

## SERMON XXXVI.\*

### THE BEAUTY AND STRENGTH OF ZION.

*Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.—PSAL. xlviii. 12—14.*

MANY expositors think this psalm to be an ἐπινίκιον, a triumphant song of thanksgiving after some great deliverance at Jerusalem. Some apply it to the times of Asa, when Zerah and the Ethiopians came with an army against Jerusalem of ten hundred thousand men. Others apply it to the times of Jehosaphat, when the Moabites, and Amonites, and mount Seir the Edomites, were gathered together against Judah. And others again to the days of Hezekiah, when Sennacherib and his army came against Jerusalem and were destroyed. They ground their interpretation upon ver. 4—6. ‘Lo, the kings were assembled, they passed by together. They saw it’ (but they could come no farther), ‘and so they marvelled; they were troubled, and hasted away. Fear took hold upon them there, and pain, as of a woman in travail:’ which is a description of some great consternation that befell the enemies of God, and the enemies of Jerusalem, when they drew near unto it. So the Jews do interpret these verses: ‘Walk about Zion, and go round about her, tell the towers thereof, mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces:’ that notwithstanding this great and dreadful attempt, whether by the Ethiopians, or by the Moabites, or Sennacherib, there is not one tower broken down of Zion or of Jerusalem, but all things are safe and well. For my own part, I should rather judge this psalm to be composed by David, and purely mystical and prophetic. It is easy to manifest that all the foregoing psalms are so. And the close of the former psalm is the calling of the Gentiles, where he saith, ‘God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth upon the throne of his holi-

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ness;’ ver. 8. And in ver. 9. you read in the margin of your bibles, better than in the text: ‘The voluntary of the people are gathered unto the people of the God of Abraham.’ The people were become a willing people in the day of his power. However, all conclude that these words are a graphical description of the defence that God will at all times give his church, which the psalmist doth set before our eyes.

Look upon it, and observe what a diligent view he requires to be taken of what he here proposes. He looks upon Zion as a well-fortified garrison, not like to be carried in haste by the enemy. And he would have you well consider too, what the fortifications are; therefore he distributes his direction into so many particulars. ‘Walk about Zion;’ this is the way whereby you may come to see how Zion is fortified. It may be you have gone a little way in walking, and have seen much, but do not cease: ‘Go round about her,’ see if you can find one weak place, where she is likely to be attacked by the enemy: ‘Tell the towers,’ cast up the number of them, and see that they are not few; which is what a man of judgment and understanding would do, if he were to take a view of a fortified place, and consider whether it would hold out against a strong enemy: ‘Mark ye well her bulwarks;’ or, ‘set your heart to her bulwarks,’ consider them, do not take a general view of these fortifications of Zion, but ponder and consider, whether they are likely to hold out or not, and whether you may put your trust in them: ‘Consider her palaces,’ which were the great and eminent buildings in and about Zion, called in some place, ‘palaces of ivory,’ with which they were greatly adorned. So that here is this direction given to take a very strict, sedate, considerate view of the fortifications of Zion; since it would certainly be attacked by great and powerful enemies. There are two things added. One is the particular end wherefore they should do so: ‘That ye may tell it to the generation following,’ since other ages of the church would have the use of it. The other is the ground why all this would be of benefit to them, and the generations following: ‘For this God is our God in covenant, and that for ever and ever, and will be our guide unto death.’

I shall make one observation from the words, and speak a little very briefly and plainly to it.

*Observation.* A diligent search into, and consideration of, the means and causes of the preservation and protection of the church in the greatest dangers and difficulties, is a duty incumbent on us for our own support against sinful fears, and to enable us to that testimony which is required for future generations, to encourage them to trust in the Lord.

Every age is to give over a good testimony of God's dealing with Zion to the age that comes after. And a diligent search and inquiry into the causes and means of the protection and preservation of the church of God in the midst of imminent dangers and difficulties, is a duty incumbent upon us, that we may be fortified against sinful fears in ourselves, and encourage succeeding generations to trust in the Lord. As we have received the testimony of such who have gone before us, so we are to give our testimony to those who shall come after.

All that I shall do at present is to answer these five questions :

I. What is to be understood by the preservation and protection of the church, so as we may look neither for less nor more than what we are like to meet with ?

