

SERMON VIII.¹

“We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have, as it were, brought forth wind, we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

Isaiah 26:18–19

AS this people had before heard of many judgments, and likewise of many good days to come; so, in the first and second verses of this chapter, Zion begins this song, “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” And well she sings, and desires to have possession of that of which she sings. That shows what was in her heart, for she sings with the tear in her eye. She sings a song of that which is coming on; she invites all to come and take a trial of the Lord, for “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.” And then, “Trust ye in the Lord for ever.” And then she begins to look what way she will do it: “For he bringeth down them that dwell on high; the lofty city, he layeth it low; he layeth it low, even to the ground; he layeth it low, even to the dust.” And then she and her daughter come to say, “Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited upon thee: the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee.” And at length she takes the promise boldly: “Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.”

In the words we have read, she shuts up her song, as if she had said, “I can sing no more, except it be in complaints; we have been with child.” We may take this to have been spoken when she was in captivity. She says, “We have been

in pain; we expected a deliverance; but when we thought to have brought forth a man child, then we only brought forth wind. We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth.” But Christ answers her thus, “Although thou be dead, and lying in the dust, yet sing, ‘Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.’” Or the prophet says it, in Christ’s name, “I am fully persuaded that ye shall be well, and I would engage to sink and swim with you. I shall,” says he, “desire to be no better than ye shall be.” He bids them all believe it; and then they begin to apply the promise unto themselves, and they all confess to that which the prophet had said. Hence the Church says her dead body shall arise, so that all her members begin and apply it unto themselves. The Lord begins to bear in the application of the point upon them; then they all consent to sing, and they encourage one another, saying, “Our dew shall be as the dew of herbs; and the earth shall cast out the dead.”

Now ye have heard of the close of the song. And now in this, and the preceding verses ye have: (1) A complaint, (2) a promise, and (3) an application of the promise.

As to the complaint, it consists in three things: (1.) “We have been with child.” This is their condition. (2.) They are pained. (3.) The continuance of the pain. “We thought to have been delivered, but our thoughts and expectations are frustrated, and we bring forth wind, instead of a child.”

DOCT. I. *When ye find such a woful condition, and yet a song appended to it, observe that sometimes Zion and her daughters sing with tears in their eyes.*

Now, for proof of this, there are many mournful psalms of David that bear this title or inscription, “A Song or Psalm of David.” The Church of God is represented in a sad and woful condition in this place, and yet the prophet calls this representation a “song.” The reasons are threefold:

1. The first reason why she must sing with the tear in her eye, is because it is a commanded duty. Though she can give no reason of a song, either internal or external, yet she must sing. If it should be to run over some precipice, and dash herself to pieces, if she hath a command, she must obey the charge. Whatsoever stands in her way, she must go through it; and then He allows Zion to sing. She must sing a song.

USE. This reaches a reproof unto the natural man, for he knows not what it is to obey a command out of regard to God's authority. He cannot do it in remembrance of Him; but the spiritual man must essay it, and he dares not say anything to the contrary. Says Job, "Yet in my flesh shall I see God;" that is, "My dust shall yet praise God." Thus the children of Zion must go on in obedience to a command. And,

2. She must sing. And why? That she may engage others in this work;" For although I never thrive," says the child of God, "yet I wish all Zion's daughters to thrive and prosper." So that, Christians, you should not suffer any of your jealousies to frighten others from coming to God in Christ. Zion's daughters will smile when they hear the word preached, although it should sting them to the heart.

3. The third reason why she sings is, she knows that if there be any means under heaven to engage God to work for her and to recover her out of her bad condition, it is this exercise. Says David, "I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies." She knows that to call upon God and to praise Him would be the way to be saved by Him. The soul knows that it never got God's approbation for disbelieving. "Many times," says the soul, "hath He frowned upon me for it; and therefore I would strive against unbelief." Now when the soul can plead this way from experience, then it is encouraged to sing. But again, as Zion sings, she sings with the tear in

her eye. The reasons for this are:

(1.) Because, although she sees she is bound to sing, yet she sees a debt in her bosom that she will never be able to pay. This makes her weep because she hath wronged Christ; and when she sees how far she is fallen from God, and from that sweet and desirable condition she was in, as the Psalmist expresses it, "When I remember these things, I pour out my soul within me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holy-day." Thus he begins to sing, and then the tears start into his eyes, and he thinks, "Oh, that it had been with me as formerly, then I might have sung cheerfully."

