

The Spirit and the Standard

by Thomas Bradbury

The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against the enemy, who is sin, and bring us to victory over sin and death.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Ecclesiastes 3:2, Isaiah 59:19, Matthew 11:28, Mark 9:24, John 14:1, Acts 22:11, Romans 5:12, Galatians 5:17, Ephesians 2:4, 1 John 2:15, 1 John 3:8

Topics: "Total Depravity", "Holy Spirit"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches about the total depravity of human nature and the universal corruption, emphasizing the distance sin creates between individuals and God. He delves into the convicting power of the Holy Ghost, revealing the dense cloud sin forms in the conscience of believers. Bradbury candidly acknowledges the faithful portrait of fallen human nature drawn by the eternal Spirit, highlighting the need for self-reflection and recognition of one's own sinfulness. Despite the overwhelming power of sin, Bradbury points to the hope found in the Spirit of the LORD lifting up a standard against the enemy, providing assurance of victory and salvation through Christ.

Transcript

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."
(Isaiah 59:19)

IN this chapter we have the total depravity, utter incorrigibility, and universal corruption of human nature strikingly set forth. As my eye scanned the chapter this morning before coming here, much questioning arose in my mind as to whether or no I should read it. The greater portion displays the awful malady, sin, with only here and there a word about God's remedy. Here we can see sin abounding, and the chariot wheels of salvation apparently dragging heavily. The opening words are an expostulation of JEHOVAH to His ancient people.

He says, "Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, neither His ear heavy, that it cannot hear." These words were addressed to a people who were at a fearful distance from God, yet professedly nigh. Outward privileges secure not nearness or communion with God. In the midst of the corrupt mass of the Jewish people a remnant was found who mourned over their felt distance from the God they loved, and oftentimes they could call into question the reality of their love.

Look at the second verse: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear." Sin, through the convicting power of the Holy Ghost, and felt in the conscience of a living child of God, forms a dense, black cloud, hiding a loving Father's face from view. In this night of desertion the sweet recognition of a covenant Parent is withheld, when the child turns inward and after great searchings of heart comes to the just conclusion so aptly described in the following verses.

Terrible, trenchant, and unmistakable is the declaration of JEHOVAH concerning every part and particle of fallen human nature. I do not mean the human nature of the reprobate alone, but that of the elect also. The child of God sometimes starts with convulsive horror at the faithful portrait of himself as drawn by the eternal Spirit. How do I know this? Because I have winced in this pulpit under the power of God's Word as it has been squeezed out of this heart of mine and drawn by the Spirit of the living God from the depths of a Divinely wrought experience.

My poor, proud nature loves not to confess this; but would be something in itself different altogether, and appear righteous, holy, and devout in the eyes of those whom I address. But God has graciously thrown His pure unsullied light upon me, and in myself that is, in my flesh I can see no good thing. Look at that beautiful description given by Paul of the light of God's glory shining upon him in Acts 22:11. He says, "I could not see for the glory of that light." He then ceased to see any beauty or merit in his own righteousness.

He was then conscious that his best works were but as splendid sins in the presence of Infinite Excellency. His former virtues then appeared as so many vices deserving ten-thousand times over the lowest place in hell. He could not see a particle of merit in all his religious parade and performances, or any hope of acceptance with God through his prayers, praises, or piety. He could see nothing but the deceit, depravity, and distance from God as described in the first eight verses of this fifty-ninth chapter of Isaiah.

In the experience of the same, the godly remnant of Isaiah's day confessed, "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for lightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noon as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us."

Now listen! "For our transgressions are multiplied before Thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them." In the glory of that light every man knoweth the plague of his own heart. But look! "In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. 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."

Mark that! A prey for Satan, a prey for the world, a prey for false brethren, a prey for the proud professor, a prey to his evil surmisings, a prey to his doubts and fears. Notice the marginal reading: "He that departeth from evil is accounted mad." If departing from evil which appears in the shape of error, or, in the persons of trimmers of God's truth, trucklers with Satan's free-will lies, and temporizers for the sake of place, position, and power, be accounted madness, let me be madder still.

If the spiritual and eternal life which God has given me be "for a prey in all places whither" I go, as I am blessed with the guidance of His Spirit, I bow in acquiescence with His will, and my heart would unceasingly respond Amen. "And the LORD saw it, and it displeased Him, and there was no judgment. And He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore His arm brought salvation unto Him: and His righteousness, it sustained Him. For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation upon His head; and He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloke.

According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; to the islands He will repay recompense." Here are striking figures from military life employed to show forth the perfect and complete salvation accomplished for us by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Captain of our salvation, and the entire overthrow of all our spiritual enemies. "So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the West, and His glory from the rising of the sun."

