

SERMON VIII.

A LIFTING UP IN CASE OF TEMPTATION.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me,” &c.—Psalm xlii. 11.

V. SOMETIMES the discouragements of the saints are drawn from their temptations.

And thus they argue with themselves: I am a poor creature, that hath laboured under many temptations, never any so tempted as I have been: these two, three, four, five, six, or many years, that I have lien under these temptations, and no relief comes, no help comes; have I not reason then to be discouraged and cast down?

No; no reason yet: I grant that the least temptations are great afflictions; for the more a man is unfitted by affliction for God’s service, either in doing good or receiving good, the worsor and more heavy is that affliction to a gracious spirit. Now, though God doth so overrule the temptations of his people, that they receive good thereby, as appeareth afterward, yet the temptation in itself doth indispose a man unto what is good. The more a man is tempted unto what is evil, the more a man is hindered from what is good. It is an affliction to a gracious heart to be conflicting, fighting and combatting with a man: but in temptations, we do combat and conflict immediately with Satan, who is the prince of the air; with principalities and powers; with that evil one, who for his devouring nature is called a lion, for his cruelty is called a dragon, and for his subtlety an old serpent: and in every temptation, a poor soul goes into the field with Satan, and fights a duel with him. “Satan hath (saith Christ to Peter) desired you;” in which duel and combat a man doth not miscarry for this present life barely, but, if he miscarry, he miscarries to all eternity; he dies, is killed and slain to all eternity: oh what a mighty hazard doth a poor soul run in every temptation! The chaste and good woman counts it an affliction to her, so long as she lives, if she be but once violated; if a filthy person meet her in the field, and violate her, though she do not consent unto him; she wrings her

hands, and saith, I am undone for ever. Now these temptations are the solicitations of an unclean spirit, and what though a man do not consent unto them, yet thereby his soul suffers violence. Oh, saith a gracious soul, what though I do not consent, yet what an infinite misery is it to be thus abused, defiled, and violenced by these temptations! The more any affliction doth seize on soul and body, the greater it is: it is comfort in a family that the wife is well, when the husband is sick; or that the husband is well, when the wife is down: where both are down at once, it is a sad family indeed. So though the soul be afflicted, yet if the body be well; although the body be afflicted, yet if the spirit be well, it is some comfort: but where both are down, the condition is sad: and seldom doth any great temptation befall a man, but soul and body are both down at once; though at first it falls upon the spirit, yet it descends into and fires the body. And therefore saith Paul, "I received a messenger of Satan, a thorn in my flesh, buffeting of me." As in the comforts of the Holy Ghost, though the comforts be poured out upon the soul and spirit, yet they run down upon the body: so in the troubles of temptation, though they seize first upon the inward man, yet they run upon the skirts of the outward man also. And thus you will find it with Job (chap. vii. 1). God had put Job into Satan's hand, only with this reserve, "See that thou spare his life." The devil having the power, first he loads him with outward afflictions, and then with inward temptations: while he was under his outward afflictions, how sweetly did he carry it, blessing the Lord, saying, "The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away, blessed be his name;" but when the volley of temptations came, then see what a sad condition the good man was in, how he was all on fire, as if Job could not be found in Job: while he was under these afflictions, he rebuked his wife, for saying, "Curse God, and die;" but now, being under temptations himself, he wisheth to die, and curseth the day of his birth: "My soul chooseth strangling and death rather than my life," Job vii. 15. But had this temptation any influence upon his body too? it seems his heart, and soul, and spirit was much disquieted, for he saith, "Why hast thou set me as a mark against thee?" verse 20. But was his body fired with it too? Yes: "When I said, My bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint;

then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me with visions." verse 13, 14. As now we find by experience, many poor souls cannot sleep while they are under their temptations; and if you will see the sum and upshot of all, read what he says at verse 20: "I am a burden to myself." And so many now; Why should I live any longer? I am a burden to my family, I am a burden to mine acquaintance, a burden to all my friends, I am a burden to myself; who knows the burden of a poor tempted soul but he that bears it? Heb. xi. 37. Temptations are ranked among the greatest afflictions: "They were stoned, sawn asunder, were tempted:" and, in Heb. ii., it is said of our Saviour, that "himself suffered being tempted," yet he sinned not under his temptation. So that there is somewhat of a suffering in every temptation, although one be free from sin. And in Rev. xii. 12, it is said, "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath." And wherein is his wrath more seen than in his temptations. Oh, what a sad and woeful condition is it then to lie under temptations! Yet, let me tell you, though there be some suffering in every temptation, and the least temptation is a great affliction, yet the saints and people of God have no reason to be discouraged or cast down, whatever their temptations be.

How may that appear?

Four demonstrations of it.