(2.) The second reason why they sing with the tear in their eye is, because their enemies thrust sore at them. When they begin to sing, the devil perhaps starts up and says, "O thou blasphemer of God, how canst thou sing? for thou but dishonourest Him with thy song." Then the tears start in their eyes. "Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord helped me." And then she sees that she hath reason both of singing and complaining. At last she finds out a way to unite them, and sings with the tear in her eye.

(3.) The third reason is, because ye know singing is a token of hope. When she begins to think how many vain hopes she has had, she is troubled, and that makes the tear to start into her eye.

Now, we think there are some people this day that would sing, and they must sing, and yet the tear appears in their eye when they think how many vain thoughts and vain expectations they have had, to be loosed from their bonds. Now, we would wish the Lord's people would not plead their duty of praise out of doors. For be your condition what it will, sing; for the worst condition ye can be in gives

you no liberty to thrust out a command. If ye will give this place, we defy unbelief to prevail with you. But you may say, "Ye know not what condition we are in, and yet you bid us sing." Indeed, I know not your different conditions; but they can be no worse than the condition the Scripture here speaks of. "We have been in pain; we have brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth."

Now, "We have been in pain; we have been with child." Here the Church's condition may be divided into three different things.

1st, A conception or deliverance under outward troubles.
2ndly, This conception comes to the hopes of a delivery.
And, 3rdly, They were disappointed in this.

DOCT. II. *Great troubles and afflictions are in the lot of the people and children of God.*

But you will wonder that we took such a text or subject on this day; but as we essayed to pass it by, but could not get liberty, so we think that many of the people of God are come to this pass.

I say, outward afflictions are the lot of the godly; for "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all." Some have troubles on their bodies, some upon their names, some upon their goods, &c. But why is it so with Zion?

1. The first reason for this is, because it is to scour off the rust, so to speak, of their armour, that it may be put to use or practice. Sometimes when a man doth not his duty to God, then He lays trouble one way or another upon him to stir him up to his duty. He will suffer this man's character to be tossed as a foot-ball up and down the country, and

by that means will set the man upon working. "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed." Acquainted with troubles, people grow more patient; they will bear with a wrong now, that they could not have endured or borne with before.

2. A second reason is, that they may know that the full enjoyment of their peace is not on this side the grave. For when they begin, as it were, to lay in a stock for themselves to live peaceably upon, then he cuts the sinews of their expectations. That which they leaned unto fails, so that they can find no comfort in it. But says the apostle, "Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city."

3. The third reason why God lays troubles upon His people is, that the rent of these troubles may be paid unto Him. There are a great number of outward strokes that He lays upon the men of the world, and they never acknowledge God in or for them; and therefore He lays them upon Zion, that He may get the tribute of them from her. He will have His people declare what they can pay to Him out of any year, accident, or the like. He will have them give a proof before the world what may be made of that which the world can make nothing of. And, we dare say, that if people knew this, they would walk more sure, more safely, in and under troubles. Pay thy dues then, O man, or woman, before the world. "I will pay my vows now, in presence of all his people."

Now the Lord out of His absolute power and sovereignty will lay the plague of pestilence on some of His people, that the world may see that they can believe, hope, and rejoice in such a condition, and pay the due thereof unto God. The world cannot do it, and therefore you of Zion shall get them laid upon you. "We have been in pain; we have been

with child.”

