

SURREY TABERNACLE PULPIT.

GREAT MERCY.

A Sermon

BY MR. JAMES WELLS.

“For thy mercy is great above the heavens.”—PSALM cviii. 4.

THIS is a mode of speech denoting the incomprehensible greatness of the mercy of the Lord ; that as we cannot see through the starry heavens with our natural eyes, as that is the boundary of our natural vision, so the mercy of the Lord goes beyond that. This language, therefore, is to remind us that the mercy of the Lord goes beyond our thoughts, beyond our comprehension, beyond our apprehension ; “Thy mercy is great above the heavens : and thy truth reacheth unto the clouds.”

The “clouds” here, figuratively taken, may refer to those darkening and discouraging circumstances over which we have no control, and which circumstances have seemed sometimes, not only to obscure the prospects of the Lord’s people, but to threaten their destruction. But the truth of God, in its promises and in its power, “reacheth unto” all these clouds, and so orders them as to make them subservient to the carrying on of the work of God and to the bringing about of the revelation of his glory ; fulfilling that great scripture, that these clouds, while they are, as it were, over our heads, or beyond all power of human control, are nevertheless the dust of his feet, “who hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm.” His mercy is the great remedy for all troubles and diseases, being “great above the heavens : and his truth reacheth unto the clouds.”

The Psalmist commences this Psalm by saying that his “heart is fixed.” Now the word “fixed” here signifies prepared : “My heart is prepared ; O God, I will give praise unto thee.” Now the heart being prepared means that the ample provisions of his mercy were those things of which the Psalmist felt his need, and of which the Lord brings his people to feel their need. By keen exercises of mind from time to time, to show us what we are as sinners, we become increasingly willing to receive his truth ; and in this way the heart is prepared to receive the truth—prepared to crown the

great Redeemer "Lord of all." Now, then, this fixedness of heart does not mean that the mind never wavers ; it does not mean that we do not undergo mutations every day : but it means that the heart, once prepared for this great work, is prepared for ever. Whenever, then, God has prepared a man to ascribe all the glory to his grace, and nothing but his grace, that preparation may be hindered as it regards the exercise of it, but the existence of it can never cease ; the people once "made willing" are "made willing" for ever ; and whatever disturbances transpire among and between the people of God, as they pass home to glory, if, when we arrive, it were possible (which it will not be) to bring up one of those little differences, we should say, "That day is gone and past, and the differences are gone with it ; the darkness is for ever fled, and the true light now shineth." We shall see what we are, and where we are ; what we have around us and before us, and what we have to do ; we shall commit error no more for ever. Therefore we have but one straightforward business—to go on glorifying God, who is the author of this great, this eternal mercy.

Now, then, we notice this scripture under two ideas : first, the greatness of his mercy in its interposition ; secondly, in its source, by which its continuation is certain.

I. Now, first, interposition. "Thy mercy is great above the heavens."

Now in this interposition notice, first, the putting away of our sins ; and in each of the departments we are about to notice, I think the language will fully apply, that "his mercy is great above the heavens." I know I might talk to you here of the freeness of it and the sovereignty of it, keeping in the track of commonplace thought ; but through mercy you are established in those things ; therefore I shall not notice them, but just notice the subject as I have placed it before you.

Well, now, in putting away our sins, there is a fourfold putting away of them, and in each case the mercy of the Lord appears in its greatness. The first is, taking our sins from us and putting them to the account of the Lord Jesus Christ. Now we well know that this was purely and exclusively the work of the Lord our God, taking all our sins away from us, and setting them to the account of the Lord Jesus Christ. On account of this great act—for this is the way that God our Father interposed for us,—on account of this great act the Saviour is said to be the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Therefore if it be asked how God our Father has interposed for us, we tell you this is the way ; that he did interpose for us by taking all our sins from us, and laying them upon his dear Son, and by the work of his dear Son justifying, accepting us ; having not one

