

think thus : Why, Lord God, such a one that walks so inoffensively, so graciously, yet what a broken heart hath such a one. I have a wretched heart, and yet I cannot find my heart break ; thus the very society of poor broken hearts will be a mighty help to thee.

And then, fourthly, If you cannot mourn, then mourn that you cannot mourn. Oh this will be acceptable unto God. You will say, I cannot have command over my heart to mourn for sin as I desire. Ay, but canst not thou go to God and make thy moan, and complain of this as the greatest evil that is upon thee : Lord, I account this dull, hard heart of mine as a most fearful evil upon me ?

And then, fifthly, Do not give way to yourselves to take any joy or comfort in anything in this world till you get your hearts broken for your sin. Will not my heart yield in way of mourning for sin, it shall not rejoice then ; I will not let it out to any vain mirth and joy until I can get it to break, and

although heretofore I took content in such and such company, and in the use of the creature. It is true, it is lawful for a man to take comfort, but is it convenient for such a man as I that can never mourn for my sin ? Nay, I will charge this upon my heart, first to labour to be affected for sin, and to mourn for sin, and then I hope I shall take more comfort both in God and his creatures than heretofore.

And then, lastly, Oh take heed of sinning after mourning, thou that wouldst have such a mourning heart as is here spoken of in this my text for thy sin. Take heed that if ever God begins to break thy heart and help thee to mourn, that thou do not sin wilfully after mourning. If God begins to wound thy heart for thy sin, above all times thou hadst need now to be watchful and careful over thyself. Oh let me lay a deep charge upon thy soul to look to itself, that now being troubled for such and such a sin, thou do not after this give way and liberty to thy soul to commit the same sin again.

SERMON X.

OR,

AN EXHORTATION TO MOURNERS FOR SIN.

'Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.'—MAT. v. 4.

I HAVE but a word or two for exhortation further about this argument of mourning for sin.

It is an exhortation even to those that have mourned for sin, to mourn still, to make it a continued work. I told you that the assurance of the pardon of sin is no hindrance to mourning for it, but should rather be a furtherance, as it was in David ; and therefore you who are the people of God, God expects that you should mourn for sin, for you know how sin is against the holiness of God, the blessed will of God, more than others do ; you know what price was paid for the purchase of the pardon of it more than others do, and therefore do you mourn. Your sins they grieve the Spirit of God more than others' do. The sins of other men may provoke God's Spirit, but yours grieve God's Spirit, Eph. iv. 30 ; your sins do more hurt than others' do, therefore do you mourn. You know what the great mischief is that sin doth in the world, Rom. viii. 21, 22 ; sin makes the whole creation to groan under the burden

of it, and shall not you be sensible of so much evil of sin as remains in your hearts ? You know that sin is a greater evil than all afflictions whatsoever, and therefore do you mourn ; go under the burden of sin with a heavy heart as long as you live. It is not long that God hath to glorify himself in your sorrow, it will not be long but you shall be delivered from your sin ; but so long as you have this body of sin about you, God expects mourning from you. God expects from you not only to mourn for your own sin, but to mourn for the sins of others, 'and blessed are they that do so, they shall be comforted.'

First, We are to mourn for the sins of others. We have very remarkable scripture for this, Ezra ix. 3. Oh the lamentable condition that Ezra was in for the sins of his people ! he doth rend his garments, and sits down astonished for their sins. And David in Ps. cxix. 53, 'Horror takes hold upon me,' saith David. What ! was there any great judgment near him ? No ; 'Horror hath taken hold upon me because of the