The trouble is as that of a woman with child; that is, great trouble in itself; but the thoughts of being a mother to a child mitigates the pain unto her. Hence,

DOCT. III. *That outward trouble is grievous in itself.*

Therefore it reproves these who may be saying, “Oh that I had some cross, I would wait better upon my duty.” But fools, I say, that trouble is altogether grievous in itself; it is as a woman with child in pain to be delivered. It is true, the man is blessed that gets the right and satisfied use of it. “Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest out of thy law.” But without teaching of His law, trouble is an impediment, and hindrance unto many. I say, a cross laid on you, if ye get not the sanctified use of it, will bring one trouble after another daily, as so many strangers that will hold you so busy, that ye shall not have time or leisure for prayer to God. Therefore let none of the people of the Lord, now approach unto His table, with these thoughts in their hearts. For crosses of themselves are an enemy to godliness. For instance, some men will have a bad wife, and some women a bad husband; some bad children, and these troubles occasion new ones, so that they are in pain to be delivered, and yet oftentimes bring forth nothing but wind. And troubles are grievous,

1. Because the Lord hath hidden, as is were, His face; and that makes it troublesome. For it is impossible for one to be much subdued with any affliction, if he have the Lord’s countenances. But when He hides His face, then trouble becomes more grievous. “Thou hidest thy face, and I was troubled.” Now we would wish, that those who have trouble, and from whom the Lord hath hid His face, would pray unto God, that He would, as it were, draw the curtain, and that would make every trouble sweet and comfortable

unto them.

2. A second reason why trouble becomes grievous is, because ye have not a clear conscience, but have challenges along with the cross; and then the least cross hath the sting in it. For if I am not consumed with guilt lying upon my conscience, then I can plead with God more cheerfully.

3. The third reason why your troubles become grievous to you is, that when ye see these things come to pass that ye proposed unto yourselves, yet have not got that in them which ye expected. This brings forth wind, and makes your trouble grievous unto you. For example, a man that, perhaps, hath a bad wife takes comfort in this: he thinks, "I shall have good children, and I shall have honour of them;" but God makes the children crosses to him as well as the wife; and thus what he laid down as his ground of comfort, brings forth wind. I will tell you what makes it grievous to you; it is because you limit the way of getting your cross loosed. But, I say, resolve to wait; and depend upon God until He deliver you, although it should be till your last breath.

4. The fourth reason that makes your cross grievous unto you, is because ye will not bear one day's cross alone; as if the cross ye have were not enough, ye cut and carve out crosses unto yourselves. Ye think, "What if this and that shall be, then I must be still worse and worse." Thus the man is vexed with his own vain thoughts. "This and that will come," says he, "and then I shall be ashamed—then I and my house will be ruined." "But is not every day sufficient for the evil thereof," says Christ. And can He not send as much strength with the cross, as shall make you bear it. These sad thoughts of the cross make it become exceeding heavy.

USE. Now for the use. Anyone who is thinking it shall be

thus and thus, and whose time is taken up with these vexing thoughts of crosses, ye should live in a constant dependence upon God, and on bills of exchange. One cross shall furnish you with as much as will carry you on to another; and thus ye shall be carried still from one to another, if ye live by a constant dependence on God. This kind of life will keep His name great in your estimation. "God is our refuge and strength, and a very present help in trouble." I wish that the Lord's people, before they now go to His table, would resolve upon this, to live henceforth, as it were, on bills of exchange, and trust all unto God. Oh! that all God's afflicted people would do this!

5. The fifth reason is, Ye will not yield to the cross, when it lays hold of you. Ye know when a beast frets and takes ill with the yoke, then the yoke becomes more grievous and irksome to it than it would be if it took well with it. So when He says you shall bear it, you say ye will not bear it. But you should say, "I see Thou art designed to cross me such and such ways; and now from henceforth I desire that I may receive strength to bear them." He allows you all means to hold off the cross; but when it comes ye should resolve to bear it. For if ye say, that "at such a time crosses shall not come in my way;" then they shall undoubtedly come in your way. As when the Lord sent a message to the Moabites, saying, "Let my people go through your land, and they shall take nothing from you." Say they, "They shall not get leave to pass through." "But," says the Lord, "they shall go through it, and to your cost too. Let my rod pass by you," says God; but ye say, ye will not have it come your way; and when it comes, ye lay the blame on this person, and that person. But from henceforth never own the creature for thy party, but take God for thy party, and say it is good reason that it should be so and so. Welcome the cross.

