this land! "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!" Psalm xxxi. 19. "If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us; and, if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him," 1 John v. 14, 15. And how sweet and acceptable is every thing that is much wanted, and comes in answer to earnest prayer! "Before they call I will answer, and while they are yet speaking I will hear," Isa. lxxv. 24. This endears the Lord to us; "Who so is wise and will observe these things, even he shall understand the lovingkindness of the Lord," Psalm cvii. 43.

A few months after this affair, in the year 1800, a way was opened for me, and I got settled in business; and for a long time every thing I engaged in went on as prosperously as could be

desired. Nevertheless, my ruined and lost state was my meditation day and night, which brought me down very low, and my distress kept increasing upon me; my natural strength was much abated, and extreme weakness of body succeeded; for the arrows of God stuck fast in me, and his hand pressed me sore, therefore I was feeble and sore broken, Psalm xxxviii. 2 and 8. In the month of November you came down to Leicester, and I heard you preach from these words, "Thou, which hast shewed me great and sore troubles, shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth; thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side, Psalm lxxi. 20, 21. Never was any thing more suitable to any one than this discourse to me in my then distressed state of mind; the things you brought forth were what I had felt, and I was a good deal relieved from the burden I had long laboured under, and felt encouragement to hope that he which had begun his good work in me would carry it on; for, although I was in such a state of confusion that I could make nothing of myself, yet, as you went on with your discourse, I could see that it was God's good work, and I was greatly helped, and for some time not so much bowed down as heretofore; but after a while I not only got back to my old place of darkness, confusion and misery, but sunk lower than ever; till, like Job, my soul was weary of my life, and

I went mourning by reason of the disquietness of my heart. This increased my weakness so fast, that I soon was in such a debilitated state as to be apprehensive it might terminate in my dissolution; and I was much cast down, through the fear of death and judgment to come. My sins were set in order before me, and God appeared as a swift witness against me. "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow, then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul," Psalm cxvi. 3, 4. I had no rest in my bones because of my sin, Psalm xxxviii. 3. The caul of my heart was rent, and I went in heaviness, meditating terror, "for the arrows of the Almighty were within me, the poison whereof drank up my spirits," Job vi. 4. God made inquisition for blood, and I knew that I was out of the city of refuge, Numb. xxxv. 6. And the avenger of blood was behind me; should death cut me off, as the tree falls so it lies: I was sensible that where death left me judgment would find me; and, if I died in the state I was then in, all would be lost for ever, and I should be "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power," 2 Theff. i. 9. These things were so weighty, that I felt myself incapable of transacting business, my mind being wholly engaged about them; and in that disconsolate

state I could pay but little attention to sublunary things; "For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?" Luke ix. 25. Many passages of scripture, which seemed to make against me, laid with very great weight upon my mind; and, amongst many others, I often thought of the fruitless cries of Esau, and frequently wept when thinking I should be like him: the words also of our Lord were very cutting to me, "Every plant that my heavenly father hath not planted shall be rooted up," Matt. xv. 13. Thus my way was hedged up, and fear was on every side; for, look which way I would, there was no rest for the sole of my foot; my life hung in doubt; and I was filled with slavish and tormenting fear night and day, so that in the morning the language of my heart was, 'Would God it were even,' and at even I said, 'Would God it were morning,' for my sin was ever before me; and I found, as Paul says, that destruction and misery are in all the sinners ways, and the way of peace have they not known, Rom. iii. 16, 17. I was bowed down under the guilt of sin, and a sense of God's wrath. The heavens revealed my iniquity, and "I remembered God and was troubled; I complained and my spirit was overwhelmed," Psalm lxxvii. 3. So, that, as Job says, my words were swallowed up, Job. vi. 3; and I had sorrow in my heart daily; for God, conscience, the scripture, law,

and gospel, all appeared to be against me, for day and night his hand was heavy upon me ; and so distressed was I, that my days were sorrow, my travail grief, and my heart took not rest in the night, Eccl. ii. 23. I sunk in the deep mire, where there was no standing ; and, being in this perilous condition, I hastened my escape from the stormy wind and tempest, Psalm lv. 8. “ The captive exile hasteneth that he may be loosed, and that he should not die in the pit, nor that his bread should fail,” Isa. li. 14. My life was quite a burden to me, for I had no satisfaction in any thing beneath the sun ; and the comforter, which should relieve my soul, was far from me, Lam. i. 16. And so distressed was I, that for some time sleep almost departed from me ; “ Thou holdest mine eyes waking,” saith the Psalmist, Psalm lxxvii. 4. I used to think of, and long for, the experience of these words, every night when I retired to bed, “ Thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid,” Job xi. 19. But, so far, was I from this, that I was full of fear ; my fore ran in the night, and ceased not ; for, as Job says, “ When I consider I am afraid of him,” Job xxiii. 15. This my distressed state of mind brought me down so low, that I was almost worn out with trouble ; “ The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity, but a wounded spirit who can bear ? Prov. xviii. 14 ; and in such a weak and feeble state of body, that I was under the neces-

sity of having medical assistance. But the physicians knew no more of my disease than I understood of their medicine ; sin was the malady, and I felt its dreadful effects ; this fretting leprosy was broke out in every part ; so that, as the prophet says, from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds, bruises, and putrifying sores ; the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint ; and none but the good Samaritan, which is Christ Jesus, can bind up these wounds : he is anointed “ to preach the gospel to the poor, to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,” Luke iv. 18. He alone can heal a wounded spirit, as it is written, “ Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn and he will heal us, he hath smitten and he will bind us up ; after two days will he revive us, and the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight,” Hosea vi. 1, 2. But, as Christ says, “ No man can come to me except the father which hath sent me draw him ;” and so I found it ; for faith in him, as my Saviour and redeemer, was not then come ; I could no more believe than I could create a world ; but was “ kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed,” Gal. iii. 23 ; being bound in the prison house of unbelief, hardness of heart, and blindness of mind ; and it is



the Lord alone that can say to such prisoners, "Go forth; and to them that are in darkness, shew yourselves." Faith in him sets us at liberty from this prison; and it is his own power that effects this work of faith; "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent," John vi. 29. It is the Holy Spirit that must first melt the heart, soften the affections, work confidence in the mind, and draw the soul to him, before we can come in faith and affection. I was so gloomy and dejected, that my soul was weary of life, and my chief concern was to know how I could be saved. I was weary and heavy laden; weary of working for life, and heavy laden with sin; and whether God would shew mercy to one so vile as myself I could not tell. "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." But I had no power in myself to come to him. "No man can come unto me," saith the Saviour, "except it were given unto him of my Father," John vi. 65. I began to think that all was over with me, and that I could not obtain mercy; and, seeing that all was lost, I thought it was but of little use labouring for the body, as I had no other prospect before me but an eternity of misery; therefore I left my business, and retired to my room, to fret and mourn over my wretched fate. In this melancholy state of mind I sat me down in a chair, with as heavy a load as ever any poor mortal laboured under. I pitied myself, en-

vied every body, and heartily wished I had never been born: and whilst I sat in this miserable state these words came upon my mind, "The whole need not the physician, but they that are sick." Then, thought I, if this is the case, surely I am one that is sick; for I am sick of self, sick of the service of Satan, sick of sin, and sick of the world and all that is in it: I feel my need of the Saviour; and O that he would shew mercy to me! This scripture came also into my mind, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Then, said I, I am a sinner indeed, and have destroyed myself; and, as Christ came to seek and save the lost, I will call upon his name once more, and confess my faults before him. While doing this these words came sweetly into my mind, "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me," John xiv. 1. I felt a little relief, rose off my knees, and sat down to meditate upon the words. "Believe also in me," kept rolling over my mind, and I was led out to look to Christ, as the mediator and saviour of the lost; I felt that hardness of heart and desperate rebellion, under which I had laboured so long, in a measure to give way, and a hope rise up in my soul that the Lord would, sooner or later, have mercy upon me. I sensibly found a burden taken off me; and, instead of giving all up for lost, I felt encouragement to keep on seeking him, from whom I had deeply revolted.