II. What is meant by searching into, and considering of, these causes and means of the church's preservation? 'Walk about Zion, tell her towers, set your heart to her bulwarks, consider her palaces,' &c.

III. What are those causes and means of the church's preservation, those towers and bulwarks which will not fail, whenever Zerah or Sennacherib comes, or whatever attempts are made upon Zion ?

IV. What reason is there why we should thus search into, and consider these causes of the church's preservation and protection ?

V. What is the testimony which we have to give concerning this matter to the ensuing generation? 'That ye may declare it to the generation to come.'

I shall speak a little in answer to these five inquiries.

I. What is that preservation and protection of Zion, the church of God, that we may expect, whose causes and means we should inquire into ?

This may be reduced unto three heads.

1. The eternal salvation of the church of God. This is

the goal and the prize that all this great running is about in the world. Satan is in his own nature as active and restless, as he is malicious; and yet, I suppose, if this end was taken away, if this was not in his eye, the eternal salvation of the church, of all that believe, he would give himself much more leisure than he doth. All things here, evils, trials, persecutions, and the like, are but skirmishes; but where goes eternal bliss, there goes the victory. This therefore is part of that preservation and safety of Zion which we are to look after; namely, as the apostle saith, 'That all Israel shall be saved.' You have a great security that our Lord Jesus Christ gives of it, John x. 27, &c. 'My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one.'

This is the first thing in the church's preservation, namely, that let the conflict be never so great, never so severe, all true believers shall be eternally saved. And if we do not lay the principal weight in our thoughts upon this, our concern in other things will be of no moment unto us. There is one false opinion doth more mischief to the honour of God in the world in this matter, than all the devils in hell are able to do; and that is, of the total and final apostacy of true believers; for if that be so, we have lost our very first principle of the preservation of Zion, namely, that 'all Israel shall be saved,' and that none shall take believers out of the hands of Christ.

2. There is this in it also, that there shall be a church, a professing church preserved in the world throughout all generations, in despite of all the oppositions of Satan and the world; that is, there shall be a called number yielding obedience internally unto Christ, and openly professing that obedience always preserved unto the end of the world. It is expressly included in that promise, Isa. ix. 7. 'Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth and for ever: the zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.' However it may fall out in particular places and nations, yet Zion will be preserved, God will reserve for

Jesus Christ a church visibly professing, and yielding obedience unto him according to the gospel.

But you will say perhaps, Where was there such a church in the time of the antichristian apostacy? Did not the visible church wholly fail?

I answer: Though I acknowledge all the churches in the world have greatly apostatized and fallen away; yet, in the first place, all did not fall away in the same length or manner with those in these parts of the world, that were under the antichristian apostacy. There were churches in the east, which though very corrupt formerly, and now more so, yet might justly be esteemed a visible church. Besides, the church of God was then in Babylon, until the reformation. There was in the Roman church a number of persons that sincerely feared God, and belonged unto the Zion of Christ, who were preserved. Hence is that call, Rev. xviii. 4. 'Come out of her, my people.' Christ's people was in her until the time that God gave them a call to come out of her. And another part of them were in visible opposition all along to the growing apostacy of the papacy. About four or five hundred years after Christ, the great composition was made between Christianity and Paganism, when the outward court was given to the Gentiles to be trodden down; that is plainly, when these northern nations, that divided and destroyed the Roman empire, were brought in to be Christians. And upon that composition, nations came in to a profession of Christianity with pagan worship and manners; but yielded obedience unto Christian rulers, bishops, priests, and the like. Now from that very time, when all things sunk into anti-christianism, there was still a visible testimony given against it by the church of Christ; that is, by believers from one generation to another, an eminent, blessed testimony against all that cursed apostacy.

It is good to keep our faith and expectation within bounds, that we do not look for more than is like to come to pass; and yet still to have our faith confirmed in those things that may be sure not to fail. 'All Israel shall be saved,' and Christ will maintain his kingdom in the world against all opposition; that the cause wherein we are engaged, whatsoever becomes of our persons, will be triumphant. Believers

shall be saved, and a professing church shall be preserved, which is all the general cause wherein we are engaged. And God, it may be, hath placed us in this age to give over our testimony to the future generation.