thing against us, but having infinite realities for us ; making everything through time subservient to the bringing us into possession of those things which he has for us. This is one view of putting away sin. And indeed this doctrine, I cannot but say, was somewhat more important—at least in my opinion—in the estimation of the Old Testament saints than in the day in which we live. Now we live in a day when there is comparatively little said about this. Now let me just remind you of the position of the Old Testament saints as without this doctrine. They might speak thus :—“ Where are our sins ? Not put away, for Christ is not yet come. Where are our souls ? Not yet redeemed, for Christ is not yet come. Where are our persons ? Not actually justified—(that is to say, mind you, the righteousness not yet actually wrought out, by which we are to be justified). Where are our prospects ? Not founded upon the actual accomplishment of the work of Christ, for it is not yet accomplished.” Where, then, was their resting-place ? Why, in this great fact, that all their sins were laid upon the person of the great Redeemer ; and they knew that they had standing for them a Divine Redeemer, a Divine Substitute, who is called in the Old Testament Jehovah. They never dreamt of disputing the actual and eternal Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ ; they never dreamt of a begotten Divinity, or of a pre-existing soul. They were accustomed, and that constantly, to call the great Redeemer Jehovah throughout the Old Testament. They knew that Jehovah the Father had set all their sins to the account of Jehovah the Son ; and they knew this glorious Person, being one with the eternal Father, in every sense of the word, there was no danger but that their sins would continue to his account, until he should come in the fulness of time, should finish transgression, make an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness. If you take away this great doctrine of ancient—I had almost said eternal—imputation of sin to Christ from the Old Testament saints, why, they would have had no gospel. They had to trust God for the whole of it. There was no Redeemer come yet.

So then, I say, this doctrine was important to them. Is it less important to us ? No, if we are rightly taught that God the Father is to be loved, admired, and esteemed by us, on account of what he has done. May the Holy Ghost, in his mercy, increasingly make known to us what he has done, and then God our Father will be dear to our hearts. He never had a thought against us, and he never will. The thoughts of his heart are to all generations, and his counsels stand for ever. Now, then, this is one idea of sin being put everlastingly away. This is the grand turning point, to see that God be our all in all.

Then the Lord Jesus Christ in the fulness of time interposes.

And here there are two things. The first is, that Jesus Christ never confessed a sin or infirmity of his own ; and the reason was, because he had none. And the second is, that he never once complained that all our sins were laid to his charge. He never complained. So far from complaining of this—as it was the will of God the Father that he should terminate our sins and save our souls—so far from complaining, he said, “It is my meat to do the will of him that sent me ;” “I delight, O God, to do thy will ;” I glory in making known what thou hast done ; I glory in unfolding these eternal solemnities. He had no sin of his own ; yet he never complained to God the Father because our sins and our sorrows were laid upon him.

Interposition ! God having thus interposed, who could disannul the great purpose of his heart, and turn him back in the mighty operations of his power ? Oh ! then, “Thy mercy is great above the heavens.” Are we great sinners ? Has the Lord shown us this, made us feel this ? and do we feel this ? If so, nothing but such a gospel as this can meet us in our necessities, deliver us from our fears, or give us any hope in or access to a God of infinite purity and perfection.

And now, thirdly, in the power of it. The Holy Ghost interposes ; and the Holy Ghost begins at the root. He comes to a man, and he finds that man a liar—and he writes the truth in that man’s heart, and makes him a man of truth. “Let God be true, and every man a liar.” There is the man, false ; his heart full of contradiction to the Lord’s truth, full of contradiction to the Lord’s ways, full of contradiction to the Lord’s eternal glories. Now the Holy Ghost makes the man feel that he is a poor, vile, helpless, miserable creature, and he begins to do what he has never done before in his life. What is that ? say you. Why, to speak the truth. The man never told God before that he felt himself to be a sinner, as vile as he feels himself now. He says, “O Lord, I am a sinner. ‘Behold, I am vile.’ Behold, Lord, I am but dust and ashes. Behold, Lord, my supposed strength is weakness, my supposed comeliness turned into deformity, and rottenness entered into my bones ; and, Lord, I am worse than nothing, the vilest wretch that ever was.” He begins to speak the truth now. I say, he begins to speak the truth ; and as he finds God is a God of truth, he loves to hear the truth. He says, “O Lord, if thou hast not treasured up any mercy for a poor worm, I shall have none.” He begins to speak the truth. He says, “Unless Christ died for me, and has wrought out eternal redemption for me, I shall be the slave of sin and Satan, and feel thy vindictive wrath through eternity.” The man begins to speak the truth. He says, “Lord, unless thy