1. If Satan do therefore tempt the people of God, that he may discourage them; then have they no reason to be discouraged because they are tempted by Satan. I say, if Satan's great design, end and aim, in all the temptations of the saints, be to discourage them; then they have no reason to be discouraged because they are tempted, for then they should gratify Satan, and give him his end. Now Satan doth tempt that he may tempt; he tempts unto one sin, that he may tempt unto another; he tempteth a man to sin against the law, that he may make him sin against the gospel; and what greater sin against the gospel, than unbelieving discouragements? He knows or thinks, such and such a person is gone from his kingdom, and he saith, Though I cannot hinder his salvation, but he will be saved do what I can; yet I will hinder his comfort, and make him

draw heavily, and if I can but discourage him in his duty, I shall in time make him to cast it off. His great design is to discourage; and therefore whenever any godly man is tempted, he should say, Well, through the grace of Christ, seeing Satan's design is to discourage, my design shall be to bear up my heart and spirit against all discouragements.

2. If God our Father doth pity his children under their temptations, and the more they are tempted by Satan, the more they are pitied by God; then have they no reason to be discouraged, whatever their temptations be. How is it with your own bowels? If you had two children, one that is in your house with you at home, and another that is in Spain or Italy, abroad, exposed to great temptations; is not your pity most towards that child that is abroad, and exposed to most temptations? Your love may be expressed to him that is at home as much another way, but your pitying love is most to him that is abroad.* As in the time of a storm, great rain or hail, if you have one child lie in your bosom, or sitting upon your knee, and another that is abroad in the open fields; though your love in one kind may run out to him that is upon your knee, yet, doth not your pitying love run out more to him that is abroad in the open fields? Thus it is with God, he hath two sorts of children; some that are exposed to more temptations, and some that are exposed to less; though his grace and love may run out more in one kind to them that are less tempted, yet his pitying love runs out most unto those that are most tempted. And upon this account you will find in Scripture, that when God saw any of his children were to go into any sad temptation, he did either immediately before, in or after, more than ordinarily reveal himself unto them. The more you are tempted by Satan, the more you are pitied by God. It matters not whether your temptation be great or small: if less, you have the less pity; if more, you have the more pity. Why then should you be discouraged, although your temptations be never so great?

3. If all the temptations of God's people be overcome and broken, before they do fall on them; then have they no

* Quo gravior incumbit tentatio, eo solet indulgentius agere cum suis Deus.—
Brightman Apoc. ii. 49.

reason to be discouraged or cast down, because they are tempted. Now so it is, Christ was a common person, not only in his death, but in his life ; he did act and work and bear as a common person, as our second Adam all along : *Christus non meruit sibi*. Christ did not die for himself, nor obey for himself ; but he did die for us, and obey for us, and all his seed were in him, as in a common person. Look whatever evils Christ did bear, those he did bear for us, and we did bear in him, as in our second Adam ; and therefore when he was tempted, he stood as a common person in his temptations, and in him all the saints and people of God, who are his seed, were tempted ; and in his overcoming they did overcome. For as when the first Adam was tempted, he being a common person, we all were tempted in him ; and when he yielded to Satan, we did all yield in him ; when he was overcome, we were overcome in him ; and when he did eat the forbidden fruit, all his seed did eat in him ; and every child of Adam may now say, I did then eat the forbidden fruit : so when Christ was tempted, all his seed were tempted in him ; and when he overcame, all his seed overcame in him. And therefore when you read the story of Christ's temptations, ye are not barely to say, Thus and thus Christ resisted for my example : but, in his resisting, I did resist ; in his overcoming, I did overcome. For, as I did eat in the first Adam's eating, and yield in the first Adam's yielding ; so I did refuse, and resist, and overcome in Christ, the second Adam's refusing, resisting, and overcoming. Thus with all the saints and people of God, who are the seed of the second Adam, Christ hath not only overcome their temptations for them, but in Christ their second Adam they have overcome Satan, and made a spoil of principalities and powers. And therefore why should they be discouraged, whatever their temptations be ?

4. If God hath such an overruling hand of grace upon all the temptations of the saints, as that they shall turn to their good ; then they have no reason to be cast down, or to be discouraged, because of them. Now God would never suffer his people to be tempted, but that he intendeth to destroy their temptations by their temptations. Look what is the end and issue of an evil, *that* was God's design in suffering that evil to come to pass. And this is the end and

issue of all the saints' temptations, that thereby they are more enlightened. *Tentatio dat intellectum.* Temptation gives understanding; tempting times are teaching times.

Thereby they are more humbled; "For this cause (saith Paul) I received a messenger of Satan (he speaks it twice) that I might not be exalted."

Thereby they are the more occasioned to live in God and depend on him. "Watch and pray (saith our Saviour) lest ye fall into temptation." Watching doth note our diligence, praying doth note our dependence. And why watch and pray? but, lest ye enter into temptation.