Some time after this, being ordered to the sea, I purposed, in my way to Brighton, to stop in town to hear you; but, upon my arrival, finding you was gone to Lewes, I journeyed forward, and the next day arrived there, and that very night heard you preach from these words, "And the Lord was with Judah, and he drave out the inhabitants of the mountains, but could not drive out the inhabitants of the valley, because they had chariots of iron," Judges i. 19. This discourse was much blessed to me, and did me more good than all the medicine I had taken. It is hope being deferred that makes the heart sick; but, when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life. I was sweetly refreshed, my hope being strengthened and my faith increased. I had indeed been brought low, but the Lord helped me; and I received that hope and satisfaction which I never entirely lost sight of again; "Whatsoever God doeth it shall be for ever," Eccl. iii. 14. I heard you again the Sunday following at Lewes, and one evening in the Barn at Ringmer from these words, "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him," Psalm cxxvi. 6. And here I got another help in the way, and a light was thrown upon my path. The Lord will give strength to his people; "They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God," Psalm

lxxxiv. 7. In my way home I heard you several times in London, from which I reaped great benefit, and returned from this journey in every sense much better. The loins of my mind were girt up, and my health was much recovered, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing," saith David, "thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness," Psalm xxx. 11. And, although I many times after this sunk very low, and was much cast down, yet I had a hope at the bottom which I would not part with for all the world; though it was several years, from my first being quickened to feel my lost state, before I was brought to know my interest in the dear redeemer. Nevertheless, as saith the prophet, I was holpen with a little help, and the everlasting arms were underneath me; and the Lord kept me earnestly seeking his salvation, until he was pleased to cause me to return to my strong hold as a prisoner of hope, and my eyes beheld the King in his beauty. "Being confident of this very thing," says Paul, "that he, which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Philip. i. 6.

I have frequently been sweetly refreshed in our meeting for prayer, and reading the scriptures and your works; being comforted, strengthened, and encouraged; "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." And, although

this way of meeting together has been, and still is, despised by many, yet I have reason to rejoice, having therein received much good, and at times found him whom my soul loveth; "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," Matt. xviii. 20. The Lord hath condescended to meet with us; he has owned, honoured, and blessed us with his presence, and in the midst of all opposition has enabled us to stand fast, and to contend earnestly for the faith. And this work and this counsel, which I believe to be of God, all our opponents have never been able to overthrow; therefore they had better *desist from such an unholy war*, "*lest haply they be found even to fight against God*," Acts v. 39. I embraced every opportunity which offered in coming to town to hear you; and when you have been down in the North I have generally attended at every place where you preached. But to enter into particulars, by giving you an account of each time and place where God has blessed your ministry to me, of the many helps by the way, and the encouragement and strength I have received in hearing you at different times, might appear tedious; suffice it therefore to say, that I never came up to London to hear you, nor attended you in the country, without receiving some good, more or less; and have many times rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. The Lord's word does not return void, but accomplish that which

is pleasing to him, and prospers in the thing whereto he sends it ; “ He confirmeth the word of his servants, and performeth the counsel of his messengers.” Three or four times, when I came up to London to hear you, I have been much perplexed, sorely distressed, and under heavy afflictions; but I never came in vain. Once, during the time I was a married man, when no one I think was under heavier trials than I was, which my countenance fully proclaimed, I had a great desire to speak to you, and for that purpose went to the vestry at Monkwell street; but when I saw you I said nothing about my trials and afflictions, though you asked me what was the matter, and the cause of my looking so ill. The truth is, they were of so complicated a nature, and from such an unexpected quarter, that I was unwilling to enter into the subject. I have often found that, when under the heaviest trials, I have been afraid to speak of them, not knowing how the matter would end. Perceiving that I was much bowed down, you spake very kindly to me, though I came out of the vestry with a heavy heart, ready to break with trouble. I walked about, and wept much, having great sorrow in my heart; afterwards I went into the chapel, and you preached from these words, “ Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger,” Psalm viii. 2. What I heard

that night comforted me not a little, as you described the very feelings of my soul, and I was much relieved from my burden ; “ A gift in secret pacifieth anger, and a reward in the bosom strong wrath,” Prov. xxi. 14. And, though I was troubled on every side, yet I could see that I was not forsaken of God, but my hope was strengthened in him, that he would be with me and support me ; and I found him, as he hath promised, a present help in trouble. Unto God I committed my cause, and waited upon him, watching his hand ; the Lord sustained me ; and, though the trial was sharp, yet under God it worked for my good, and has been of great use to me since. My afflictions were many, but the Lord in his own time delivered me out of them ; it is God that avengeth me, and girdeth me with strength ; “ therefore bless thou the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.”

The next heavy trial was the division that took place in the church. After we had met together for some years hereby crept in amongst us. Oneismus came with his airy visions, and beguiled many unstable souls ; this enemy sowed his tares amongst us, and then went his way ; but after his departure the leaven which was communicated continued to ferment, and it was not long before it's dreadful effects were seen, as many amongst us gave heed to this seducing spirit, and soon shewed that they were subverted thereby ; so that

we found it to be as Paul says, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them," Acts xx. 30. Some withdrew, and set up for teachers, while others followed after them. "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for, if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us," 1 John ii. 19. Howbeit, though many were taken with his wild and extravagant notions, yet not all; for some stood fast in the truth which they had received, and withstood him, though he prated against our manner of worship with malicious words. John says that he had no greater joy than to hear that his children walked in truth; and Paul saith, "Now we live if ye stand fast in the Lord," 1 Theff. ii. 8. And some were enabled so to do; for, by what we had already experienced, we well knew that our way of assembling together was approved of God, and that what this deceiver brought forth was not according to the gospel we had received. The Lord had met with us and blessed us, therefore we knew that we had not followed cunning devised fables. An outcry was raised against reading other men's works, and preaching in general, without making any distinction between right and wrong; in short, every thing was found fault with, but nothing established; much confusion



wrought, and the greater part knew not for what they were come together ; for it was utterly impossible to know what was aimed at, as nothing but wind and confusion was brought forth. But some, who were like the Athenians of old, always fond of either telling or hearing some new thing, Acts xvii. 21, were much charmed, and were all alive ; and it was amazing to see how this strange fire spread itself amongst many ; it served as a fan, by which the floor was purged : when the chaff is blown away the wheat becomes more consolidated together ; “ There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest,” 1 Cor. xi. 19. There are some, Paul says, which received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved ; “ And for this cause God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie,” 2 Theff. ii. 11. They that cannot endure sound doctrine, after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears ; “ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables,” 2 Tim. iv. 4. Some there are, who are ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth ; and many there be who, when they hear, receive the word with joy ; “ and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in the time of temptation fall away,” Luke viii. 13. When men are puffed up, and become vain in their imagination, their foolish hearts are