mercy reaches further than my sins, I shall never obtain pardon, any access to thee, any shedding abroad of thy love. I feel utterly unable to do any of these things, or to make any way towards it." Why, the man is doing what he never did before in his life—he is telling the truth. The devil was "a liar from the beginning;" and as this old adversary, the devil, loses his hold, the man can no longer be kept telling lies against God. Oh! gladly would your adversary hide from you the disease; gladly would he hide from you the wickedness of your hearts; gladly would he hide from you the desperate condition which you are in by nature; gladly would he hide from you the unfoldings of the book of eternal life; gladly would he hide from you the nothingness of all those false systems; but when God opens the eyes, what can shut them? When he says, "Live!" who can effectually say, "Thou shalt not live"? When he by his word giveth light, who can obscure that light effectually? And when the Lord says, "Loose him, and let him go," who can hold back? And when the Lord works the truth in, who can work it out? Oh! then, may we ask, if the mercy of the Lord in this important matter be not also great? Was it not a great mercy to have our sins laid on the dear Mediator? Is it not a great mercy that this glorious Person came to put our sins away by his great atonement? And is it not a great mercy for you and me to be among that few who are brought to a knowledge of the truth, and then by grace made to abide therein? I need not remind you here that the character of the Lord's people is described as being the very opposite to that of "liars;" and therefore "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth." The reason why people go on in error is because they like it. The reason why people go on in the truth is because they like it. But do we love the truth? Yes, to be sure we do. God has made us loathe our sins, and love his eternal truth. "Thy mercy is great."

Now there is another part of the interposition, upon which I shall not attempt to say much; and that is the annihilation of sin itself—the annihilation of sin itself, bringing us into such a position as to make it utterly impossible, when sin is annihilated, that we should ever sin again to all eternity. Wherein, then, lies the impossibility of saints sinning when they get to heaven? When you and I get to heaven, wherein will lie the impossibility of our ever committing sin again? "Oh!" say some, "in the preserving power of God." That is true, but that is no explanation. "Oh!" say some, "we shall be holy and righteous, and have no temptation to sin." So were the angels holy and righteous; yet that was no security. Well, then, where is the secret. We will tell you; we will illustrate it by the best example.

Wherein lay the utter impossibility of the manhood of Christ committing sin? Not in itself considered; no, the utter impossibility of the manhood of Christ committing sin lay in this one thing,—in its oneness with the eternal God. The manhood dwelt where it was impossible that it should commit sin; it dwelt in God, and God in that, and this mutuality of inhabitation made it impossible that sin should ever gain entrance in his human nature, or he ever commit the shadow of a sin. Well, then, here is the explanation; God will dwell in his people in a way that he never did in angels or in Adam and Eve; we shall dwell in him; and this mutuality of inhabitation will make it impossible that we should ever commit sin, and that to all eternity; because God dwelling in us and we in God, before our minds can be brought into a wrong position, God must cease to dwell in us, and we must cease to dwell in him, neither of which can take place. The devil, therefore, before he can get us into sin in heaven, must get God into sin; and I hesitate not to say, that so far from the infernal system of Irvingism being true (I mean that part of it which charges the manhood of Christ with peccability), why, the devil must first get the eternal Godhead of Christ into sin before he can get the manhood into sin. His safety lay in his eternal Godhead. And oh, then, thy mercy is great in laying all our sins to Christ's charge; thy mercy is great in putting those sins away; thy mercy is great in the entire annihilation of our sins, with the utter impossibility of their ever returning to us, or of our ever returning to them.

Perhaps I may be speaking to some this evening who came up thinking that they were so carnal, so vile, so dead, so wretched, that they could hardly hope. Well, are you bad enough to need this mercy? If you know your need of it, and God be true, he hath said, "The expectation of the needy shall not always be forgotten." He may seem to forget you now for a time, but he has his eye upon you, and his heart upon you, and you will not always be forgotten. No; the sighing of the prisoner shall not always be neglected. There is a set time; and he will be sure, in the right time, to show the greatness of his mercy by his dear Son, in sweet accordance with all the glorious perfections of his nature.

Well, then, another idea, though included in this, is assimilation to our Lord Jesus Christ; but upon this we shall not enlarge.

But we notice two ideas in this, not only interposing and putting away our sins, but interposing and supplying from time to time all our need.