Thereby the grace and power and might of God in Christ is the more discovered, and revealed to them. "My grace is sufficient for thee," saith God to Paul in the time of his temptation; a word which he had not heard before.

Thereby their graces are more increased, as the Israelites were multiplied by being oppressed. *Unus Christianus tentatus mille Christiani.* One tempted Christian is worth a thousand, saith Luther; for as the wind and breath of the bellows, though contrary to the fire, blows up the fire, and increaseth the flame thereof; so, though the breath of temptation be contrary to grace, yet thereby grace is more increased, and raised to a higher flame. When Satan curseth, God blesseth; and when God blesseth, he saith, "Increase and multiply."

Thereby all the saints are made to triumph over Satan. It is a christian's duty, not only to triumph over the world, but over Satan; therefore saith the apostle, "The God of Peace tread down Satan under your feet." Those are words of triumph, and Paul in the name of other christians, triumphs over principalities and powers. How shall a man triumph, if he never have victory; and how shall he have the victory, if he never fights? Therefore God leads his people into the field, that they may fight; but in all this fight, God stands by, Christ stands by, love stands by; and God hath no design but of love upon his children in their temptations.

Yea, upon this account our Saviour saith, that he doth "appoint unto his disciples a kingdom, because they continued with him in his temptations," Luke xxii. And shall his disciples then be down, and be discouraged or complain,

because they are with him in his temptations? Surely they have no cause, they have no reason for their discouragements, whatever their temptations be.

But I have been tempted long, and long, and long assaulted, yet I have no deliverance.

How long? As long as Christ himself? "He was in all points tempted as we are, sin excepted," Heb. iv. Indeed Satan found nothing in him, no tinder to receive the sparks of his temptations; but do but abate the sin of his temptations, and then in all points he was tempted as we are, even as much and as long: for if you look into Luke iv. 2, you shall find that he was at one time tempted forty days; and then when Satan left him, the text tells us, "He left him for a season," for he was daily tempting of him. And though you have been long assaulted, hath not Satan left you for a season, have you not had some intermissions, some revives, some breathing times? Job complained that he was not suffered to swallow his spittle, he had no breathing time, as he thought. But though your temptations have been long, and very long; yet you have had revives, Satan hath left you for a season. And if that be true, That God hath such an overruling hand of grace upon your temptations, that your very temptations shall turn to your good; that thereby you are more enlightened, humbled, and your grace increased; then the longer you are in this school, the better scholar you shall be, the more enlightened, and the more humbled, and the more gracious: why should you then be discouraged, though your temptations be very long?

But I am tempted many times to doubt of my child-ship, Whether I be the child of God or no?

And was not Christ our Saviour tempted so? There are but three particular temptations mentioned, in all the forty days of Christ's temptation, and two of them run so: "If thou be the Son of God?" Wherein Satan labours to draw a cloud upon Christ's assurance, and to write an *if* upon his child-ship or sonship. Do you think to march through your enemy's country to heaven, and never be at a stand about your condition? Suppose a man should travel through a strange country which was very long, wherein he never was before, and wherein are many cross ways; would you not wonder that he should travel all the way, and never be

at a stand about his way, never question his way, whether right or wrong? If you be the child of God, you are now from home, and travelling home, warring in a strange country; and do you think it is possible, and would it not be a wonder, that meeting with so many cross ways, you should never be at a stand about your condition, or question your way, whether you be right or no? Give me leave to propound you a parable. Suppose two men: one goes very brave, fares deliciously, is very merry, and full of money, yet hath no lands, no calling, nothing left him, no friends to maintain him, nor any honest way known to bring him in money, and yet he is full of it; the other works hard, fares meanly, goes plainly, and he is oft complaining, I fear I shall want and miscarry, yet he hath a calling, some land, good friends, and some money? Which of these two, think you, doth come most honestly by his money? Will you not all say, the latter? For though he hath but a little, yet he works, hath a lawful calling, ways known for to bring it in. But as for the other, though fine, brave, and looks high, yet he hath nothing to bring it in; I fear he comes not well by it. So spiritually: there are two sorts of people in the world: one that is very confident of his salvation, and full of comfort, yet he prayeth not in private, reads not, meditates not, examineth not his own heart, takes no pains about his soul, but is often spending, keeping ill company, will be sometimes drunk, swear, and be unclean, yet he is very confident he shall go to heaven; the other prays, hears, reads, meditates, walketh with all strictness in his life and conversation, yet he is always doubting and fearing, but through grace he hath some comfort: which of these two, think you, is in the best condition, and comes most honestly by his comfort? Will you not say, surely, the latter? for though he fears, yet he is always doing, working heaven-ward. The other, though confident and full of comforts, hath no good way for to bring them in, and therefore surely his evidence for heaven is stolen, his comforts are all stolen; but as for the other, though he hath but little comfort, yet he comes truly by it. Thus it may be with you; whilst others swaggering it, and braving it out with their comfort, and false confidence, go to hell, and perish everlastingly. It is a sure rule, that God's promise of mercy doth suppose our misery;