soon darkened; and, when once they get wise above what is written, God soon makes them fools in religion; "They have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them?" Jer. viii. 9. These lack moisture, and therefore wither; "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived," 2 Tim. iii. 13. Paul says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him," Coloss. ii. 6. And he exhorts us, whereunto we have attained, to walk by the same rule and mind the same thing. When this wonder of wonders first appeared I begun to try his spirit, whether it was of God; for which purpose I brought what he advanced to the test of scripture and my own experience; and I perceived that what he brought forth was not agreeable either to the scriptures, or what God had taught me, and I believed he was an utter stranger to that power in which the kingdom of God stands. Paul says, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed," Gal. i. 9; and exhorts us not to give heed to seducing spirits, for by them the minds of many are corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, in the same way as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety. God is the author of peace, but not of such confusion as this man brought forth; he erred, not knowing the power of God; "Who-soever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doc-

trine of Christ, hath not God." "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." God has promised his holy Spirit to guide his children into all truth; "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him," 1 John ii. 27. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Paul laid the foundation as a wise master builder, and warns every man to take heed how he buildeth thereupon; "Now, if any man build upon this foundation, gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble." Here are two sorts of builders, and the materials are very different: one sort the fire will not burn, but refine; the other will be consumed by it. Sharp trials discover many that are not sound in the faith. It is one thing to receive the knowledge of the truth into the natural understanding, in the letter of it; and it is another to receive the love of the truth in the heart; and, when the fiery trial comes, by which every man's work is to be revealed, many fall away, the work is burnt up, and then it is made manifest of what sort it is. Many seem to run well for a time, and then draw back, and become so degenerate, that there is not a shadow of truth about

them; they go from a tolerably sound judgment into Arminianism, and sink into the worst of errors; and it is often seen that such are greater enemies to the vital power of godliness than they who have never made a profession; the scribes and pharisees were the worst enemies to Christ. The preaching of the gospel is compared to a net cast into the sea, which gathered of every kind; the servants did as they were commanded, and gathered together as many as they found, both good and bad, and the house was furnished with guests; but, when the king came, he discovered the man which had not on a wedding garment; while the good seed is sown by the servants of Christ, the enemy sows tares. Paul says, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour: if a man therefore purge himself from these he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work," 2 Tim. ii. 21.

It was some time after Onesimus came and introduced his wild ferment before the division took place; during which time we had to contend earnestly for the faith, and the contention was extremely sharp. Before they separated themselves from us I had two singular dreams, which made a great impression upon my mind; and, thinking them very significant, I wrote them

down, waiting and watching the end.—They were as follows: I dreamed that I was travelling in some very rugged roads, full of hills, that were of an amazing height; by the side of the hills there were great numbers of people, sitting upon seats, who seemed very attentive, as if listening to some one speaking: at a little distance off were a number of people with a great variety of articles to sell, which were all wearing apparel of different kinds; some looked like woollen cloth, and other pieces had the appearance of linen; many of them, as I passed on, asked me to buy: but I found fault with their articles; for, on examining a number of pieces, I could discern a thread of woollen mixed in them all, on which account I refused them. All the pieces that I looked at were woollen, or mixed with it, except one, which was a piece of fine wove filk: I examined it very minutely, and could discern no woollen in it; I therefore bought this piece, and yet paid nothing for it. I then went on over the hills, through the midst of a great number of people; and, as the roads were very bad, and many large stones laid in the way, it was with great difficulty I got along: and I had not gone far before I met a woman who much admired my piece of filk, and asked me to let her have a part of it; but I refused, telling her I should want it all for myself, and would therefore part with none. She said to me, ‘It is

a nice piece.' I told her it was, and that amongst them all there was not one like it. She then left me, and I journeyed forward till I got into some very rough and indifferent roads again, and at last came into a very large building, where there was a great number of people, some looking fat and healthy, while others appeared thin and very ill. As I stood in this place a man came up to me, and said I was wanted in a room up stairs; in my way there, it came into my mind that they wanted me to contribute to some one's relief; so I put my hand into my pocket, and took out three pieces of gold; but thought I would part with none till I knew to whom and what for. I then opened the door, and was greatly amazed; for in the middle of the room was a very large couch, full of men that lay in a very disorderly manner; some were dead, and others looked very ill, apparently at the point of death, with their mouths wide open, gasping for breath; and the visages of all were frightful to behold. As soon as I entered the room it came into my mind that these men were all professors of religion, who had swerved from their profession, and brought disgrace on the truth, on which account they were so afflicted, and visited with the judgments of God. I saw no one that spake, but heard a voice which talked with me. I inquired how it was that these men all came together; and was answered, that they came to see each other, and

that the disease was such, that, as soon as they entered the room, it seized them immediately, so that they could not get out again. I felt no fear of catching the disease, nor of death, nor had I any symptoms of it come upon me; but asked what I was sent for. The same voice answered me, that I was to join with another in prayer, that this disease might not spread itself farther, which appeared to be as destructive to mankind as the plague. I felt a good deal agitated in my mind, and a little afterwards kneeled down by the side of the couch: earnestly looking at them all, I perceived that some were quite dead; others, whose visages were very long and countenance pale, appeared so ghastly, that they were horrid to look upon; and a third sort appeared very sickly, though the infection was not so strong upon them. Whilst I was looking at the whole I perceived that there were some amongst them whom I knew; and I discovered several that attended our chapel, which so distressed me that I awoke out of my sleep.

A few nights after I had another dream, in which I came to a very large piece of water, the half of which was as clear as crystal, and the other half very thick and muddy. These waters were not at all mixed, but separated down the middle as straight as if by line; while I stood looking at the water I perceived that there were a number of men in it. I then drew nearer; and in the

part which was clean I saw several men swimming, very healthful and strong, and some whose bodies were partly in the clear water and partly in the muddy; these looked very sickly. Others again were in the water that was thick and muddy; these had been choaked with it, and were quite dead. The inference I drew from the dream was this: the clear water I thought to be the pure doctrines of the gospel; the men which were healthful and strong I judged to be such as would stand fast in the truth received; those which were partly in the clear water and partly in the thick I concluded would be tainted with the errors of this man, on which account they would be sickly for a time; and those dead in the muddy water I thought indicated that some would be so caught in these errors, that they would quite depart, and prove themselves to be dead while they had a name to live, Rev. iii. 1; being "men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith," 2 Tim. iii. 8. I told this dream to one who met with us (of whom I had a suspicion) and what I thought it signified; that there were certainly two sorts of people in the chapel, betwixt whom there was no union; that there were two spirits; and that it would end in a division. To which he answered 'God forbid,' and seemed to be quite shocked. I have often thought since of what Elisha said to Hazael when he told him of the



evil he would do to the children of Israel, &c ; and of Hazael's answer, " But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ?" 2 Kings viii. 12, 13. Yet afterwards he perpetrated the deed ; and this man soon after separated himself, than whom not one amongst all that went out from us, has shewn more enmity ; nor has any one sunk deeper into error, nor swerved farther from truth, than he has. When Judas had received the sop, he went out immediately. " Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him," John xiii. 31 ; and then he talked to the disciples. I am sensible that since the division we have had tenfold more of the power and presence of God with us than ever we had before ; therefore all has worked together for good : the hand of the Lord shall be made known towards his servants. Moses asked the Lord, " Wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight ? Is it not in that thou goest with us ? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth," Exod. xxxiii. 16. It is the presence and power of God being with his people which makes them to differ from all others. The goodness of the Lord is great to those that fear him, and he knows them that put their trust in him ; he hides them in the secret of his presence, and keeps them safely in a

pavilion from the strife of tongues, Psalm. xxxi. 20. The scripture says, the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead, Prov. xxi. 16; this is to the present verified in all that went out from us; for, although they have changed their opinions more than once, yet I know of no one among them that is not far enough off from truth; "They hold fast deceit, they refuse to return," Jer. viii. 5. And how awful is the state of every man who departs from the faith? "He feedeth on ashes, a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa. xlv. 20.