Here, then, appears also the greatness of mercy. We shall never get away perhaps from these two sides of the question as long as we live. On the one hand, he trieth the righteous. "This is not your

rest, it is polluted." But for all those trials I would not give up my religion for ten thousand worlds; I would not give up its pleasures for all the pleasures that the world can afford. And the adversary sees the change, and he marks it; and by and by another cloud comes over. The enemy sees you baffled; he claps the shackles on again. You get into the stocks again. And thus you go on; sometimes hoping, and sometimes fearing; sometimes giving up all, and sometimes declaring that you would not give up for ten thousand worlds; sometimes thinking that you could give ten thousand worlds for Christ, and sometimes feeling as though you could hardly give a straw for your religion. Such poor creatures are we. And yet, through all these dangers and exercises, what becomes ultimately endeared? This great truth, that the Lord (in opposition to our badness)—that the Lord is good, and that his mercy endureth for ever. "Thy mercy is great above the heavens." Surely he will not leave you nor forsake you. I do not like to say anything discouraging to you; but if you think you are going to finish your journey very comfortably, I believe you are much deceived.

"More the treacherous calm I dread
Than tempest bursting o'er my head."

I would rather be driven to and fro like an autumnal leaf—I would rather be staggering to and fro, with sore trouble, like a drunken man,—I would rather be tossed with temptation to the skies, or be dashed to the bottom of the sea, than be left to carnal ease. I know that these things are rather rough, but then they are profitable. Therefore said one of old, "These things are, for the present, grievous; but they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby." The Lord will not allow an enemy to assail you which he has not and will not conquer. He will not allow any obstacle to lie in your path, which he will not in his own time remove. Therefore "Thy mercy is great above the heavens." His mercy is like himself.

Well, then, his interposition in putting away sin, and his interposition in abiding by us temporally, and abiding by us spiritually. The Lord's mercy appears also in the glory that shall be revealed. But for me to attempt to meddle with that would not be wise; because the glory to be revealed infinitely surpasses all the ideas which we can form of it at present. Now the apostle heard unspeakable words; and I have sometimes thought, if the language in which glorified saints speak to each other be a language so great and noble as to render it impossible for mortal tongue to articulate it—if their words have such a pleasing power, and convey such a vast variety of idea—if their language be unspeakable, what must be the theme of their language! what must be the circumstances with which they

are surrounded, and the glory with which they are filled! We must die to know. Therefore I will not now enlarge upon it.

II. Having glanced at the Lord's interposing for us, we now come, in the second place, to the source of the mercy, by which its continuation is certain.

Now the source is himself—God, in his self-existence. This is one idea—the source self-existence: “from everlasting.” We cannot comprehend it. And indeed, if it came within the range of our comprehension, it would be infinitely inferior to what it now is. “From everlasting:” having no beginning, is a great mystery; but if it had a beginning, it would be a very gloomy thing. And therefore, while it is incomprehensible to us, there is something very pleasing in the fact of our God being self-existent. It is utterly impossible that he, by any means or under any circumstances, should become dependent. And he has placed us in such a position, that it is utterly impossible that we should become dependent, in the ultimate sense of the word, upon any but himself. Well, then, this mercy can never fail by becoming dependent; because our Lord is everlastingly independent. He has created all the worlds; and (if I may so speak) he sits down and sees them roll at his feet. He is not dependent upon them, but they are dependent upon him. All things are under his government. I believe that heaven will be a place, but that its range or extent will be beyond the reach of angels or of men, and that to all eternity. And what we shall find in that infinity we must die to know. There is no poverty in God; we shall find no poverty. There is no darkness in God; we shall find no darkness. There is no doubt in God; we shall find no doubt. There is no sickness; we shall find no sickness. There are no foes; we shall find no foes. There is no degradation; we shall meet with none. There is no want of welcome.

Now if I say that God was from everlasting, and that he will be to everlasting, I shall speak the truth; but we can speak of him in a sense that we can of no creature—“he *is* from everlasting.” Hence it is astonishing that some should attempt to found the doctrine of pre-existence upon that passage in Colossians where it is said that he “*is* before all things.” Now the apostle does not say that he *was* before all things, but that he *is* before all things: whereas, if he had referred to a creature, he would have said he *was*. His human nature is called a “holy thing;” that therefore is one of the “all things” that he was “before.” So that God is from everlasting and to everlasting; consequently, that which must to us be an eternal past is not past with him; that which seems to us an eternity to come is not with him an eternity to come. Therefore he *is* from ever to everlasting.