if he promise health, he supposeth our sickness; if he promise grace, it supposeth our sin. Now, though in the times of the Old Testament, God promised much outward blessing; yet in the times of the New Testament, the mercy promised is, to send the Comforter; the Spirit who shall bear witness unto our spirits that we are the children of God. Often our Saviour saith, "I will send the Comforter:" why? but to show that in the times of the gospel, the people of God shall labour under doubtings, and be full of fears about their spiritual estate; and therefore, though you do doubt of your childship, which is your evil, yet your state herein, is no other than what may be the state and condition of God's own people in these gospel times; why therefore should you be discouraged in this respect?

But I do not only doubt of my child-ship, I am not only tempted to doubt whether I be the child of God or no; but I labour under sad and fearful temptations, I am tempted to strange and horrid things, such as I fear to name; I am even tempted to make away myself; tempted with blasphemous thoughts, to doubt whether there be a God or no; whether the Scripture be true; and to say that I have sinned against the Holy Ghost: such and such things I am tempted to, as my very soul and flesh doth tremble at; and have I not just cause and reason now to be discouraged and cast down?

I confess this is sad indeed: I do not read in Scripture, though I read of many sins of the godly, that ever any godly man did make away himself. It is a good speech of Austin: *Sibi auferendo presentem vitam, abnegant futuram*; Men by taking away their present life, deny themselves their future life. But because, saith Mr. Perkins, some have done this, whose lives have been counted honest and good formerly; therefore my sentence is thus: I dare not say they are damned, because of their former life; and I dare not say they are saved, because of their sinful death; yet for the temptation itself, I say, if it do not come to act; as there is no duty which a godly man doth perform, but a wicked man may do the same, yet remain wicked; so there is no temptation which a wicked man may yield unto, but a godly man may be tempted unto, yet remain godly: was not Christ himself tempted by Satan to throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple? yet he did it not: only my counsel and advice

from the Lord is, if any be troubled with such a temptation, be sure you reveal it, and discover it presently; and as for those horrid, blasphemous suggestions which lie so heavy upon your souls, which make your heart and flesh to tremble at the rising of them. Ye have read how it was with the king of Moab, when he could not break through the host of Israel, nor make them cease from following the victory; he presented unto their view a horrid spectacle, sacrificing on the walls his own dear son, and heir to the crown, that so the Israelites, being not able to endure the view of that inhuman sight, might give over the victory. Thus doth Satan do; when he cannot drive a gracious soul out of the field any other way, then he presenteth such horrid, inhuman suggestions to him, that he may scare him from the good ways of God: it is not in our power to hinder Satan from presenting these things to our thoughts. When you come into wicked, ungodly, and profane company, if they will swear, and curse, and blaspheme, you cannot hinder them from speaking, nor yourself from hearing; you may sit down and mourn, saying, Oh, what blasphemy is here! what cursing is here! but do what you can, they will fill your ears with these things. Now Satan, being a spirit, he is able to present these blasphemies to your spirits, and you cannot hinder it: you may cry out and say, Oh, what blasphemy is here! oh what a burden is this to my soul! but he can present them to you whether you will or not; and did he not present these things unto Christ himself? "All these things will I give thee (saith he) if thou wilt fall down and worship me." What greater blasphemy can be imagined, than that the God of heaven and earth, as Christ was, should worship Satan; yet hereunto he did tempt our Lord and Saviour. And if our God doth so order the temptations of his children, as that thereby they are kept from sin, have they any reason to be discouraged now by these horrid temptations? Many a man is kept from other sins. Jerom, Luther, Magdeburgensis and others, relate a story of a certain martyr, that when the enemies could not threaten him out of his religion, they sent a very handsome, fair, and beautiful woman to entice him to folly; and he finding himself to be moved, and his lust begin to work, did bite off his tongue, and spit it in her face, thinking that the pain thereof would keep him from that fleshly lust,

counting it more ease to combat with pain than with lust, as Austin speaks,* and hereby he was preserved. I do not speak of this fact to commend it, but only to shew that God doth sometimes keep his children from lust by pain. Now in these blasphemous suggestions you find a great deal of pain, and if you were not in these pains, you would be lusting after other evils. God seeth what filthy, vile, lusting hearts you have, and therefore suffers these pains for to come upon you, and so you are kept from lust. Did you never know a man kept from lust by these temptations? yea, did you never know a man converted to God by occasion of these temptations? I have, and I think many, many poor souls that have lived in an ignorant condition a long time, then it pleased God to suffer Satan to throw in these temptations, these horrid temptations, whereby they are so amazed and startled, that thereupon, they looking into their own condition, were converted unto Jesus Christ. The more delights and complacencies a man takes in sin, the more sinful is the sin: the more a man's flesh trembleth, and his soul is burdened under temptation, the less sinful. Now, cannot you say, in truth, Lord, though these be my greatest burdens, yet they are my least delights? Yes. Well, then, be of good comfort, the Lord doth but hereby keep you from other sins, and therefore why should you be discouraged whatever these temptations be? As for the sin against the Holy Ghost; he never sins against the Holy Ghost, that fears he hath sinned against the Holy Ghost.