wicked that forsake thy law.' When he beheld the wickedness of men, his heart was struck with horror, because they forsook God's law; and ver. 136, 'Rivers of water run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law;' and ver. 158, 'I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.' David's spirit was in a very blessed frame when he penned this psalm, and see how he is affected with the sins of others; and in that famous place, the 9th of Ezekiel, there you find how God marks those that mourn for the sins of the places where they live. And if we look into the New Testament, there is nothing more full; the example of Paul, 2 Cor. xii., 'When I come God shall humble me, and I shall bewail those that have sinned;' and that place is famous, 2 Pet. ii. 7.—it is said of righteous Lot that his soul was vexed; and then in ver. 8, it is said, 'He vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds.' The word in the Greek is different from what it is in your books; in the 7th verse is a word, *καταπορεύσινον*, that signifies *oppressed*: as much as oppressed the soul; it was a burden to his soul, as an oppression is a burden to a man; he accounted himself wronged by the sins of others, and he went under it as a great oppressing burden. That is the meaning of the word. I find the same word in Acts vii. 24, where it is spoken of Moses that helped the man that was oppressed. The word that is there, him that was oppressed, is *καταπορεύσινον*; it is the same that is here, for Lot's soul was vexed. And I find sometimes the word signifies to be weakened by sickness in other authors; so it is said of Lot, righteous Lot, the wickedness that he saw in others did so trouble his righteous soul, as it was as grievous to him as a sickness is to you. That is the meaning of the first word in ver. 7. Then the second word that is in ver. 8, there it is vexed again; but the word is in the original, *ἐδαράνζειν*, he did cruciate. It is a word that is used to signify the tormenting of a man upon a rack, as if the Holy Ghost should say the wickedness of those he lived among did put that gracious soul of his upon the rack. He was as a man upon the rack, with the sins of those among whom he lived; and you that are wicked and ungodly, you must not think that you shall only suffer for your own sins, you shall suffer for the grief that you put the godly to. You must not think that your sins concern not them at all; oh yes. You do wrong them by the sins you commit. Why, if you should see a man strike your father in the street, and you should come to him and ask him why he did it; and he should answer, What is that to you? I did not strike you. But you strike my father. So when you sin you strike their Father, you dishonour their God, and this is a cruciating unto them.

The reasons therefore why we must mourn for the

sins of others as well as our own, that is the first, because the blessed God is so much dishonoured. Oh how must it needs go to the heart of a godly man to see that God, whom his soul loves—that God who is so infinitely blessed and glorious, so infinitely worthy of all honour from all creatures, to be so dishonoured by base, wretched worms! There is a report of Cæsar's son, that was dumb all his days, until he saw a soldier striking at his father to kill him, and then the affection that he bore to his father did break the bars of his speech, and he cries out, Why do you kill Cæsar? So when we see God, that blessed God, so dishonoured, whom our souls do so love, it must of necessity pierce our hearts.

And then, secondly, Our love to others should cause grief. Why? when we see others sin against God, we see them do mischief to themselves. Doth it not grieve you when you see men wound and destroy themselves? when you hear of men's houses on fire, and of the grievous pains they are in? Why, you mourn for it, and it would make, you say, the hardest heart in the world to melt. You can never see a man so miserable by anything as he is by sin; sin makes him the most miserable creature in the world, and therefore, if you have any love to your brother, mourn for his sin.

And then, thirdly, Because the sins of others doth bring a great deal of evil to the world. What is the cause of the evils that are in the world but the sins that are committed in the world? and while thou dost live in the world, thou canst not but partake of the miseries that do come by sin. In Eccles. ix. 18, 'One sinner destroys much good;' what doth many sinners then? As the vapours, they ascend insensibly up, but they come down sensibly; so the sins of the world they may ascend up, and men not regard them, but they will come down in grievous storms and tempests.

And then, fourthly, There is cause of mourning for the sins of others, because thou canst never see any man commit any sin but thou hast cause to consider that the root of that sin is in thy heart. It is reported of Bradford that he never saw a man commit a sin, never heard a man swear an oath, or the like, but he would use to say, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' God be merciful to me—that is, he saw the root of that sin in his heart. It is true, the Lord hath restrained thee from such cross sins, but thou hast the root of them in thy heart; and therefore thou hast cause to mourn when thou seest sin in others. And blessed are they that do thus mourn.