But this is not all. Not only is God self-existent, but he is immutable. He not only endures for ever, but continues the same. There is no reason why he should change his mind, and he never will. Says the carnal mind, we must not enlarge much on this doctrine; although the Lord has said that he is abundantly willing to show to the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, yet we must not talk about it. Men are offended at the only things that can do them good. We, who feel that we move in a narrow circle, glory in that infinity presented; we, who feel that we are but of yesterday, and are just departing from off the narrow neck of time, glory in the prospect of eternity; and we, who feel that we are poor, mutable creatures, never scarcely two minutes alike, glory in the fact that "our God changeth not; therefore we, the sons of Jacob, are not consumed." So then, God being self-existent, his mercy will continue; being infinite, his mercy will continue; being immutable, his mercy will continue.

Now let us look at this mercy, in the continuation of these mercies, as set forth in Scripture. You have these very beautifully presented by the apostle in one verse; and then you have acquaintance with them presented; and then you have the assurance of our final triumph by them. Now the apostle presents us these mercies in one verse. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh." I suppose you admit that. "Justified in the Spirit." He felt that he was justified in what he did; he felt that he was justified in what he said; he felt that he was justified in all his movements, from first to last. Now mark that Christ does not say, "Believed on *by* the world;" but "Believed on *in* the world." There are some in the world whom God hath chosen out of the world; but says Jesus, "They are in the world, though not of the world; keep them through thy name; I have given them thy word." "Received up into glory." Now here is the connection of these mercies. How beautifully the apostle speaks of these mercies, setting forth our acquaintance with them, in the epistle to the Ephesians! "Wherefore," he says, "I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers." Well, Paul, what is it to be? Why, "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling." There are many things in this world which give you a hope of succeeding here, and succeeding there, but all these are temporal. The apostle's prayer is, "that ye may know what is the hope of his calling"—that it is a great hope; and what "the riches of the

glory"—it is not a poor glory, it is not a glow-worm glory, it is not a temporal glory, but it is an infinite and eternal glory—"the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." And not only so, but that ye may enter into a knowledge of the power by which these things are kept safe. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward, who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." That is the prayer of Paul; knowledge of Christ; hope of his calling; riches of his grace; the power of his arm; the exaltation of his person; subjugation of the adversaries; certainty of our eternal supply. "Thy mercy is great above the heavens."

I will, in closing, refer you to the Psalm in which our text is found. Now in this beautiful Psalm you have an account of the Lord's designs respecting his people; then comes in an interesting account of the subjugation of the adversaries, and then of the eternal triumph of his children. The Psalmist says, "God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice; I will divide Shechem" (alluding to Samaria), "I will separate my people from idolatry" (that is the meaning); "and mete out the valley of Succoth. Gilead is mine," I will have those that are mine, "Manasseh is mine." Gilead signifies witness—ay, and the witnesses are mine. Manasseh signifies forgetfulness—my people shall forget all their sorrows. "Ephraim also is the strength of mine head." Ephraim signifies fulness—there is fulness to the people. "Judah is my lawgiver." Judah signifies praise. Well, then, the Lord says, "Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph." These were the adverse powers of the day. By turning Moab into a washpot God meant to show that he would render the abominable errors of the day subservient to the good of his people. "Moab is my washpot; over Edom will I cast out my shoe; over Philistia will I triumph." And then he says, "Who will bring me into the strong city? who will lead me into Edom? Will not thou, O God, who hast cast us off? and will not thou, O God, go forth with our hosts? Give us help from trouble; for vain is the help of man."

REFLECTIONS OF A RENEWED SOUL.