But these are not my temptations; I praise God I am free from such: but I have other great and strong temptations, and have no strength to resist them. I am a poor, weak person, a weak young man, or a weak young woman, and I fear I shall yield unto my temptations; and therefore I am thus discouraged, have I not just cause and reason now?

No; for out of weakness we are made strong, and when we are weak, then are we strong in the Lord, saith the apostle Paul. Possibly a man may be weak in regard of years, and yet may be strong in regard of grace, and overcome his temptations. In 1 John ii. 12, "I write unto you little children," saith the apostle John. Children he doth call

* *Difficilius est pugnare cum libidine quam cum cruce.*

them all, for he was their father in Christ. And at verse 13, "I write unto you, fathers (saith he), because ye have known him that is from the beginning: I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the wicked one: I write unto you, little children (saith he), because you have known the Father:" which, because it is matter of concernment, he repeats again at verse 14: "I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning: I have written unto you, young men, because you are strong, and you have overcome the wicked one." There are three sorts of people in the world; some that are old and aged, some that are children, some that are middle-aged, and are called young men, or young women. The aged think that they have no need to learn, they know as much as the minister can tell them; therefore saith the apostle here, "I write unto you, fathers." Children think that they are not yet to learn, and they have time enough before them; therefore saith he, "I write unto you, children." Young persons think they should mind their business, trades and callings; therefore saith he, "I write unto you, young men." And I pray mark what he speaks, words suitable to all these conditions: old men love antiquities, and therefore, saith he, "I write unto you, fathers, because you have known him that is from the beginning." Children love to have the father's and mother's name in their mouth; and therefore saith he, "I write unto you, children, because ye have known the Father." Young men are strong, and are fit for fighting, and therefore saith he, "I write unto you, young men, because you have overcome the evil one." What evil one is that but Satan the tempter? and, of all others, young men are here said to overcome the evil one; of all men and women, young persons do overcome. This time of young men is the overcoming time. And I pray tell me, was David an old man when he slew Goliah? Nay, not thirty years old. Was Joseph an old man when he refused and overcame the temptation of his mistress? Was Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego old persons when they resisted and overcame the temptation of the king, choosing rather to go into the fiery furnace than to yield? Nay, but they are called the three children; and hath not God said, the "young child shall play upon the hole of the asp?" What is the hole of the asp, if temptation be

not? And if you consider that story of the Israelites' victory, which God gave them against the Amalekites, ye shall find that they never had a more glorious victory; so great, that they set up an altar, and called the name of it, "Jehovah Nissi," the Lord my shield. Yet if you look into Deuteronomy you will find that the Amalekites fell upon them when they were weak and weary at Rephidim, and in this weak and weary time they had this glorious victory. What therefore though you be weak and weary, and now are in the valley of Rephidim; yet thou mayest overcome, and have so glorious a victory, that thou shalt set up an altar, and call the name of it, "Jehovah Nissi," the Lord my shield.

Oh, but I have yielded, and been overcome already in my temptation.

Well, but know you not that it is one thing to be overcome *in praelio*, in the skirmish; and another thing to be overcome *in bello*, in the battle; those who are overcome in the skirmish, may overcome in the battle: and let me tell you this, that you are never quite overcome, so long as you keep your weapon in your hand: when a man lieth down before his enemy, and gives up his weapon, then he is overcome indeed; and when you lie down, and are discouraged, and give all up, saying, I will pray no more, and hear no more, and read no more, all is to no purpose; then are you overcome: but till that be, though you be overcome in the skirmish, you may overcome in the main battle; will you then lie down and be discouraged? or is there any reason why a godly man should be discouraged? No. Surely if this be true, that a man is never quite overcome till he lie down; then, through grace, every godly man should say, I will never give up my weapon: "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul? Still wait on God."

But yet all this reacheth not my case or condition; for I fear that my temptations are not such temptations as are incident unto God's people; as my sin and spot is not the spot of God's people; so that my temptations are not, that they are not such as God's own people do meet withal; and I rather fear it, because that since the time that I have set my face towards heaven, I have met with such temptations as I did never feel before: surely therefore all is not right with me; have I not cause then to be discouraged and cast down?

No; for, I pray, what are the temptations of God's people, and how do they take them?