For, first, This argueth sincerity; this argueth much of the Spirit of God. It doth not argue so much sincerity to mourn for our own sins as for the sins of others; though indeed there is more cause why we should mourn for our own sins than for others', yet

there is more sincerity in mourning for others' sins than for our own.

And then, secondly, By mourning for other men's sins thou dost free thyself from the guilt of them. How canst thou that livest in a nation or family be free from the sins of those that thou dost converse withal, if thou dost not mourn for them? But now when thou canst mourn for the sins of others, thou dost free thyself from the guilt of them, and especially when thou mournest for the sins of such as are in relation to thee, then thou dost free thyself from the guilt of those; as it may be there is such a godly child whose eyes God hath opened to see his own sins, and he mourns for them. Oh, but he thinks with himself, will ever God be merciful to me that came of such a stock? I have such a father or mother that is so profane, a drunkard, a swearer, a scornor, and I am afraid that the Lord will visit the sin of my father upon me. Now, thou that art a child hast no way to be delivered from the guilt of the wickedness of thy father and mother, or thy forefathers, but by mourning for them. Hath God pulled thee out of a wicked stock, now God doth expect that thou shouldst mourn and lament for the sins of that stock; and so thou livest in a wicked family, and the judgments of God may come upon the family for its sin, why, thou canst not free thyself but by mourning for their sins as well as thy own; and blessed art thou if thou dost so. If thou dost mourn for their sins, the Lord will not visit their sins upon thee.

And then, thirdly, Blessed are they that do mourn for the sins of others, because by this means they make themselves fit instruments of God to be used by God to help against the sins of others. No men are such fit instruments of God, to do God service, to stop the course of the sins of others, as those that take them to heart; and therefore above all men, men in public place, that God makes use of to stop the course of wickedness, they should be men that should be much exercised with this grace of mourning for the sins of others. You that God makes to be chief in parishes, and towns or cities, and puts into your hands to stop the course of sin in the place where you live, now if your hearts be not touched with the sins of the places where you live, how unfit instruments will you be for the honour of God, for the stopping of sin. No marvel though men in place care little what becomes of things; let things go which way they will, if they may get any gain. Why, to this day they never knew what it was to be in a closet alone, between God and their souls, lamenting for the sins of the places where they live; but blessed are they that do so, for they are the instruments that God doth use, and that he delights to employ in such service.

And then they shall be comforted, these that do thus mourn.

For, first, In public calamity they shall be hid. As we know Jeremiah, he was a great mourner for the sins of others; and in Jer. xv. 11 the Lord makes a promise to him in the time of public calamity to be hid. Read Jer. ix., beginning, and so on, and you shall find him bitterly lamenting, oh that his head were waters, and his eyes a fountain of tears, and that he had a cottage in the wilderness; indeed, it is in part for the slain of his people, but it is for their sins likewise. And in Jer. xv. 11 God promises that he shall be hid: and that place in Ezek. ix. is famous; and the Lord would have one with a pen and inkhorn go and mark all them that mourn for the sins of others. Take notice of them, saith God; whatsoever calamity doth befall the place where they live, I will be merciful to them—one way or other I will provide for them.

And then, secondly, Thou shalt be comforted. Know thou that art a mourner for the sins where thou livest, that within a little while all the wickedness of men shall be subdued—all shall be brought under, so as God shall not be dishonoured by the sins of men as now he is, all the refuse shall be cast upon the dunghill; there shall be nothing but rejoicing at the righteous judgments of God upon wicked men. Indeed, now when we see God dishonoured by wicked men that live among us, we are to mourn, but there is a time coming that there shall be no more mourning for their sin, but rejoicing at the righteous judgments of God executed upon their sin: 'Blessed are you that mourn, for you shall be comforted.'

And for this, by way of use, briefly, thus:

Oh, let us learn then to lay to heart the sins of those where we live, not only in our parishes, families, those that belong to us, but the sins of the nation.

I will instance but in some few particulars, and you that are the most barren in meditation you may easily reckon up abundance more.