"We have been with child; we have been in pain; we have,

as it were, brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.” There is a term, when their pain comes to a height, and they expect to be delivered; but their hopes are frustrated.

DOCT. IV. *That sometimes the troubles of the people and children of God come to a height; and then they presently expect an outgate, and they bring forth nothing but, as it were, wind.*

Now in this, it is Satan’s way to make them hope on wrong grounds; for then he knows, that when they are thus beguiled, it is a hundred to one if they be not made to question all the work of God within them. Now we shall show you some of these false grounds, whereupon he makes you hope. And,

1. When ye see a sin which ye saw not before, oh ye think “Surely this has been the sin for which He hath contended with me. Now since He has let me see it, He will forthwith deliver me.” And dost thou think He will deliver thee for that? Hath He not enough of reasons besides for contending with thee, although thou beholdest them not.

2. The second ground whereupon ye hope is, That He shall deliver you, because you have taken on a new duty, or engagement to duty.

3. The creature hopes for an outgate, when it seems to have attained to any measure of submission under the cross. But do not hope upon that ground; for that is but a weak ground or evidence for you to hope upon.

4. The fourth false ground is, that He makes them hope when they seem to have a promise of deliverance. But I say, take heed how ye understand the promise, for, I say, ye are

not bound to believe any promise, but that which is necessary for salvation. But ye may believe in general, "that all his paths are mercy and truth unto you." Indeed, I grant that we may believe a promise for such a particular thing, if the Spirit of God so bear it in upon us, that we are engaged to believe it.

5. The fifth ground whereupon your hopes are wrong, is, that when ye come to such a height of distress, ye think, surely He will now either destroy or deliver you. But ye are mistaken; for He may bring you to the door, when ye think your troubles are at a height, and, as it were, let you get the air; and even put you back into your prison, and shut the door upon you again. Therefore, I say, limit not the grounds of your deliverance; for if ye lay down a ground, and hope upon that ground, and when it is frustrated, it is a thousand to one if ye do not question all your salvation to-morrow. Therefore lay down no such grounds; for He that knows all things, can He not take a time to work when it shall be most conducive to His own glory and your good?

Now all that entertain these false hopes shall be disappointed. We wish ye would not lay down any ground whereupon ye should hope for present deliverance. But let every one of you say, "Thy dead men shall live; together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake, and sing, ye that dwell in dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." And let all who are under trouble, apply unto themselves the two last verses of the chapter where my text lies; "Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain."

But the words may be taken in another sense here. There is another conception that the daughters of Zion may have, and that is a conception of faith. And here,

1. We shall show you how there is such a conception.
2. How this conception comes to a height. And,

I. Of a false conception. Ye that have this false conception, we ask you these questions:

1. The first is, how and when did ye conceive? Ye may say, that ye know the time; and yet by your conversation, I know ye have not conceived.

2. Thou sayest, thou hast conceived, and yet the evils of thy nature are still breaking out. Now when I see a man that says he hath conceived, and yet his evil nature is allowed in breaking out daily, I say, there is not so much as even a false conception in that person.

3. The third question we think pertinent to ask is, What fellowship or discourses have ye about the new birth? If thou hast no discourse about them that are regenerate, and the marks of regeneration; and if thou desirest not to be amongst those that are born again, it is but a false conception that thou hast, and not a true and genuine one.

4. The fourth question is, Hast thou any longing desires after this and that spiritual good? All that have conceived graciously, do still long for some new things; and they long “for the sincere milk of the word, that they may grow thereby.”