1. When a godly man is tempted to any sin; if he fall into it, then he is tempted again with unbelief, to think that all is naught, even all that ever he had done before, tempted to aggravate his sin, and to despair. When a wicked man is tempted to what is evil, if he fall into it, then he is tempted to presume, tempted to excuse his sin, and to think, and say, This is but a slip, or youthful carriage, God is merciful, and the like; and so he is tempted to presume. This usually is the way and manner of Satan with the godly and ungodly.

2. When a godly man is tempted to what is evil; if he fall into it, the devil then tempteth him to think it was no temptation, and to lay all upon himself, saying, I have done foolishly, I will go out and weep bitterly; the devil had no hand here in it, it was all mine own. When a wicked man is tempted to what is evil, if he fall into it, he is then tempted afresh to think it is but a temptation, and I was drawn into it by others, it was not myself, Satan tempted me, or such an one tempted me, the woman that thou gavest me, or the friend that was with me; and so he doth lay it on others. This is usually the way and manner of Satan with the godly and ungodly.

3. When a godly man is tempted to what is evil, he rather startles at the sin than at the burden of it. When a wicked man is tempted to what is evil, he rather startles at the burden and at the punishment than at the evil and sin of it. And this we see clearly in the xxvith of Matthew; our Saviour tells the disciples, at the 21st verse, that one of them should betray him; whereupon they were all of them astonished, and said every one, one by one, "Lord, is it I?" These were good disciples. Judas yet stirs not: but at verse 25, it is said, "Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered, and said, Master, is it I?" Then; When? Look to verse 24, and you shall read that our Saviour speaks of the burden and punishment of his sin: "The Son of Man goes, as it is written of him; but woe unto that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born." Then Judas answered, Is it I, Lord? Then he startled. The true and gracious disciples of Christ startled at the sin, when Christ did but name the sin; but then not

a word from Judas: but when Christ speaks of the punishment and burden of his sin, then Judas startled, and not a word from them. So that, plainly, a gracious soul startleth at the evil of a temptation more than the burden of it, a wicked man more at the burden than at the evil of it. This is the way of the godly and ungodly in their temptations.

And as for you, poor, tempted, doubting souls, that labour under sad temptations, and think it hath not been with you as with others; have you not even found it thus? Can you not say of a truth, Lord, my soul hath found it thus? For after I have sinned, I have been tempted again, to doubt of my child-ship, and to sad despair; when I have been tempted to sin, and have fallen into it, I have laid all upon myself, and said, it is no temptation, but this is my own corruption; yea, Lord, thou knowest my soul hath been more startled at the evil of the temptation, than at the burden; as for the burden of my temptation, I leave that to thee, take it off when thou wilt; but oh that my soul were freed from the evil of it. Then be of good comfort, it is no otherwise with you than what may be with God's dear children; your spot is no other than what may be the spot of God's own people.

And whereas you say, I fear that all is not right, because I find such temptations now, since I have looked towards heaven, which I did never feel before:

Do you think that Peter ever did deny Christ before he was converted to Jesus Christ? Did David ever number the people whilst he was in the state of nature? Do you read that the children of Israel wanted water and bread while they were in Egypt, or that they met with so many temptations there as they did after God had appeared mightily to them? Was not Christ tempted after baptized, and heard a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" did he ever meet with such temptations, before he was so declared to be the beloved Son of God from heaven?

And if God do not measure a godly man by any one action, under any present temptation, nor cast his everlasting condition thereby; then what reason is there why he should be discouraged in this respect? Look into the Scripture, and you shall find, that though God doth chastise his people for their miscarriage, and change of their behaviour under

their temptation; yet he doth never measure a godly man, or cast his everlasting condition by that. You will not measure milk when it seeths and wallops, but when it is cool: and God will not measure his children by what they are when they wallop in some temptation, but by what they are when they are cool and most themselves. So he did deal with Job, Jeremiah, and Moses, and all his children: indeed he doth not deal so by the wicked, he measures them sometimes by one carriage, and they are cast thereby, that even everlastingly they are cast thereby. Ananias and Sapphira lied but once to the Holy Ghost, that we read of, and Satan had a hand therein; for saith the apostle, "Why hath Satan filled your heart, that you should lie unto the Holy Ghost?" yet they were cast thereby. It was but one act that Saul did when he spared Agag and the fatlings, yet he was cast thereby. It was but one act that Adam did, and Eve did, when they did eat the forbidden fruit, and Satan tempted them to it, yet they were cast thereby, and all mankind lost thereby. Why? Because they were upon a covenant of works. So when men are under a covenant of works, if they miscarry but in one action, though tempted thereto by Satan, yet God may cast them thereby. Now all the wicked, still, are under the covenant of works; and therefore though it be but one act wherein they miscarry, and they be drawn thereunto by Satan, yet God sometimes doth, and justly may cast them thereby unto all eternity. But as for the saints and people of God, they are not under a covenant of works, but of grace, all of them are so; and therefore God deals graciously with them, not measuring them by any one carriage, under one temptation. No, saith the Lord, it is but the time of their temptation, I will not measure this man or woman by what they are now, but as they are when they are cool, most themselves, and out of temptation. Oh what a gracious privilege is this! Who would not labour to get into Christ, to become godly, to be in this covenant of grace! And as for you that are godly, tell me, upon all this account, have you any just cause and reason for your discouragements under your temptations. Surely no; whatever your temptations be, yet you have no reason for discouragement.