As, first, Let us mourn for the great injustice that is among us at this day; there is cause of mourning for that, the oppression and injustice. In Isa. lix. 11, 14, 15, 'We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves.' Why? 'We look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us;' and so he goes on in the 14th verse: 'And judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter: yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.' What an aggravation is this to this sin of injustice, that it should be at such a time as now it is, that when the Lord by such an outstretched arm delivered us from our oppressors, that now we should oppress one another. I believe there was never a greater cry for the

sin of injustice to Heaven than there is at this day, however it may be some may complain that have no such cause; but woe to us, there is a great deal of cause, for there is woeful injustice among us.

And then, secondly, Oh mourn that Christ is no more embraced among us, that when we have as fair opportunities to bring in Jesus Christ among us as ever people had since the world began! Jesus Christ is offering himself to us in as fair a way as ever he did offer himself to any people, and yet what a spirit of malignity is risen among us, as we are ready to say, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' Oh mourn for the ignorance, for the profaneness of the people of the land! even now when there is such a liberty of the gospel, (for never was the like,) yet they turn away from it, and judge themselves unworthy of eternal life, and even do despite to the Spirit of grace. In Rom. ix. 2, mark how Paul was affected for his countrymen's sake, that he could even have wished himself to have been cut off from Jesus Christ, he was so troubled for their ignorance and rejection of Christ; one would think that, seeing God hath so wonderfully wrought to bring us to the enjoyment of the liberty of the gospel, that this should be a time that generally people should come in to embrace it. Oh, but we find it otherwise; there is a vile spirit risen among men against the ways of godliness.

And then, thirdly, Mourn we that there are such divisions now among us. The devil sees that he cannot get many to that profaneness and popery as he was wont to do, and therefore now he comes to spoil religion, and that by divisions, yea, and among the godly; and there the policy of Satan is as much seen as in anything. Yea, and the rather let us take this to heart, when we consider that almost every time men meddle with divisions, and cry out against them, they make them wider, and many they are affected indeed because of the divisions that are in the land. Ay, but it is because every one will not be of their mind, and therefore they mourn; but it is a selfish mourning, for the most part, when men cry out of divisions because they may carry away all the esteem, and honour, and dignities, and preferments, without any control whatsoever; therefore they cry out of divisions, but there is not a spiritual mourning of heart for the sins of the divisions that are among us.

And then, fourthly, Oh mourn we for the abuse of our liberty, the wantonness that is among us now. The Lord grants unto us times of liberty more than ever our forefathers had, or could have thought to have had, and now, O Lord, what an abuse of this liberty is there! How do men run out to all kind of licentiousness because of liberty; out of that pleading for that true liberty of conscience that Christ would have us to tender one another in, they run out to all

kind of licentiousness, blasphemy, and wickedness whatsoever.

Sixthly, Oh mourn we for this, that there is so much unthankfulness among us; that is, because we have not everything as we would have, therefore we are ready to say, there is nothing done. Oh it is a vile speech that comes from any mouth to say, What hath God done for us? The Lord hath done that for this kingdom that is more worth than thy life, or the lives of ten thousand more than thou art, and therefore to say there is nothing done because all is not done that thou wouldst have done, it is a most wretched unthankfulness, and you should bleed in the consideration of it.

And then, seventhly, Mourn we for the scandals that are among us, the many stumbling-blocks that lie in the way, the evils of men that are professors of religion; how do they cast stumbling-blocks in the ways of such as are coming on, and make the ways of godliness to be abhorred because of their wicked lives!