3. There belongs to the preservation of the church, the protection and deliverance of the true church of God under persecution: this likewise comes within the compass of these fortifications. We are very apt to look after our own concerns, and it may be to imagine we are more concerned in this third head, than in both the former. But those that think so, make a very wrong judgment; for the measure of all our concerns in present deliverance, or in the conflicts of the church, is to be taken from those two generals, the eternal salvation of the church at last, and the preservation of the kingdom of Christ in the world. And if once we begin to measure them by our own advantages, peace, liberty, or friends, we shall take wrong measures of God's providence, and our own expectation.

There are three seasons, or three ways, whereby churches in particular times and places are in danger of coming short of this protection, or seeming so to do. (1.) When the power of Satan and the world are set upon them in a way of persecution. (2.) When the nations of the world, among whom they live, are so wicked, that God will not forbear a general devastation and destruction. (3.) When themselves apostatize and decay, and provoke God to remove his candlestick from among them. In such seasons it comes to a trial, whether particular churches, or a church in any particular place, shall be preserved and protected in their present trial, or not. And I confess unto you that my thoughts are, that all three are upon us at present, which makes our case the more difficult and hard to be determined. But this, I bless God, I cannot but think, that what we most fear, is least to be feared. It is plain, we most fear the first; and I think I am certain, that the first is least to be feared. I shall speak briefly to each of them.

(1.) As to the first there are two rules whereby to make a judgment of the preservation of the church in time of persecution. The one is that given by the prophet Hosea, chap. xi. 12. Ephraim 'compasseth me about with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit: but Judah yet ruleth with God,

and is faithful with the saints.' He prophesies the immediate destruction of Ephraim: the church of Israel shall wander to Assyria, but Judah shall yet abide. Why? 'Judah yet ruleth with God:' that is, for God; the ruling power of Judah is for God. I take that to be the meaning of the words: for if you will observe concerning Judah, all that ever were good among them, was in the ruling power. In the very days of Josiah himself, Judah, that is, the body of the people, turned to God feignedly, and not with their whole heart; Jer. iii. 10. But yet the prophet foresaw a time would come, that Judah should not be so: he shall rule therefore while he is faithful to God. Here then is your rule: while the ruling power of a church or nation is for God, is faithful to God, and his interest, walking with him, they are within these bulwarks. And truly, to speak what I believe in this matter (for in all things that are future, that we may not have clear and full evidence of, there is a reserve for sovereignty), wherever there are churches walking with God, ruling for God, and faithful to him, they shall never be prevailed against by outward persecution in any place, unless it be in subserviency to the hidden design of sovereign wisdom, to remove the gospel wholly from such a place. This then is the second rule, and we can never fathom, and so must be in the dark, whether the church in this or that particular place shall be absolutely preserved; because, if God pleases, he can make the total scattering to be a means subservient to the spreading of the gospel. But so far as they walk with God, they are within this protection.

(2.) The church's danger lies in the destruction that may come upon places where they are, for national sins. There were in the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, 'good figs at Jerusalem, very good figs, even as the first ripe figs,' Jer. xxiv. 2. that is, there were many precious saints of God: and there were also 'evil figs, so evil that none could eat them:' and yet God puts all these figs into a basket, good and bad, and all must go into captivity. He could no longer forbear for the provoking sins of the nation, the whole must go into captivity together. Now if such a season may come upon any place, as hath upon many nations deservedly because of national sins, the good may suffer with the bad, and churches may receive a scattering.

(3.) The third danger is their own apostacy. There is not any thing in the world that we ought to be more afraid of than of a church's scattering in an apostatizing condition. Then we shall bear the burden of our guilt in our scattering, and be clean taken off from all means of retrieving it. But there is an interest of all particular churches walking with God in this preservation and protection that is here promised and described to be round about Zion; and it is an act of mere sovereignty where God dealeth otherwise with them. That is the preservation and protection of the church in answer to the first inquiry.

II. The second question is, What is it to search after, and consider the causes and means of this preservation? Where shall we look for it?