But what then? What shall I do that I may bear up my heart against all discouragements in this kind, that I may not

be cast down or discouraged by reason of my temptations? I confess, indeed, that there is no reason why a godly man should be discouraged in this respect; but yet it is a hard thing to bear up against all discouragements in time of temptation: what shall I do in this case, that I may not be discouraged whatever my temptations be?

I will say nothing to your natural temper: if temptations arise from natural causes, then natural means, as physic, are to be used and applied, and people should do well to be persuaded thereunto. But somewhat by way of direction spiritually.

If you would not be discouraged under your temptations, take heed that when you are in temptation, you do not expect too much from any one means of help; over expectation breeds discouragement; disappointment doth breed discouragement: it is not the sadness of your condition, but disappointment that doth cause discouragement. If a man be in debt, and under an arrest; so long as he thinks he hath friends to bail him, or some goods and commodities to make sale of, he is not discouraged; but if he expect much from his friends, and all fail him, and his goods be seized, that he cannot have help come in at that door, nor from any other means, which he expected from, then he is quite discouraged. If a man be in the water, wherein there is danger of drowning; so long as he can get hold of something that will bear him up, he is not discouraged; but if he lay hold of some tuft of grass on the bank side, and that breaks, he falls back again, and is more plunged in the water; and if he be not scared out of all thoughts, he is more discouraged than ever. So here, in temptation, we are as in the water, and in fear of drowning, crying out, We sink, we sink; then we fly to some tuft of grass, some means or other, and if that break or fail, then we are quite discouraged. Would you not, therefore, be dejected or cast down in time of temptation; take heed that you do not lay all your strength upon one tuft of grass; this or that man's counsel; this or that particular means; but say rather, I am now indeed in the deep, and in fear of drowning, and see no means of deliverance; but God's ways are in the deep, and he is infinite, he hath ways and means that I know not of; therefore though I use the means, yet I will

not rest on them, and though all tufts of grass break, and anchors come home; yet I will wait on God.

If you would not be discouraged in time of temptation, take heed that you do not say of your temptation, this is no temptation. Satan tempts, first unto what is evil, and then he tempts God's people to think that their temptation is no temptation: as long as man thinks it but a temptation, he thinks, it will not last long, it is but a temptation, it will not hold always, and so his heart is in some measure upheld with hope: but when Satan can persuade, that the temptation is no temptation, but a worse matter, then the heart sinks and dies: take heed therefore that you do not say that your temptation is no temptation.

Consider what infinite engagements are upon Jesus Christ, to succour and relieve poor tempted souls; you can never be discouraged under temptation, so long as you think, how mightily Christ is engaged to help those that are tempted; and engaged he is many ways; engaged by his own temptations; for he was therefore tempted, that he might be able experimentally to succour those that are tempted: engaged he is by promise; for he hath said he will not quench the smoking flax, yea, though it hath more smoke than fire: engaged he is by his interest in you, and his name upon you: engaged he is by his own gracious disposition; when he was upon earth, he cured those that were vexed by Satan: art thou now tempted? thou art now vexed by Satan: Christ is as gracious in heaven as he was on earth: engaged he is by office; for saith the apostle, "We have not such an High-Priest, as cannot be touched with our infirmities, but was in all points tempted as we are, that he might succour those that are tempted;" he is our great High-Priest. When the man-slayer was pursued by the avenger of blood, if the man-slayer fled unto a city of refuge, he was safe there: where he was to stay till the death of the high-priest; and when the high-priest died, then he was set at liberty. The Lord Jesus Christ is our High-Priest; by whose death we are set at liberty; and by whose life we are all preserved: it is his office to succour poor tempted souls, pursued by avengers of blood: and if a good man be faithful in his office, much more will Christ, by whom all other men are faithful. Yea, God our Father hath erected

an office for the succouring of poor tempted souls, and Jesus Christ hath this office; whenever therefore you are tempted, and fear you shall miscarry under your temptation, then remember Christ, and say, Oh! but the Lord Jesus is in office; he is bound to succour poor tempted souls, and such a one am I; he is engaged by his own temptation; he is engaged by promise; he is engaged by his interest in me, and his name upon me; he is engaged by his own disposition; he is engaged by his office, and therefore though I be tempted unto what is evil, yet, avoid, Satan, for I shall be delivered; I am tempted, but I shall be delivered, for the Lord Jesus Christ is engaged for my deliverance. Do but think of Christ's engagement, and you will never be discouraged, whatever your temptations be.