5. Thou that sayest thou hast conceived, if thy conception have not stirrings, thou hast but a false conception. I think nothing of a man’s having a stirring sometimes at a preaching. It is not a scriptural conception that hath not these marks. When there is a rich reward to be given to religion;

as when there were gifts to be given to the Jews, many called themselves so that were not Jews. There was a stirring among them. So there is a stirring when Christ hath a great day in His sanctuary; when He is, as it were, dropping myrrh amongst His people. Again, there is a stirring in this man, and that, when the Lord is dealing about great strokes. "When he slew them, then they sought him; and they returned and enquired early after God."

And then there is a stirring, when there are great out-breakings. Then the man's conscience flies in his face, and he hath a great stir within him. Yet, I say, the man that hath but these, hath but a false conception, and shall bring forth wind. If thou trust to such a conception, thou wilt break thy neck by approaching unto these holy things in the sacramental ordinance, however thou prayest, think that thou bringest forth something.

II. We come to the true conception; and we shall show you how it comes to a height, and thinks to be delivered, and yet brings forth the wind. Now,

1st, The first and great doubt thou hast is, that it was not a proper means that first set thee on foot. Thou sayest, "It was not the sight of my sin and transgression, and therefore I bring forth but wind." What was it then? "Why, it was a cross or affliction," say ye, "that first set me on work; therefore I bring forth but vanity." But that is bad reasoning. As if a man going about a base errand should find a purse of gold by the way; but he says, "I will not take the gold, because I came not to seek gold; but when I come to seek gold, then I will take it." Everyone sees the folly of such reasoning. Now that we speak of that which first set you on work, ye say it was a cross; we say, it is not the unsounder for that circumstance. With regard to most of those who came unto Christ in the days of His flesh, it was some outward trouble that made them come. Some came,

as it were, to buy a needle. "But stay," said He, "I will tell you that there is not a whole shirt on your back." In this way He made many a bargain with poor fools. Some came there that did not so much as know that He was the true Messiah; and yet they were brought to say, "Rabbi, where dwellest thou?" And He says, "Come and see." And says He, "Ye shall bear testimony of me before the world. I shall give you enough." What is that to you? What set you on work, if ye be set on work? You believe the Master is speaking to you, and take it as from God, and hide your faces when ye hear this told you; but you need not do so; for it is a true conception, although ye have these doubts about it.

2ndly, A second question, or doubt, that ye may have about the soundness of your conception is, "I had no such pain as I conceive some have had in their conception; and therefore I think mine is not a true one." As for that that ye say, that ye have not been so damped with the works of the law as others, ye must know that the Lord is an absolute sovereign, and He works as He will. It is true that some that have the work of God within them can tell the very hour of conversion; but it is also true that there are others that cannot tell it, and yet have the work of God in them. For which cause we shall give some rules whereby ye may know whether ye have the work of God within you.

1. Whether or not didst thou see so much villainy and uncleanness, even in thy holy things, as made thee flee unto the Mediator and refuge set before thee. Then the Lord allows strong consolation to all those who flee unto the refuge set before them, or have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them.

2. Whether or not didst thou see so much of the covenant of free grace as to make thee wonder at it, and say, "I see as much in free grace as can pardon the greatest sinner that

ever was." Unto the new man all things are pure. Look if thou hast got such a view of justification as makes thee fear Him—"Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord." And thou art afraid to offend Him in anything. We use to say, "Burnt children dread the fire." Now this is all ye have to object against your conception. Ye say, "Seeing it is true, why then am I not established and delivered?" I say, for this reason, that ye walk upon false grounds. And,

(1.) The first false ground whereon ye walk is, That ye will not believe as long as ye see an outbreking in yourselves, or as long as ye see an infirmity. So that if ye were once healed, ye would believe and come to Christ. But, I say, whether ye be healed or not, ye are bound to believe; and ye shall never get these evils mortified until you come to Christ.

(2.) A second false ground wherein ye walk is, that ye say "Such are some of the marks of the child of God; but I cannot believe that these are stirring in me, because I cannot get all the marks of the child of God. Therefore I am not of that number." "But shall the ear say, Because I am not the eye, therefore I am not of the body." When thou dost get nineteen promises that thou mayest lay hold upon, yet thou wilt not believe because thou canst not lay hold upon the twentieth; that is to give God the lie nineteen times.