To this I answer,

1. Be sure to take off your search and consideration from those things which are not, and will not, prove to be the bulwarks of Zion. You know how they were blamed in such a case, Isa. xxii. in a time of great distress and invasion that was coming upon them. The prophet tells you what the people did, ver. 8, &c. 'He discovered the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the house of the forest. Ye have seen also the breaches of the city of David, that they are many; and ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool. And ye have numbered the houses of Jerusalem, and the houses have ye broken down to fortify the wall. Ye made also a ditch between the two walls, for the water of the old pool; but ye have not looked unto the maker thereof, neither had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago.' Looking unto carnal aids and helps in straits and difficulties hath been our folly. The first thing in this call, to look to Zion, is to 'cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils: for whereof is he to be accounted?'

2. Where shall we look for these bulwarks? We must look for the protection of the church, where we look for the destruction of its adversaries. And where shall we look for that? The prophet tells us, Isa. xxxiv. 16. 'Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them.' All the foregoing prophecy is concerning the utter destruction of Idumea in



the type, but of Babylon, Rome, antichrist in the antitype. And the verses from 11. to 16. express the gathering of all the fowls of prey, dismal fowls, to dwell in the place. But how shall we know whether this will come to pass? Says the prophet, 'Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read; no one of these shall fail:' that is, no one particular judgment that God hath threatened in his whole book against his adversaries, shall ever fail, no, not in one circumstance: neither the cormorant, nor the screechowl shall want her mate. Seek it out of the book of the Lord; you will find it recorded in these prophecies, and nothing shall fail there; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it, and the Spirit of the Lord shall accomplish it. We are to look therefore and search for these defences, causes, and means of the protection of Zion, in the book of the Lord. This is 'the tower of David, where hangs a thousand shields, all shields of mighty men,' Cant. iv. 4. where is recorded all the defence of the church and people of God. It is your duty to search in the book of God, and read, to see what are the causes and means of the protection and preservation of the church; and when you have found them out, you are then to consider them. Want of consideration weakens our faith greatly. If you can find by reading in the book of God, that there are such and such defences and bulwarks of Zion; our duty is now to consider whether they will hold out against the greatest attacks and attempts of Satan and all our adversaries. I speak what is plain, but very fit for this day. When you have found out these defences, bring them to the shield of faith, and obedience to God, and consider whether they are like to hold out; consider each, and give judgment upon them. And if you judge they are so, then trust to them; drive all you have, all your concerns within the compass of these fortifications, and trust to them. And this may suffice in answer to the second question; Where are we to search for the preservation and protection of the church?

III. What are the causes and means of the preservation of Zion, and protection of the church, that we are to search out, and to consider and trust unto?

It is but a little I can comply with the text in, I cannot go round about Zion, I cannot tell her towers; but we will consider some of her bulwarks, that will be a sure pre-

servation against all opposition. And I will name four or five unto you.

1. The designation and constitution of Jesus Christ to be king of the church, king of Zion, is the great bulwark of Zion. This is the fort-royal that never fails. Psal. ii. 'Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.' Notwithstanding all this tumult, conspiracy, and rage, all these counsels and advices, yet, saith he, Zion must stand; for I have set my king, I have anointed Christ my eternal Son to be king upon my holy hill of Zion. But though Christ be made king, it doth not follow but he may give over reigning, and so there will be no security from hence. The truth is, he will do so, he will give over reigning as to his mediatory kingdom; but not before he hath done with all his enemies: Psal. cx. 1. 'Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.' And the apostle, 1 Cor. xv. saith, 'he must reign until all his enemies be subdued.' And when he shall have put down all power and authority, then he shall give up the kingdom. The great security of the church is from hence, that Christ is made king of Zion; and if he be a king he must have subjects. The word is his law, he rules by his Spirit; but rule and law together will not make a kingdom, unless there be subjects to yield obedience. If Christ be a king, if he sit upon Zion, the church must be preserved; for he must have a kingdom. There is but one way in the world that looks probable to put an end to Christ's reign, and that is to cease being his enemies; for the express terms of his reign is, 'till all his enemies be made his footstool.' How easy were it for me to dwell upon this, that this king of the church hath power to preserve it to all ends and in all circumstances; power to preserve it to eternal salvation, in visible profession, or in particular trials. And what king is there among men that will not preserve his subjects in time of trial, when it is in

his power so to do? The Lord Christ will preserve them. 'I give unto them eternal life, and no man shall take them out of my hands. He is able to save them to the utmost, even all that come unto God by him; and he is given to be head over all things to the church,' to dispose of all as seems good unto him, for the end, use, and interest of the church.