After a few years of prosperity, it pleased God that I should be exercised with a long and sore day of adversity, during which time I have had many things to consider of, and my afflictions have been many; nevertheless, the Lord has sustained me in every time of trouble; and, although I have been much cast down, yet not destroyed; though, like Hezekiah, I many times have said, "I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living;" and, like him, "I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will he break all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me," Isa. xxxviii. 13. When this fiery trial first began I was like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, and Satan was permitted to stir up all that was within, which is the

worſt of all ; and very obſtinate, froward, perverſe, and rebellious I was ; but I found it as the wiſe man ſaith, “ He that hath a froward heart findeth no good,” Prov. xvii. 20. And, as long as the fool’s lips enter into contention, ſtroke upon ſtroke muſt come, for unto the froward God will ſhew himſelf froward. It is by hard labour that the heart is brought down ; and, when the heart is humbled, and the puniſhment of our ſins is accepted, then the Lord appears propitious to us in his covenant. It appears that Hezekiah was lifted up, and then “ God left him to try him, that he might know all that was in his heart,” 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. And, had I never been tried in the way I have, I never ſhould have been acquainted with the evil of the heart as I now am. When it pleaſed God to try Job ſeverely, by taking away all his ſubſtance, he received this with great ſubmiſſion ; “ the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord.” But it is ſaid that after this Job opened his mouth, and curſed his day ; when Satan ſtirred up what was within, Job then ſhewed what was in the heart ; I have long laboured under a train of heavy trials ; and thoſe that I have had outwardly have oftentimes produced great fear within, as all things ſeemed to make againſt me, and I was troubled on every ſide ; look which way I would, the proſpect was gloomy. And I have many times been brought

into such a strait, that it appeared impossible I could escape; and, like Jehoshaphat, I have been at my wit's end. But the Lord never left me in a trying hour; for, when every other refuge failed; he always appeared in my behalf, and wrought deliverance in such a way and manner as I never could expect. I have been brought low, but the Lord has helped me; underneath have been the everlasting arms, and strength has been given equal to my day: the Lord is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working; he hath never left nor forsaken me; and, though often faint, he has always kept me pursuing: I have frequently been ready to give all up; which I certainly should, and have turned back in the day of battle, had not the Lord strengthened me, and kept me by his almighty power. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," Phil. i. 6.

You was once in the country when I was under very trying circumstances, and I heard you several times; many things which you then brought forth were very suitable to me, particularly a discourse you preached from Prov. viii. 20; "I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment, that I may cause those that love me to inherit substance; and I will fill their treasure." The word was attended with power, and much blessed to me; for I re-

ceived encouragement, strength, instruction, counsel, and comfort. My hope was revived, and my way cast up; for in treating of the way of righteousness, and the paths of judgment, you exactly described the feelings of my heart, and I found myself a good deal relieved from that anxiety and distress which then lay heavy upon me. The hand of God seemed to be gone out against me, as it went out against Naomi; and I laboured under great bondage, darkness, and fear; my soul being bowed down with affliction, so that I was “far off from peace; I forgot prosperity,” Lam. iii. 17. My grief was great, and my life bitter, and I said, with Jeremiah, “Surely against me is he turned; he turneth his hand against me all the day,” Lam. iii. 3. And I was in such confusion that I could not make what I experienced accord with the scripture, as many things seemed to clash, and Providence run counter to the promise; but I have since perceived that the Lord hath led me in a right way, and that “all the words of his mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them; they are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge,” Prov. viii. 3, 9. The first time Mr. Brook was down in this part of the country, I remember hearing him from Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12.—“He found him in a desert land, and in the waste-howling wilderness; he led him about, he

instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." His discourse I heard with great satisfaction, and what he brought forth from the scripture was suitable and profitable to me; for as he went on I could see the way in which the Lord had been leading me to humble me, and to prove me; and I hoped that God would sooner or later appear, and make darkness light before me, rough places plain, and crooked things straight. I felt my heart a little moved in gratitude to God that he had helped me thus far, and had hitherto supported me under all my troubles, and had kept me as the apple of his eye; "All his saints are in his hand, there is the hiding of his power." The Lord waters his vineyard every moment, and keeps it night and day. But to return; I had one continued succession of trials, troubles, and disappointments; so that I was frequently much cut up, and my soul discouraged because of the way, fearing that in this time of temptation I should wither for lack of moisture, and so fall away. But, blessed be the Lord, it was not so; he kept me by his power, and enabled me to feel after him, and with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord; "But ye that did cleave unto the Lord your God are alive,

every one of you, this day," Deut. iv. 4. All fulness is in the Saviour : he is our life ; and the seed of Jacob never fought his face in vain. He communicates grace and strength equal to the day ; " He giveth more grace," and has promised to him that hath more shall be given ; he strengthens the things that remain, which, according to our apprehension, are ready to die, and supplies, as we go on, all our wants out of the riches of his grace. " I am come," saith the Saviour, " that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," John x. 10. " Without me," says he, " ye can do nothing ;" and counsels us to abide in him, promising, " If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you," John xv. 17. And I bless his name for ever that he hath sustained me under every trial, and enabled me to wrestle with him in prayer, and prevail too, not suffering me to give him any rest till his righteousness went forth as brightness, and his salvation as a lamp that burneth : therefore I may say, with David, " I fought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my fears," Psalm xxxiv. 4.