(3.) The third false ground is, "Because," say ye, "I have not the condition of that promise, 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,' therefore I will not come." But, if none should come but those who have the condition of that promise, of what use are all the promises in the Bible? For if none should come but those who have the condition of such a promise, there needed be no more promises in all the Bible. But because some have got the condition of one promise, and some that of another^s—"Whosoever will, let him come and take of

the water of life freely” —they are free. If you get a grip of any promise, take it under the pain of condemnation. Now these are some of the reasons why ye are not established.

Now would ye know when the conception comes to a height? When a great stroke is coming on, and it sees hell as it were beside it, then it stirs to be at the Mediator. At other times it will be silent. Sometimes, when it comes to a height, there is much of the power of God seen. When the person is walking through the sanctuary, then it begins to stir like John the Baptist, who as soon as he heard Mary’s voice leaped in his mother’s womb; so the true conception begins to stir when there is a day of Christ’s presence in the sanctuary. Another time is when it receives a hurt—when there is some sin committed, then it strikes with hands and feet, and says, “Either take Christ now, or never.” When threatenings come forth, then it resolves that it must set about believing. Another time is just before it be delivered. Now we may assign these three reasons as the causes that make persons bring forth the wind, and hinder them from being established in believing: (1.) There is somewhat in God’s part, as an act of justice, that “because ye delighted not to believe, and to retain the knowledge of God in your hearts, therefore he hath given you up to strong delusions to believe a lie.” (2.) A second way in which it comes from God is, as it is an act of His wisdom. And (3.) As it is an act of His absolute sovereignty. He would have the creature give up all claims to Him. As long as it will not believe, it shall never be established; otherwise, it comes from Satan’s false way of reasoning with them.

1st, He reasons from wrong expounded Scriptures. But take no expositions but what agree with the analogy of faith and the grounds of religion.

2ndly, He reasons from sundry ways of providence. But I am not bound to these, for “no man knows love or hatred

by all that is before him.”

3rdly, He reasons from a part to the whole. “Thou canst not deny,” says he, “that thou hast hypocrisy, then thou art altogether a hypocrite.” But, Satan, this is groundless and foolish logic.

4thly, He reasons from one time to all times. Says he, “Ye dare not say that ever ye had love to God or to His people, therefore ye shall never have it.” And then he reasons from breach of promise. Says he, “Thou hast promised to Him many a time, and hast still broken thy promises. If thou shouldst do so to any like thyself, would he ever believe thee again.” That is bad reasoning, for it is to bring God unto the level of the creature. “But as far as the heavens are above the earth, so far are my thoughts above your thoughts, saith the Lord.” And then he reasons from one saint to another—“Thou canst not find another saint in thy case.” As Job’s friend said unto him, “Unto which of the saints wilt thou turn?” But I am not bound to find another in my condition, if my condition be like a scriptural one. Then he will propose an objection, and because ye cannot answer it, therefore he says it is unanswerable. But he lies in this too. And then he reasons from what is done to what is to do. “Because,” says he, “ye have not done such and such things, therefore ye shall never do it.” I say this too is false reasoning.

But, upon the whole, take his reasons and throw them back upon himself. Go to Christ and desire Him to teach you how to answer them. But we add no more.

Footnotes:

1. This sermon was preached immediately before the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Fenwick.

2. As the Lord has been graciously pleased to favour us with an absolutely free grant of Christ, and of eternal life in Him, so He has condescended to exhibit this grant in a wonderful variety of promises suitable to the variety of our cases. "And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life; and this life is in his Son. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises; that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Hence these words, "Some have got the condition of one promise, some that of another," must be understood agreeably to the nature of the gospel promise, as if it had been said, "The Lord has given us not one but many great and precious promises, so that though a person does not see one of them to be suitable to his case, he may see another to be so."