And then, lastly, Mourn we that good men when they are put upon the trial do so much miscarry. This is a sore evil that we may see under the sun at this time. There was never a time in any kingdom wherein so many godly men had so much power in their hands, either in place of magistracy or ministry, but yet, oh the miscarriages of them! How do many of them go by the same principle that others went before, but in another way! And we come to see plainly the truth of that speech, Put men into place, into power, that they may have power over others, and we see what strange spirits they have; even such as we thought were broken-hearted, and did heretofore mourn for the sins of other men that were in place, and, together with their brethren, were fasting and praying and crying to Heaven against the evils of those that were in place but a few years ago, now they come to hope to enjoy the same power, we find that they go apace towards the same way that others were in. Oh my brethren, I speak these things out of conscience, as a duty that we owe to God, to lay them to heart, and to bewail them in the bitterness of our souls. I do not speak this to upbraid any, for there is upbraiding enough abroad, but that we should mourn for them. God forbid that we should speak in way of reproach; no, but in way of lamentation, because these evils have been so much against God and against the public good. Oh if we could lay aside our wrangling a while, and fall a-mourning in one another's bosoms, reformation would go on in another manner than now it doth.

And here is yet a further evil, we have some cause to mourn for men's mourning—that is, men mourn because they cannot have their wills, and they mourn merely out of a kind of spirit of revenge, and make

many times their very fasts to be fasts for strife; we should mourn, I say, for our mourning. And thus much for this that lies so full in my text, 'Blessed are they that mourn;' such as can thus mourn are blessed. Oh that this spirit of mourning were upon us!

And then the next, that is, the last point in my text, It is those that mourn for the afflictions of the church, as well as otherwise: Blessed are those that mourn for them; and we find it in Scripture to be the way of the saints likewise to mourn much for the afflictions of God's people, as in Neh. i. Though Nehemiah were at the court himself, and had a great place, and was at ease, and had abundance of riches, yet he looks sad, and would not have the king to wonder at it, when it was so ill with the church, and a notable scripture we have in Luke xix., even in our Saviour, Christ. It is a very remarkable scripture. When Christ came near to Jerusalem he wept, both because of their sin, and the misery that was coming upon them, and said, 'Oh if thou hadst known, at least in this thy day, the things that concern thy peace; but now they are hid from thine eyes.' Mark this, at what time Christ did this, it was not in a time that Christ was in any great affliction himself, for you shall find that when he did thus lament, ver. 36, 37, it was when they cut down boughs and strewed them in the way, and cried Hosanna to him; it was at that time when they honoured Jesus Christ most; and yet that did not take up his heart so as not to be affected with the miseries of others. 'And,' saith the text, 'as he went, they spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitude that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.' The people went before Christ magnifying of him, and they took off their garments and strewed them all along in the streets, and would have Christ go upon them, as not thinking it fit that such an honourable person as Jesus Christ was should go upon the ground, but go upon their garments: and they cried out before him, 'Blessed is the king that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.' What honour had Jesus Christ here! But now mark, Christ was not much taken with the honour that was done to his person; that you shall find almost in the very next words, 'And when he drew near, he beheld the city, and wept.' He falls a-weeping at that time when he is so much honoured. Oh this should for ever teach us, that how good soever our own condition be, though our tables be furnished, and we have honour and respect from others, yet this should not at all hinder our affections towards the miseries of our

brethren: we should be in our weeping and mourning condition even at those times when we have the greatest abundance of the comforts of the world. I beseech you, think of this you that are lifted up in places, and you that have means coming in, and have as great a fulness as ever you had, and it may be more than ever you had, yet at this time, if you have the Spirit of Jesus Christ in you, that that you enjoy in the fulness of it will not take away your affections unto the sorrows of your brethren. It is a command in Rom. xii. that we 'must weep with them that weep, and mourn with them that mourn;' and in Heb. xiii. 3, we must be 'even in bonds with them that are in bonds;' we must be affected with their bonds as if we ourselves were in bonds. This God requires of us. Now what shall I say of the examples of Jeremiah and David, and others of the prophets that did thus mourn, of Paul, &c. It were endless to name all examples that we might have in Scripture for this, but blessed are they; there is a great deal of cause that we should do so.

Why, first, Those that are in afflictions, they are men, mourn for them as they are men. Oh but they are our brethren, they are those that are near to us, they are the saints of God.