WHEN grace quickens the soul it gives the man a supernatural knowledge of himself, such as he never had before ; while in the light of this divine life he sees his blindness, feels his deadness, learns his weakness, finds his bondage, and is ready to acknowledge before God that he is the vilest wretch out of hell ; and in order to please God, and silence his own conscience, not knowing the gospel plan of mercy, nor yet his own weakness, he begins to make what he calls "good resolutions, promises, vows," and so on, that he will repent, and pray, and keep the Sabbath, and be very moral ; on which ground he seems to have some hope that God will be merciful to him for his past sins, seeing he is determined to be very strict for the time to come ; thus the soul is quickened. Here are the motions of life, although he talks childish, he will know when he gets older ; there is plenty of room for him to grow ; and when he becomes a man he will be glad to put away these childish things. However, to work he goes, or at least tries at it, as he thinks he can run alone ; so off he starts towards Sinai, for he does not know the way to Zion yet, thinking he shall find every needful accommodation, such as his deficiencies made up—infirmities forgiven—that God will be merciful, and he will be moral—and that he will make his peace with God as well as he can ;—but being taught by the Lord, who makes all his scholars wise unto salvation, he begins to feel, notwithstanding all his external consistency, that he is still in possession of evil thoughts, evil inclinations, unbelief, hardness of heart, pride, envy, malice, anger, rebellion, hypocrisy, peevishness, presumption, self-will, self-consequence, covetousness, yea, a cleaving to self ; while the commandment comes with a sin-convincing power, and shows the sinner that the law is spiritual, but he is carnal, and held in bondage by the power of sin ; this slays his Pharisaic hope, sweeps away his refuge of lies, and makes him feel that he is on a road and in a place where there is no life for the dead, no strength for the weak, no mercy for the miserable, no pardon for the guilty, no justification for the condemned, nor any liberty for the prisoner ; for the law worketh wrath, it being the ministration of death and not life, of condemnation and not justification ; this creates an army of slavish fears while he is shut up in prison waiting to know his doom. Thus necessity compels him to stand still, and see the salvation of God, with the Egyptian battery on his right hand ; viz., the wicked one with all his artillery—the rock of unbelief on his left hand, a sea of trouble before him, a host of sins behind him, and the eye of justice looking down upon him ; while, like the publican, he dares not look up, for it appears to him that God is angry with him—neither can

he go forward into Gospel liberty until truth divide the sea of iniquity within him ; he feels his nature is like the troubled sea that cannot rest, but casts up mire and dirt ; he cannot go to the Lord of life and glory until grace melts the rock of unbelief ; neither can he obtain victory until the Lion of the tribe of Judah remove Satan from his right hand ; neither can he go back and face the great host of his sins. In this state he can enter into the feelings of the publican when he said, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Thus he hath sorrow, because his hour of regeneration was come. But when he is delivered from his bondage, he remembereth no more his anguish, for joy, that the man-child, Christ Jesus, is born in his heart the hope of glory. Thus the Holy Spirit makes conscience a faithful witness against him as a sinner. Although he has endeavoured to bribe this witness, yet he cannot silence his testimony ; for a conscience made alive by the Holy Ghost can never be silenced by creature-works.

"Thus 'tis the Holy Ghost that gives the wound,
And makes the wounded whole."

While conscience continues to appear in the character of an adversary, and leads him to Moses the magistrate, who hails him to God the judge ; the judge delivers him to Justice the officer. He being found guilty by this fourfold witness, namely, Law and Justice, God and Conscience, the officer shuts him up in the prison-house of the law, in which he finds nothing but hard fare, his feet put in the stocks, so that he cannot run away, his head in the veil of darkness, so that he cannot see himself a child of God : in this sense he is blind. The law says run, but he finds his feet are in the stocks ; yea, that he is broken-footed, and cannot move ; broken-handed, and cannot work ; crook backed, and cannot walk uprightly ; a dwarf, and cannot reach up to the stature of the law ; a flat-nose, and cannot smell the sweetness of Gospel truth ; a leper, and therefore is not fit for the king's presence ; yea, he is so far broken, that he cannot beget one good desire. (Lev. xxi.) Therefore he dare not suppose himself able, to officiate in any part of the high priest's work. Thus he is made sensible of the following truth, namely, that if ever he obtains pardon, justification, victory, liberty, adoption, acceptance, &c., it must be by free, unmerited, eternal, and almighty grace ; while in this condemned cell his language is, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, O Lord ; for in thy sight (by creature works) shall no flesh living be justified." Thus he owns himself a lawful captive, justifies God, glorifies the law, and sees his distance from God, and the need of a Mediator, while God sustains him, tries his patience, yet makes him wait, amidst all the tossings of his mind, until the appointed time to favour him.