When I came to Grantham to hear you in the year 1807, I was bowed down with trouble, till my spirit sunk within me, and, as Paul says, I seemed pressed out of measure, above strength ; and my countenance proclaimed to all who saw

me the disconsolate and distressed state of my mind ; what I suffered I can never express ; I felt as if the time was just at hand when all would be over with me, and that something would take place, to make manifest to all the awful state I was in. I thought that no one seemed to care for me, which added abundantly to my grief ;” “ I looked on my right hand and beheld, but there was no one that would know me ; refuge failed me ; no man cared for my soul,” Psalm cxlii. 4. In this state I went to the chapel on Sunday morning, and you preached from Habakkuk iii. 2. “ O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid ; O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years ; in the midst of the years make known ; in wrath remember mercy.” While you were speaking I found a very great change in my feelings, and was very comfortable ; the Lord’s presence was with me, and I had some little brokenness of heart before him ; but this was only the beginning of that which was afterwards to follow, for there were yet greater things in store for me. “ Ask, and ye shall receive,” saith the Saviour, “ that your joy may be full,” John xvi. 24. Before I left Grantham, on relating to you a few of the trials I had gone through, I remember that what you said to me was very encouraging, and your last words were, “ When submission to the will of God takes place, I have no doubt he will appear for you.” When I left



you to return home my heart was ready to break with a mixture of grief and joy. I had no expectations of hearing you again the following week ; but God's thoughts are not as ours, neither are his ways our ways ; wherever he intends to do his people good, something must occur to bring them there, as nothing can hinder his purpose ; " God will work, and who shall let it ? " Isa. xliii. 13. A way was opened for me to go to Newark, which I gladly embraced ; and on the following Sunday morning I found my mind more serene, calm, and quiet, than it had been for some time ; and in prayer I found nearness of access to the Lord, and a little enlargement : I was led out in great earnestness that the Lord would be with me to bless and comfort me ; and I felt a confidence spring up in my mind, and a persuasion in my heart, that God had heard, and would answer the petition that I had put up to him, to bless your ministry to me that day. " Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," Heb. xi. 1. And blessed, for ever blessed, be the Lord, he condescended to fulfil all my petitions, and attended his word with power to my heart, while you was speaking from Isa. xxxv. 3, 4.— " Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees ; say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not ; behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a re-

compence, he will come and save you." I may say with the Psalmist, "Now know I that the Lord saveth his anointed; he will hear him from his holy heaven, with the saving strength of his right hand," Psalm xx. 6. He strengthened me out of Zion; but what I felt I shall never be able fully to express; the God of hope filled me with all joy and peace in believing, that I might "abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost," Rom. xv. 13. While your doctrine dropped as the rain, and your speech distilled as the dew upon my soul; my beloved was come, and his reward was with him, and his work before him; the holy Spirit testified of him, and took of the things which were Christ's, and shewed them plainly unto me. And I felt in my soul such quietness, composure, tranquillity, and submission to the will of God, and such brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, together with such unction, power, rest, and peace, as I am not able to speak of; but I found that "Godly sorrow that worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of," 2 Cor. vii. 10. All my bondage, darkness, and fear, were gone; and I rejoiced in God, as the portion of my soul, who had reconciled me to himself by Jesus Christ; "For your shame ye shall have double, and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion, Isai. lxi. 7. All that I had suffered before was not worthy to be compared with that glory

which was now revealed ; “ Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee,” Isa. lx. 1. The Lord was the health of my countenance, he anointed my head with oil, and my cup ran over; my soul delighted itself in the Lord; and, as I said then, so say I now again, I would not take all the world for what I then enjoyed, and what I have many times experienced since; it is that which makes all things in this life sink into nothing. The price of wisdom is far above rubies, and in Christ we have all things richly to enjoy; “ The meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace,” Psalm xxxvii. 11; as it is written, “ The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever,” Isa. xxxii. 17. “ I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.” “ My fruit,” saith he, “ is better than gold, yea than fine gold, and my revenue than choice silver,” Prov. viii. 19. It is by the blood of the covenant God sends forth his prisoners out of the pit, wherein is no water, causing them to return to their strong hold, Jesus Christ, as prisoners of hope. The atonement being applied speaks pardon, peace, and reconciliation with God; whereby the conscience is purged from sin and dead works, truth makes us free, and the Spirit bears witness to our adoption, works faith in the heart, proclaims

our enlargement, and cries, Abba, Father. "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father," Gal. iv. 6. Our conscience beareth us witness in the Holy Ghost; and, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God," Rom. v. 1. The soul feels the blessed effect of this union; "I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me," John xvii. 23; and, being made an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ, I was enabled to approach him without wrath or doubting, perfect love having cast out fear and torment. This makes his service perfect freedom, and enables us to worship God in newness of the spirit, and to walk in newness of life. "At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you," John xiv. 20. Well might Paul call it a peace which passeth all understanding, and an everlasting consolation; for, while the soul feels this blessed earnest of its future inheritance, we are lost in wonder, looking forward to that felicity which will be enjoyed beyond this life, when we shall be filled with all the fulness of God. John, feeling the love which God hath to us, seems to want language to express it, and therefore says, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world

knoweth us not, because it knew him not. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is," 1 John iii. 1, 2. The Lord Jesus Christ made to me a feast of fat things, and of wines on the lees; and I drank and forgot my poverty, and remembered my misery no more. It was a day of release; and I, who had long been bowed down, labouring under heavy afflictions and sore trials, and had feared every day because of the fury of the oppressor, was bidden to go free; and I could then in my heart bless the Almighty for all the trials I had endured. It was one of the days of the Son of man; and how delightful it is to sit at his feet and receive such blessed portions as these! My heart, like David's, was fixed, trusting in God, while his lovingkindness and tender mercy, made known to me in a dear Redeemer, melted my soul in gratitude and thankfulness before him. Nay, so abundant was the revelation, that I well remember that at times, whilst I sat, I hardly knew where I was. I have frequently thought of Paul's words, "whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell, God knoweth; of such an one will I glory, though of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities;" this experience is a blessed reality, which no bond servant ever knew. "The servant knoweth not what his

Lord doeth ;” “ The world seeth me no more, but ye see me ; because I live, ye shall live also,” John xiv. 19. This secret is with the righteous, and it is those that love him whom he causes to inherit substance ; who with the heart believe unto righteousness, and with the mouth make confession unto salvation. “ Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness ; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation, and let righteousness spring up together ; I the Lord have created it,” Isa. xlv. 8. The kingdom stands in power, and not in word ; it is in righteousness, joy, and peace. “ He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself,” 1 John v. 13. “ And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true ; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ : this is the true God and eternal life,” 1 John v. 20. Paul says that “ No man knoweth the things of God but the Spirit of God ;” and the Saviour promises that he shall teach us all things ; “ It is the Spirit that searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God,” “ He shall glorify me,” says Christ, “ for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you ;” and this he does by revealing unto us his fulness and all-sufficiency, and his suitableness as the Saviour of the lost, by leading our souls to him, and revealing and making him known to us in

all his covenant characters, and in all his undertakings in our behalf; "who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," that Christ should be all in all; he testifies of him, applies the benefits of his death, and gives us to feel our interest in his blood and righteousness. His blood cleanseth from all sin, and in his righteousness we stand complete before God. These I believe are some of the things which accompany salvation, and God has said that "the path of the just is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto perfect day," Prov. iv. 18. And I bless the Lord that I find, as I go on, an increase of these things; fresh grace, light, and life, are communicated out of Christ's fulness; and there is a growing up into him in all things; as it is written, "Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Paul knew in whom he had believed, and John says, "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John i. 3. And in what I have now written I may say with David, "I have spoken of the things which I have made touching the King;" I am still exercised with many trials, and experience much tribulation; but this, saith our Lord, ye shall have. Nevertheless, in him I have peace; and, though *my trials are as heavy*

as ever they were, I find this difference—they do not cast me down as they did in times past; and though at times much perplexed, I am not in despair, for hope is as “an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, which entereth into that which is within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus,” Heb. vi. 20. And I find throughout, that, after having suffered awhile, God is pleased to strengthen, establish, and settle me, more and more;” “Wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation; the fear of the Lord is his treasure,” Isa. xxxiii. 6. A daily cross counterbalances the spirit of this world; “Every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit,” John xv. 2. “The Lord’s fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem,” Isa. xxxi. 9. Much furnace work causes self-examination, and a searching of things to the bottom; “He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness,” Mala. iii. 3. Paul says, “the fire shall try every man’s work, of what sort it is,” 1 Cor. iii. 13. And I find as I go on, that, although no chastening for the present is joyous, but grievous, yet it has been profitable unto me, and afterwards has yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness; and, though I have had sharp work of it at times, and



have felt much fear in time of trial, not knowing how the matter would end, yet "having therefore obtained help of God, I continue to this day," Acts xxv. 22; and am kept by his power; though sometimes I am in great heaviness, through manifold temptations, still all works together for good; "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt thou recover me, and cause me to live," Isa. xxxviii. 16.