Think not to comfort or relieve yourself in temptation, with mere philosophical or moral reasons, for the disease of temptation is stronger than that physic; temptations answered by reason will return again, but temptations dipt in the blood of Christ will return no more, or not with such violence and success. Ye see how it is with a candle that is blown out, it is easily lighted again, but if you put it into water, then it is more hard to light. So, temptations blown out with resolutions and moral reasons do easily return, but quenched in Christ's blood do not so. Christ is an universal good, reason can hold forth but a particular good; now there is that in an universal good which will answer unto all your ills; but as for moral reasons, the tempter will say to them, Christ we know, and the promise we know, but who are ye? It is God himself, saith the apostle, 2 Cor. 1. "Who comforteth us in all our tribulations." Are we in the dark? Christ only can light the candle.

Be not unwilling to advise with those that have trodden the way of temptation, though they be weaker than yourself. Christ was stronger than any angel, yet in the time of his agony, the angels came and comforted him. Possibly a stronger may be comforted and strengthened by a weak hand in the time of an agony; and temptation-time is agony-time. Are you therefore tempted and in the dark? Speak with those children of light that have gone through this dark entry of temptation. Who knows, but that God may speak that comfort to you by a weaker hand, which you could never obtain by a stronger.

But especially speak and converse with the promise; hear what the promise speaketh; the Lord by it saith, that no temptation shall overtake you, "but what is common to men." 1 Cor. x. 13. Oh! say you, never any one was troubled with such temptations as I am, but saith the apostle, say not so, "for no temptation hath overtaken you, but what is common to men." You think that your temptation is extraordinary, and the truth is, that is a second temptation at the back of the first; it is a temptation to think that my temptation is extraordinary, yet say you, Oh! my condition is extraordinary, my affliction extraordinary, and my temptation extraordinary; but, says the apostle, "no temptation hath overtaken you, but what is common to men." You think that you shall never be able to bear your temptation. Oh! say you, I am a poor weak creature, my temptation is strong and great, therefore I shall never be able to bear it. But says the apostle, "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able." Again, you think that you shall never be rid of this temptation, Oh, say you, I have been tempted thus and thus long, and no deliverance comes, nor any likelihood of deliverance, surely therefore I shall never be delivered: but the apostle saith, "God is faithful who will with the temptation, *make a way for escape*. He will give an outlet, open a door and window, that this smoke may go out. It may be that you see not this door, it may be out of sight; so the door of the ark was in the time of the flood, but when the ark was built, the door was built. So when Satan built this temptation, God did build a door in the sides thereof, and in due time you shall see it. But may I be sure of that, you will say? Yes, as sure as God is faithful, for he hath pawned his faithfulness for the truth of this promise. "But God is faithful," says the apostle, "who will with the temptation, make a way for escape." Oh! that that men would mind the promise more and all the words thereof. They are so hurried sometimes with the temptation, that they cannot hear the promise. But is all this true? Oh, then attend the promise, hear what the promise speaketh.

Consider also what comforts lie behind your temptations; as temptations sometimes lie in ambush behind your performances, so comforts lie in ambush behind your temptations,

and as the greatest temptations do sometimes follow the highest manifestations of God's love (witness the 3rd and 4th chapters of St. Matthew), so the greatest consolations do sometimes follow the worst temptations. When did the angels minister unto Christ, but when he had made a good dispatch of temptations? So it shall be with you also; for Christ was tempted, that by his example and issue of temptation, he might succour you under your temptation. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and what end the Lord made with him, he had twice as much after the temptation was over as he had before; and if you ride out this storm, assuredly the good angels will come and minister to you, and your consolations shall be doubled unto what ye had before. Wherefore, my brethren, take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in this evil day, and having done all to stand; and so much for the fifth instance.

SERMON IX.

A LIFTING UP IN CASE OF DESERTION.

“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me,” &c.—Psalm xlii. 11.

VI. SOMETIMES the discouragements of the saints are taken from their desertions, spiritual desertions.

And this was David's case here, for, saith he, verse 10, “As a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproached me, while they say unto me, Where is thy God?” And verse 9, “I will say unto God, my Rock, why hast thou forgotten me?” And this is the ordinary case of God's children: Oh, saith one, the Lord hath forgotten me, hid his face from me, and hath forsaken my soul, and therefore I am thus discouraged. I do not complain for want or loss of outward mercies and blessings; yea, though all the world should forsake me, I should not be much afflicted, if God and Christ were present with me: but times were, when the candle of the Lord shined upon me, when I walked, as I thought, in the light of his countenance; but now the Lord hath hid