This is the first bulwark and security we have for the preservation and protection of the church; and unless men can dethrone Jesus Christ, and cast him off from being king upon the holy hill of Zion, it is in vain to think of prevailing against Zion.

2. The second bulwark of Zion is the promises of God, which are innumerable. I will name but two of them: one is the foundation of the Old Testament, and the other of the New. One held it out for four thousand years, and was never impeached; and the other for these sixteen hundred years, and shall never be shaken.

The promise that was the foundation of the Old Testament, was the first promise of God: Gen. iii. 15. 'I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.' There are these four things in that promise: (1.) That there shall always be a twofold seed in the world, the seed of the serpent, and the seed of the woman; they shall never fail while this world stands. (2.) That these two seeds shall always be at enmity; there shall be an everlasting conflict, from the entrance of sin to the end of it. 'I will put enmity,' saith God, and such an enmity as shall be carried on by the highest and most severe warfare. The enmity is spiritual, but the warfare oftentimes is outward. The first manifestation of this enmity was in blood: Cain slew Abel. Why? Because he was of the evil one. And so it hath been carried on by blood from that day to this. (3.) That either seed hath a leader; there is he and thou, it and thou; that is, Christ and Satan: Christ is the leader of the seed of the woman, the captain and head of it in this great conflict; and Satan as he was the head of the apostacy from God, continues the head of his seed, the generation of vipers, to try out the contest with Christ unto the end. (4.) The victory shall always be to the seed of the woman. It is said indeed,

‘Thou shalt bruise his heel.’ Christ’s heel, in his sufferings, both in his own person, and those of the church. But on the contrary it is said likewise, ‘He shall bruise thy head;’ break thy power and strength; conquer thee. Then Zion is safe. This was the foundation of the Old Testament: and though things oftentimes were brought to great distress, sometimes by apostacy, and sometimes by persecution; yet this promise carried it, and delivered over the church safe into the hand of Christ.

Now when Christ takes the church, and goes to new form it, and fashion it more for the glory of God, there is the foundation promise made in the New Testament: ‘Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it;’ Matt. xvi. 18. If that obscure promise under the Old Testament did secure Zion as to all those things before mentioned, four thousand years; shall not we trust to this promise of our Saviour for half the time? Though it is indeed the continuance of the same promise; for the gates of hell is the seed of the serpent, and the rock is Christ. That is the second bulwark of Zion. We may be shaken in our faith and confidence, but we have the promise of God, that hath supported it thus far in the world, and will certainly preserve it to the end.

3. There is the watchful providence of God over the church. It is expressed, Deut. xi. 12. where the land of the church is said to be ‘a land, which the Lord thy God careth for; the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year unto the end of it.’ That land which is the possession of the church, the seat of God’s worship, the church itself, is what the Lord careth for. And it is expressed again to the same purpose, Isa. xxvii. 3. where this land is called God’s vineyard; ‘I the Lord do keep it, and will water it every moment, lest any hurt it; I will keep it night and day.’ There is the watchful providence of God over the church night and day preserving it, which providence indeed we live upon, though it is secret and invisible to us. There is power in it, but ‘God hides his power.’ We see little, we are not able to discern any thing to purpose of the secret emanation of divine power and wisdom through the hearts and counsels of all mankind, to this end, that God

may preserve his church, governing their affections, ruling their thoughts, turning and overturning their counsels, things that will never appear nor come to light, what was their occasion and ends, till the great day, when the thoughts of all hearts shall be discovered. The Lord will keep and preserve his church that none may hurt it.

4. Another bulwark is God's special presence. God is in an especial manner present in his church. I have treated concerning the nature and special presence of God and Christ in the church, and proved it from many promises, and shewed the effect of it, which I shall not now insist upon, but only shew that this is a bulwark of the church. In Isa. viii. 9, 10. there is a gauntlet thrown out to all the adversaries of the people of God, and a challenge to do their worst; 'Associate yourselves, O ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; and give ear, all ye of far countries; gird yourselves, and ye shall be broken in pieces. Take counsel together, and it shall come to nought; speak the word, and it shall not stand.' What is the reason? 'For God is with us.' The presence of God is with his church. Every thing of force, of counsel, of association and agreement, all shall be broken and come to nought, they shall have no effect; and he gives this only reason, 'because God is with us.' While God is with his church, it may be exercised with great trials, so that they may think they have lost the presence of God, as in Judg. vi. 12. 'The angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee. Oh my Lord,' saith he, 'If the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us?' Whence is all this evil come upon us, that we should be under the power of the Midianites, oppressed and destroyed by them? He could not believe that if God was with them according to his promise, they could be so prevailed upon by their enemies. Great things of trouble may befall the church of God, while God is present with them, so as they may be ready to say sometimes, 'My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God, the Lord hath forsaken, my God hath forgotten me.' It cannot be, saith Gideon, that God is with us, if we be thus ruined. But he will appear and manifest himself for the protection of Zion.