I have lately had a good deal of furnace work, being sharply tried with many severe afflictions, which I think the Lord shewed to me beforehand, in a dream I had sometime ago, which I should not have inserted here, but that whilst writing it has occurred fresh to my remembrance, and immediately these two scriptures came upon my mind, "He that hath a dream let him tell a dream," Jer. xxiii. 28. "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not; in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumbering upon the bed, then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction," Job xxxiii. 14, 15, 16. In the night of June the 10th, 1809 I dreamed that I was in the greatest trouble, perplexity, and distress, weighed down with grief, and my burden appeared more than I could bear; I was so oppressed that I laid myself down, and so weary that I was unable to get on; (what I laid upon

seemed like a large couch.) While I was in this state a man came to me, and wished me to sing a hymn; I told him I was so distressed that I could not sing; but he pressed me so much, that looking at him, I said, if I sing a hymn, it must be this——

“ Much we talk of Jesu’s blood,  
But how little’s understood !  
Of his suffering so intense  
Angels have no perfect sense.  
Who can rightly comprehend  
Their beginning or their end ?  
’Tis to God, and God alone,  
That their weight is fully known.”

I could sing no more than this verse, my mind was so led out in contemplating the sufferings of Christ in the garden; and I felt such a sympathy with him in his sufferings for me, that I wept, and was quite overcome. After this I walked along some very beautiful fields, in sweet conversation with some one, though I know not who; but I was very happy. Soon after this I met with a particular friend, and began to tell him what I had passed through. Admiring the beautiful situation we were in, we talked very freely to each other. On looking forward I saw, at a distance from me, a large building, in a low valley, having the appearance of an old abbey. While directing my friend where to look for it, I cast my eyes still farther, and saw a man walking

along, on which I remarked, that that person looks like one who formerly attended at our chapel. He seemed to be very happy, quite full of comfort, and much elevated in his spirits; his countenance was rather pale, and his eyes looked extremely fierce; I therefore kept my eye fixed stedfastly upon him, watching his gestures and looks. As he approached the building a woman came and stood in the door place, and entreated him to go in, saying she had prepared a repast. He went in, and we saw him no more. She then looked at us, but we both turned away. After this there was brought to me a young girl dressed in long white robes, and the person who brought her began to extol her much, and seemed greatly to admire the finery she had about her, wishing me to notice it; but I was quite disgusted at her appearance, and spoke most vehemently against her clothing. I then went on, and came to a place which had the appearance of a barn floor, and by the side of it was a wall built, white-washed over with lime. A man stood at the end of the wall, recommending the wall and floor to my notice: I looked at them for a considerable time, and then told him that the floor was laid very smooth, but it was of no use, nor would the workmanship do. Seeing a man walking down the middle of it, I said to him, 'you had better not venture there; for, though the floor looks sound, there is danger: and, if you fall through,

underneath I see a deep pit, which if you get in, it will be a wonder if ever you come out again; you never can unless some one help you, for you cannot get yourself out.' I then said to the man by the wall, 'your wall is not upright, and reached a plummet that lay by me to measure it. Putting the line to it shewed that the wall was not upright; wherefore I said to the man, 'your work will not do;' on which he turned pale, and went from me in a rage, when the wall fell down; and immediately another man appeared before me with a piece of machinery upon the floor, and a smile on his countenance, entreating me to look at that (the man I had warned upon the floor stood by;) I looked at it, and said to the man, 'I am no mechanic, therefore it will never do for me to argue about machinery; but this will not answer the end for which it is designed.' I then saw in the inside a pair of grindstones, which lay very much aside, on which account I told him it could not be properly worked, and what was put in it would not be sufficiently ground; it must therefore be useless. While bearing my testimony against this work, there came a man up to me, who told me that I must leave them, and go and do business at a large furnace, which was a little distance from me. Giving me something he had in his hand to carry into the middle of it, I set off; but, there being much fire in the road, I turned back to go another way,

lest I should be burnt; and here I was worse off still, as liquid fire ran in every direction, which made me stand still, to see which way I could get. On looking a little to my right hand, I saw here and there a place free from fire, though but just room enough for me to pass. I then set off, and got to the place where I was directed without being burnt. When I came out of the furnace I seemed to have something to dispose of; and, as some very poor-looking people stood at a distance, I went and offered what I had to them: but most of them turned away, and rejected what I said; at which I was surprised, and told them that what I had to offer was much cheaper and better than the man's who had the machine. Passing on, I came to some rising ground, where I saw a few more people; very ragged and poor. To them I likewise offered what I had, and after a time they took some of me; for which however I received nothing, but walked about till I came upon a very high eminence, and was much dissatisfied that so many rejected what I offered them. From this spot I looked down, and perceived that the sea was by the side of the rock, and in the sea I saw something with a pair of wheels, and behind it a small boat, in which was a man; the wheels turned round with the greatest velocity, and it went through the sea as swift as the wind, and presently came to the place where I stood, and then rose up out of the water,

In a moment I was forced into it, and down it went again ; at first I was seized with great fear, thinking I was sure to be drowned ; but before I got to the water I saw a place for me to hold by, on which I laid fast hold, and my fears abated. As soon as I reached the water it went off as fast as I saw it before, and through the sea I went, hoping to get out on the opposite side : but no ! it turned with me back again ; and, when I had gone an immense way in the water, I came to the largest wheat stack I ever saw, which stood upon pillars. I begged so earnestly to stay by this stack of corn, and not to go any farther, that it waked me out of my sleep in great agitation, and in a few minutes after this scripture came upon my mind, “ When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee,” Isa. xliii. 2. Which kind promise has hitherto been fulfilled, for God hath been with me and supported me through all my afflictions, and he hath said, “ I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,” Heb. xiii. 5. So that we may boldly say the Lord is our helper ; “ Blessed is the man that endureth temptation, when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life,” Jam. i. 12. Grace and strength have hitherto been equal to my day, and all has worked together for my good ; “ The Lord is the

portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintaineſt my lot," Psalm xvi. 5. After Abraham had patiently endured he obtained the promise, Heb. vi. 15. The Lord will not forſake his people, nor does he willingly grieve nor afflict his children; but, as every man's work is to be revealed by fire, faith (like gold) muſt be tried; and Peter informs us what this furnace is intended for, "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt," 1 Peter i. 7. The Lord watcheth over his people for good, and he is nigh unto all that fear him; he keeps them night and day: and may the Lord enable me to ſtand faſt, to fight the good fight of faith, and to finiſh my courſe with joy; he is able to keep that we commit unto him againſt that day, and has promiſed to bring all his ransomed people to Zion; "Happy are the people that are in ſuch a caſe, yea bleſſed are the people whoſe God is the Lord."