And consider, secondly, we have the root of the matter in ourselves. Why canst thou think in thy conscience that such men should be in such an afflicted estate and thou shouldst feel nothing thyself—thou shouldst have all things about thee as ever? Is there any reason why such excellent saints of God, that have done God so much service in their generation, should be cast out of house and home, and thou shouldst sit at thy table so full, and have thy wife and children about thee, and thy house so furnished, and all at peace, what reason can there be given? Is there not as much in thee to provoke God as in them? hast thou done more service for God than they? Oh, if thou hadst not the heart of an adamant it would break thee!

But there is another that is yet more. Consider the dishonour that God hath by the afflictions of his people. The truth is, the Lord suffers in their suffering, 'in all their afflictions he is afflicted;' the more the churches go down, the more do the wicked insult and triumph, the more doth wickedness prevail. Oh this should go to thy heart: God goes down, as I may say, and his cause goes down in the saints' going down; and the glory of God is unwrapt in the good of the saints, and he suffers in it.

You will say now, If God suffers, why will he let the saints be so afflicted?

To that I answer, The Lord will let them be afflicted for the discovery of those who are true and false. And indeed he doth raise to himself a glorious name many ways; but yet though the Lord doth

raise to himself a name of praise by the sufferings of the saints, yet we must mourn and lament, because in the meantime God doth suffer, and they tend much to his dishonour, although he by his infinite power can fetch honour out of them.

And, besides, if you consider only this, the greatness of the evils that is in these days. If ever there were a time to mourn for the afflictions of others, now is the time; and those that are the witnesses for the truth have cause to prophesy even in sackcloth now. Oh if we did but understand the woeful evil and miseries of war! It is an evil that hath abundance of evils, as it were, in the belly of it. It is the cup of God's anger, and the wine thereof is red—it is as red even as blood—and it is a mixed wine. The ingredients in the cup are murder, and robbery, and rape, and dellowing, and cruelty, and torment, and famine, and pestilence—these are the ingredients in the cup; and therefore, though we sit here in our houses quietly, and find not the woeful evils of this civil wars, yet others can tell us, Did you but see those doleful miseries that they see—men that were of good rank and fashion, that lived comfortably, and were of public use and eminent saints, how they are driven from their house and home like brute beasts! Oh should we but see what hath been done in Ireland! They cry to us, O you that pass by, is it nothing to you all that we have suffered? was there ever sorrow like our sorrow? It might be of very great use to lay open the woeful misery of others; but I will shew you how blessed are those that do mourn for the afflictions of others. They are blessed,

First, Because they have much of the spirit of Christ in them. Theirs is such a kind of spirit as Jesus Christ had when he lived upon the earth, and this was a blessed spirit.

Secondly, They do evidence that they are members of the same body. Thon that canst hear of the woeful evils that the churches suffer, and not mourn, thou dost evidently declare to all the world, and God tells thee to thy conscience, that thou art but a dead member, and not a living member of the body of Jesus Christ; but when your hearts can be affected with the miseries of the churches, you have evidence to your souls that you are living members of Jesus Christ.

And then blessed are you, because in this you do walk with God—that is, you observe God's way. When God comes in mercy to his church, then you can rejoice; and when God is in a way of afflicting, then you mourn. I say this is to walk with God, to have our hearts affected according to the several administrations of God's providence; and blessed are they that walk with God.

'You shall be comforted'—that is,

First, Know there is a time that God's people shall be delivered from all their sorrows, that all tears shall be wiped away from their eyes, that 'there shall be no more pricking brier nor grieving thorn,' Ezek. xxviii. 24. This is promised to the saints; and I hope that this time must be even in this world, that the saints shall be as much honoured as ever they have been dishonoured, and that wicked men shall no more persecute them, but shall be brought under them. And there is a morning wherein the saints shall have dominion over the wicked and ungodly; you shall have comfort in this, you that do mourn for the affliction of the saints: 'O thou afflicted and tossed with tempests,' now thou art afflicted and tossed, but thy foundations shall be laid with sapphires and with precious stones, Isa. liv. 11. The foundation of the church shall be so; the church shall be a burdensome stone to all that do persecute them: 'Arise, shine, O shine, for the glory of God is risen upon thee,' Isa. lx. 1, saith the Lord unto the churches; 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned,' Isa. xl. 1, 2. There is such a time that the people of God shall be so comforted, and when the saints shall triumph in the salvation of God, and shall say, 'Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him; this is the God of our salvation.' There is, I say, such a time.