5. The last bulwark, unto which all others may be reduced, is the covenant of God: 'For this God is our God.' That God who hath fortified Zion in all other generations, and wrought these deliverances, he is our God in covenant.

I shall not need to reckon any more than these five bulwarks of the church. Ponder and consider whether they are like to work out its preservation and protection. And if God gives us wisdom to single out these things, and consider them aright, we shall soon see what encouragement we have to pray for the preservation and protection of the church, however it may be attacked and attempted, even this day, which is our present business.

IV. Why should we make this inquiry into these causes and means of the preservation and protection of the church?

The reason is, to deliver ourselves from our own sinful fears, and that by a discovery of the great mistake which all the adversaries of the church run upon. The reason why the ground whereupon they attempt the church, is that and no other which you have, Ezek. xxxviii. 10, 11. 'Thus saith the Lord God, It shall come to pass, that at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought; and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwall'd villages, I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates.' Here is the very ground of the undertaking of the world against the church in any age, that they have no defence, are a poor people, that dwell in unwall'd villages, and have neither bars nor gates. It is a miserable disappointment for men to go and undertake to destroy, or oppress any place, thinking they are unprovided, and when they come there, to find it quite otherwise. At this day there would not any move a tongue against the people of God, but, upon this very account, that they have no defence, no protection. And sometimes they proceed so far as that they begin to discover the bulwarks of Zion, if not in the causes, yet in the effects. The old world saw not God in the cause of what he did; but when the waters began to roll upon them, the psalmist tells us, 'they saw it, and were

afraid, and fearfulness took hold upon them.' Is this the people that dwell in unwalled villages, that have neither bars nor gates? See their towers, behold their bulwarks; there is no attacking them. When once God makes them to see this, that the power of Christ is engaged for his people, they will then cry to the mountains and to the rocks to hide them from the day of his wrath; they will be surprised with fear.

Now seeing the adversaries of the church of God are certainly upon this mistake attempting the church, because as they imagine, it hath no guard, and they will certainly find at last that they have a guard which they saw not, and were not acquainted with; why should we be afraid in such a case? Nothing more encourages persons than when they know their enemies do clearly mistake their condition. This is enough to make the veriest coward in the world valiant. Let us be sure to be found within this garrison, and place of defence, and certain that we have to do in the concerns of Zion, and not of the world; and then shall we see the mountains all full of chariots and horses of fire round about us, Christ reigning, the promise of Christ engaged, and the watchful eye of God upon the church continually. Our fears arise from the want of considering these things, and taking a carnal view and measure of things that are seen.

V. The last inquiry is, What testimony are we to give over to the generation that is to come after us?

This testimony consists of two things:

1. The exercise of faith and patience in all our own trials that may befall us, that there may be a remembrance of it in the generations that are to come. The martyrs that suffered here so long ago, do still tell us in this generation by their faith and patience, that Zion had walls and bulwarks round about her, and that God was her God and guide. Had their not believed it, do you think they would have given up their bodies to the flames in this city and other parts of the nation? In like manner that faith and patience which we shall exercise in any trial that may befall us in the behalf of Zion, is to tell the generations to come what God hath done, and how we have found it ourselves.

2. It is our duty to give it over by instruction to those

that we bring up. Our fathers have told us what God did in their days; and we are to give in this testimony to God, to tell our children what God hath done in our days; so long have we lived and been professors; so long have we walked in Zion, and we have found God faithful in his promise. Not one word or tittle hath failed, that the mouth of the Lord hath spoken. Thus are we to instruct the generation that is growing up, that hath not seen those things which we have seen.