Before I began to write this narrative I was quite at a loſs to know how to proceed, and as if I knew not where to begin, nor what to ſay; when this ſcripture came upon my mind, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghoſt, whom the Father will ſend in my name, he ſhall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatſoever I have ſaid unto you,"

John xiv. 26. And as I went on things came fresh to my mind, which when I had time I wrote down, and the promise was fulfilled, "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you." Formerly, when I was under heavy and grievous trials, I used to look at them as coming in anger and in a vindictive way, which sunk me very low: but now, blessed be God, I am enabled to view them differently; "Thou shalt also consider in thine heart that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee," Deut. viii. 5. And I believe the intention of the Most High, in all the sufferings that I have had to this day, has been to humble me, to prove me, and to do me good in my latter end; "all that I love," saith the Lord, "I rebuke and chasten." God will visit sin with the rod; but he hath promised, saying, "My lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail; my covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips," Psalm lxxxix. 33, 34.

I bless the Lord, and rejoice in my heart to hear of your success in bringing souls to Christ Jesus, the only friend of lost, helpless sinners. "He that is our God is the God of salvation." God Almighty be with and bless my dear friend, more and more, whom he hath been pleased to make the instrument of bringing to my heart the glad tidings of his most blessed salvation.



Many I know have consulted to cast him down from his excellency ; but in this they have failed, and brought ruin upon their own heads : none ever fought against God and prospered. “ He that receiveth whomsoever I send,” saith the Saviour, “ receiveth me.” The Lord’s hand is made known towards his servants, and his indignation towards his enemies : the counsel of the wicked he bringeth to nought. “ So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord ; but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might,” Judges v. 31.

Most affectionately yours,

JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN.

To Mrs. BERRY, Greek Street, Soho.

DEAR FRIEND,

By particular desire I take up my pen, though in a very unfit state, being weak in body, and dark, barren, and lifeless in soul, but hope it will not be so long; for we are told that "weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." I have been till within this last month kept nearer to the Lord, and have had greater liberty with him in prayer, than I ever had before, which makes me more sensibly feel my deadness; but believe I shall soon be delivered from it. Hope, ere this, the Doctor is recovered of the illness you mentioned in your last; not only for the good of God's church and people, but to expose those heretics that write or preach against so faithful and valuable a servant of the Lord as he is, of which we have had a recent witness in our own family. It is by the desire of my sister Gardner, of Bodicott, that I now write to inform you of the dealings of God with her soul, thinking you might sometime or other communicate the same to Mr. Huntington. Had it been in her power, she would have immediately sent him the whole account herself; but

she says, that words cannot express the unutterable love she feels towards him. She has for many years been a sincere seeker of the Lord Jesus Christ, and almost as long an admirer of Mr. H. and a constant reader of his works; and very great establishment she has derived from them, which she has often told me, and declared, that, if that dear man of God (meaning Mr. H.) was right, so was she.

I was at Bodicott about a month before Christmas, when she appeared in great distress of soul, and complained that her temptations were very great, and of a different kind to any that she had ever experienced before; 'for,' continued she, 'I always from a child had very high and exalted thoughts of the Saviour; but now they are so mean, so base, and so blasphemous, as to make my blood rankle in my veins.' And she wept like a child; it grieved me to the very soul to see her in such a state.

At Christmas I saw her again, when she appeared more composed, as the temptation, though not removed, was much weakened, from the effects of a letter Mr. H. had sent to a Mr. Cort of Leicester, in the Second Part of 'The Love of Christ,' where he is speaking of the agreement or bargain of the sinner, under his first conviction, with the Lord, and how Christ makes and takes them at their word. She derived much comfort from it, and it was the constant

language of her heart, for a long time, that this was true ; and she seemed very impatient to see a book entitled ‘ The Heavenly Workfolks,’ saying she did not want any other entertainment during the Christmas than the reading of that book, having a firm persuasion in her own mind that, if she could get a sight of it, she should be set at liberty ; in which, blessed be God, she was not disappointed. When I visited Banbury, finding the book was published, I took the earliest opportunity of sending it to her. On the sabbath before I received your letter, I was with her again, when she gave me such a sweet account of her deliverance as it is not in my power to describe. In reading the latter part of the book her temptations, distress of mind, hard thoughts of God, and fears of death and damnation, all fled, and such love, joy, and liberty, flowed in as no tongue can express, and such as she never expected to enjoy till within a few hours of death ; and which, though so long ago, still continue with her. She said to me, ‘ Were I to die this moment, I have no more doubt of my safe arrival in glory than if I was already there.’ I saw her again the last Lord’s day, when she told me that her joys were not so great, but her assurance was still the same ; though Satan suggests to her that it is all a delusion, and that if Mr. H. was to see her he would call her a hypocrite ; but, finding this to have no effect, he tried to per-

suade her that she was an idolater, and that she worshipped the Doctor instead of God : this, however, had no more weight with her than the former, as she knew from what quarter it came, and that the penny was still the same. She longs much to see and converse with Mr. H. for she says, ‘ It is impossible for him to have one natural or spiritual child on earth that has a greater affection for him than herself.’ I was also much benefitted in reading the same book. Oh, my dear friend, how highly are you favoured in sitting under so sound and experimental a minister ! I should look upon it, next to the salvation of my soul, as the greatest blessing I could enjoy.

Please to give our love and respects to Mr. Berry, and all friends, and accept the same yourself. I hope you are all well, and that your sister is recovered from her late confinement. I should be happy to see any of you whenever convenient.

Believe me to be

Your sincere friend,

A. H.

Clattercott,  
March 21st, 1810.

To the Rev. W. HUNTINGTON.

Lombard Street, 3d July, 1810.

REV. AND DEAR SIR,

As it pleased God to make you instrumental in calling my departed wife to the saving knowledge of God, and as it was her wish that I should inform you of the state in which she departed, I hope you will excuse my troubling you with this short account of her.

She remained quite ignorant and unconcerned about the state of her soul till she was about twenty-two years of age, which was about thirteen years ago ; when, one Sunday afternoon, after she had been spending the fore part of the day with worldly people, having been always subject to ill health, and experiencing many disappointments, she was led to reflect on the vanity of all worldly things, and found immediately her heart going out after God, and wondered at his goodness in sparing her so long. She directly set out to go to Surrey Chapel, for she found a different influence to what she ever had before. The minister, Mr. Jay, took these words for his text, " Behold, I stand at the door and knock ; if any man hear my voice, and open to me, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

These words struck her very forcibly, and she wondered what it could mean, as she understood not one word of the sermon; but the text still abode with her; and from that day she found a great deadness to the world, and was enabled completely to turn her back upon it, and found a great love to reading her Bible, and being alone. She was very diligent in hearing preaching at Surrey Chapel, and attending at the morning prayer-meetings; but spoke to nobody. She went on thus for several weeks, and was quite happy, longing to die and be with God.