And then there are many promises to you who do mourn for the affliction of the saints. In Ps. xli. 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor'—those that consider such as are afflicted are blessed; and in Isa. lvii. 18, there the Lord promises unto his church that he will 'restore comforts to her and to her mourners'—to them both, they shall be comforted; those that now mourn with the saints, they shall rejoice with them; in Isa. lxvi. 10, there you have a promise to them, Those that mourn with the people of God they shall rejoice; and then in Zeph. iii. 18 there is a promise that those that did 'account the reproach of the solemn assembly to be a burden, God would gather them.' The saints of God are reproached, they are persecuted; others can rejoice now, but there were those that accounted it a burden to them, and to them the Lord makes a gracious promise.

Again, You that mourn for the affliction of the saints are blessed; for when God shall bring you into affliction, God will own your souls in the day of affliction. If at any time your children should be afflicted, your dear wives, &c., you may with comfort go to God and pray, O Lord, comfort me in mine affliction, and comfort me in the affliction of my wife, my children, my father, my mother! You may have comfort, I say. Why? Because you did mourn

for the afflictions of his children. Nay, saith God, here is one indeed that is afflicted. What, is the man's child or wife under any affliction? Why, I remember when my children were afflicted, they mourned for my children; why, now their children are afflicted, I will take that to heart, and have compassion upon them in their affliction; and therefore blessed are they that mourn. Now for the application of it.

First, It should have been to rebuke the jollity of men's spirits in these sad times. Oh, it is a wicked thing in these sad times to have a carnal, jolly spirit. God indeed gives you liberty to have comfort, and to rejoice in himself; for so you will say we are bidden to rejoice always. Ay, but know spiritual joy and this mourning may stand both together—know that God expects that you should abate of your carnal joy. I will give you but two scriptures for this, which are very terrible against those that are so jolly and merry in sad times. The first is in Isa. xxii. 12, 'And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; and behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine: let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till you die, saith the Lord of hosts.' Oh, it is a daunting scripture to those that in these times take liberty to the flesh. I beseech you, if you do believe that this scripture is the word of God, when you come home lay it upon your hearts and consciences. Saith God, When I called to mourning and weeping, behold there was joy and gladness, and mirth, and drinking of wine. This iniquity shall

not be purged till you die, saith God; I will never pardon it. It is spoken, as in the New Testament it is said of the sin against the Holy Ghost, that it should never be forgiven. And so this is made a kind of an unpardonable sin, though I think that it is not so unpardonable as that; but though God should give you a heart to see the evil of it never so much, yet you may smart for it in this world, even as the Lord did concerning Moses. He would not hear him, but bid him speak no more of that matter, but he must die in the wilderness. Oh, the Lord cannot but look with indignation upon such as these are. What! saith God, shall I chastise my own dear children, and shall this wretch, that is good for nothing but to eat and drink and get money here, shall he not take it at all to heart? I will never bear this, saith God; it shall never be purged from him till he die. O my brethren, if ever God calls to weeping and mourning, it is now; and therefore not to have a heart in these mourning times it is a sign that thy heart is hardened from the fear of God. If ever this text of Christ were suitable it is in these mourning times, wherein those are held forth to be blessed that do mourn; and on the other side, those that do not mourn they will certainly prove to be accursed by Christ when they shall come to stand before him.

And then the other scripture is in Amos vi, where the Lord complains, 'that they drank wine in bowls, and had their music, and all kinds of jollity,' &c. Oh but, saith he, 'there was none that did remember the afflictions of Joseph;' Joseph might be imprisoned, might be sold, might endure any afflictions, what was it to them? They would not so much as remember. Oh woe to them!