A friend of hers, who formerly lived with her in the same family, and upon whom God had begun his own gracious work, hearing that there was something of a change in her, advised her to come under your ministry, which she accordingly did; and, though that comfortable influence she was at first under began gradually to wear off, yet she found a great attachment to your ministry, and closely attended it, without reaping any visible benefit for seven years. But during this time, as she since informed me, she had much working in her mind at times, as she could plainly see, and heartily believed, that there was a reality in religion which she had never experienced, and often used to be saying, she hoped she should never pretend to any thing farther than what she felt, for she would sooner die in the state she then was than be a hypocrite.

About this time it pleased God to enlighten her mind a little into what you used often to be insisting upon at that time, which was the necessity of life, and that every thing short of that would come to nothing. Upon this one thing she directly set her heart; and used often to say she was convinced, if she had that, every thing else would follow. And now she began to be exceedingly anxious to hear at every opportunity; but used to say when she came home, 'Life is not come to me yet, and I begin to fear it never will.' On Sunday evening, February 3, 1805, she set out for chapel much discouraged, as she was far advanced in pregnancy, and thought it would be nearly the last time she should be able to go, as we lived then nearly four miles off. On her way to chapel she began to reflect on the state she was in, how long she had heard the word, and what difficulties she had laboured under, and was as far from what she wanted as ever. She then began to appeal to God, that she had waited on him with a real desire to find life, and had been disappointed; that he knew she could do no more than she had done. She reached chapel with great difficulty, sat down before service began, and found a great despair come over her mind, and concluded, with much reluctance, she would give up coming, for it was all in vain; life was all she wanted, and she found she could not quicken her own soul. However, she thought



within herself, as this would perhaps be her last time of hearing, she would pay all possible attention to the sermon.

The text you took was from Acts xvii. 26, 27. "And hath made of one blood all nations of men, for to dwell on all the face of the earth; and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us." She felt nothing at the first part of the sermon, though she paid great attention, till you began to speak upon seeking the Lord, and feeling after him; and then she began to feel a power which she had never felt before. She said that every word, to the very end of the discourse, agreed with her feelings; so that when you had done she scarcely knew where she was, being so lost and swallowed up with the power she felt, particularly when you was speaking upon feeling for God, and his being not far from such. In that part you were led to speak largely upon the text which first struck her mind the day she went to Surrey Chapel, "Behold I stand at the door and knock, &c." 'I knew,' said she, 'I was trying to open to him just as Mr. Huntington described.' She returned home, without speaking to any one, in great agitation, and desired me not to speak to her. 'Why not,' said I? 'Dont speak a word,' said she. I re-

plied, 'You have got the prize; I know you have life.'—Dear sir, I must here inform you that, when my wife went out that night, I felt much for her after she was gone, knowing how poorly she was, and how low she seemed in her mind. As soon as I could I retired in private, to entreat the Lord to strengthen her, and protect her safely back again; when all at once I was led with such energy to beg that the word might be made effectual to beget life in her soul, and was so persuaded that it would, that I waited with the greatest anxiety for her return, and should have been much disappointed had it not been the case. But blessed, for ever blessed, be the Lord, I had a full answer to my prayers, and much enlargement of soul that night—I shall never forget it.

From that moment till the day of her death, it might truly be said of her, that she gave all diligence to make her calling and election sure. She had immediately the Spirit of grace and supplication poured out upon her, and I know she found great nearness to God in private prayer.—The word of God, which had all the while till now been as a sealed book, began to be opened to her; and I really could but wonder at the progress she made, and so do many others now, who could see God's good hand towards her.

I could mention many sermons which God made a great blessing to her, but am fearful I shall be tedious; only I must here observe, that

the book entitled "*The Destruction of Death,*" &c. she prized next to the Bible, it was so blessed to her, as far as she could then go with it. She was naturally of a quiet disposition, and had but little to say in conversation; but was very observant of the blessed Spirit's operations on her own soul; and in about eighteen months time was brought to enjoy so much of the love of God, and could speak with such a favour and certainty about it, as made several good people greatly to admire God's goodness to her.

Her desire to hear the word was always very great; and, though our little family was at times a great hinderance, yet she embraced every opportunity, both winter and summer, and all weathers, which I believe was the means of hastening her death in the end, for she was seldom free from colds, which at last settled on her lungs, and brought on a gradual decline, for the last two years. On Sunday, the 4th of March last, she set out for chapel very weak, saying she would try her strength once more. With great difficulty she got up; but on her return, coming down Holborn, she stood still to let a coach turn up Hatton Garden, when a drunken man ran with full force against her, and beat her with great violence under the horses; and the wheel is supposed to have passed over her shoulder, which dislocated it, and bruised her head. She was brought home to me in a coach. The doc-

tor set her shoulder, and said he hoped she would soon do well : but, when he came to see her the next day, he told me not to flatter myself, for she would not live long—she might do well with respect to her hurt, but her lungs were quite gone; which was a great blow to me.—This Providence seemed rather staggering to us both; she was at first exercised with much spiritual desertion; but it pleased God, after about a month, to visit her again with much of his presence, and then she talked much of his goodness to her. She now read “The Destruction of Death” over again, saying, she could now follow Mr. Huntington to the very end of it; and that she had been enabled to exercise every grace therein mentioned, and had certainly found life at different times in them all. She had not the least fear of death, but often longed earnestly for it. In her illness she once dreamed that she was at chapel, and saw a small shock of corn, which grew right under your pulpit; and that it was so ripe and brown, it only wanted to be cut down. In relating it she said, ‘I know what it means.’

She was exercised at times with much spiritual desertion, which taught her how dependent she was on the blessed Spirit for every drop of consolation: but she said, ‘He still leaves his witness, at the worst of times, to the reality of his own work, and I am not at all afraid of coming short at last.’ She called me to her a little be-

fore she died, and desired me to give her kindest love to you. ‘Tell him,’ said she, ‘I am a witness of the truth of his doctrine, let others say what they may; and it will do for me to die by.’ She was continually inquiring after Mr. Jenkins’s welfare, his letters having been very useful to her at times.

A little before she died she told me, one evening, that she had had such a visit from her dear Saviour, that he had been with her all that day, and such sweet familiarity she had enjoyed, that she could not describe it, and desired me to read the Song of Solomon all over to her.

She found much of the path of tribulation all through her walk, and was deeply exercised with the plague of the heart, and acknowledged that she found corrupt nature just as bad to the last; that she had not one good work to plead, but found herself to be just such as the Saviour promises to save; that she never was suffered to lay a presumptuous claim on him, nor exceed what God had himself done for her, and now found her claim stood fast in the day of trial. She suffered much in body, and was not expected to live one hour after another for the last month. But three days before her death she was delivered of a child, which lived about thirty hours: from that time she could scarcely speak, but retained her senses to the last, and died in sweet peace on Monday the 18th of June, in the 36th year of her

age, and was interred on the Saturday following, at her own request, in Bunhill Fields, where a few that loved her met and sang a hymn over her.

She had a short interview with you about a year ago last February at the vestry, when you cordially received her. She told you then that we lived at Lambeth, in the same house with Benjamin Thatcher.

Pray, Sir, excuse the liberty I have taken; and may the Lord still continue to comfort and support you,

Prays your much indebted friend

And well-wisher,

ROBERT EEDES.

THE END.