What does this mean? That from all parts of the habitable globe, from both hemispheres, the elect sons and daughters of JEHOVAH shall be brought to experience the blessings of His salvation, to enjoy the bounties of His house, to feed upon the provisions of His table, and to delight in the affections of His heart. Then we come to the words of our text, and very precious words they are. Look at them!

"When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him," or, according to the margin, "put him to flight."

Divine certainties appear in every part of this very precious portion of inspired truth. Ay, and Divine certainties appear in those very spots where our sensitive spirits quail. The inspired writer says, "When the enemy shall come in." It is not, "When the enemy may come in." What say our nice, cozy, comfortable, drawing-room professors to this? There are thousands who are trifling with eternal realities and playing at religious sham-fights who never smelt hell's powder, nor trembled before the roar of heaven's artillery. Yes, there are thousands who have not experienced the lodgment in their trembling souls of venomous shafts from Satan's quiver, and who know nothing of his fiery darts of temptation, which work sad havoc in the spiritual experience of the tried and tempted children of God. Art thou a child of God by spiritual regeneration? The enemy shall come in to question thy sonship. Art thou a partaker of the Father's grace? The enemy shall come in and suggest the falsity of it. Art thou in possession of God's salvation? The enemy shall come in causing doubt and unbelief as to thy interest therein. Art thou blessed with the comforts and consolations which abound by Jesus Christ? The enemy shall come in and turn them into grief and mourning. But there is another Divine certainty in the text which is a marvellous mercy of a covenant God, "the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him." For every misery the child of God experiences, the Father has a mercy in store. There is not a sorrow that a pilgrim of Zion shall bear, but Zion's King has a joy treasured up for him. There is not a day of adversity dawns upon the living in Jerusalem, but what is followed by a day of prosperity. There cannot be a night of gloom to God's Israel not succeeded by a morning of joy. Does the Christian traveller sigh because of his felt distance from his Father's house? He shall be led to His presence, which is salvation, and where there is fullness of joy for evermore.

But it is ours for a little while, in humble dependence upon the Spirit's gracious guidance, to contemplate this interesting and instructive portion of the written Word, and in so doing, notice it in the four following aspects:

I. THE ENEMY "When the enemy shall come in like a flood."

II. THE GODHEAD OF THE HOLY GHOST "The Spirit of the Lord."

III. HIS GRACIOUS WORK "Shall lift up a standard against him."

IV. THE GLORIOUS RESULT "Shall put him to flight" (Margin).

I. THE ENEMY "When the enemy shall come in." Who is he? We are not left long in doubt concerning the identity of this person. Turn with me to Matthew 13:24-28: "Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." The term "kingdom of heaven" is a characteristic of the Gospel by Matthew, as the word "heaven" is of the Book of Revelation. "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns." Now we cannot for a moment suppose that the devil can enter into the special residence of Deity. The terms "kingdom of heaven" and "heaven," refer to events transpiring in the dispensation of grace amongst the heavenly people who are mixed up, and surrounded with earthly associations. Is good seed sown? The enemy is sure to come and sow his tares. "So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst thou not sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this." Now when the disciples were alone with their Lord, they asked Him to explain the parable. "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil." Here we are not left in doubt as to who is the great enemy of God, His Christ, and His people. This is revealed throughout the whole of God's blessed Book. I would here direct your attention to a peculiarity in the writings of John: when the threefold enemy of the Church of God, the world, the flesh, and the devil, is described, it is thus:

1. The world against the Father. See 1 John 2:15,16: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

2. The devil against the Son. See 1 John 3:8, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

3. The flesh against the Spirit. See John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." With this agree the words of Paul in Gal. 5:17, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."

Thus we see that the world is dead against the Father in His election. The devil is dead against the Son in His redemption. The flesh is dead against the Holy Ghost in His regeneration. These are Divine declarations, and as assuredly as we are brought into experimental oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall know something of the fearful opposings of this threefold enemy to the life of God which He will maintain in us. The opposition will be in respect to the blessings which God makes experimentally ours. Is heaven my home? Do I know aught of that blessed truth spoken by Paul in Phil. 3:20, "Our citizenship is in heaven?" Can I sing feelingly and in faith for a moment or two:

"I have a home above,

From sin and sorrow free;

A mansion which eternal love

Designed and formed for me?"

Do we experience a little going forth to that glorious time, when, divested of the burden of the flesh, and free from sin, sorrow, and suffering, we shall bask in light and sunshine in the presence of Him who loves us with an everlasting love? As sure as we do, the devil will tempt us with the world's baubles and blandishments. We need not seek the haunt of the hermit, or the seclusion of the deluded monk or nun; for, mark, according to the declaration of the eternal truth in Eccles. 3:2, "He has set the world in their heart," and as Satan works upon that, the child of the living God will oftentimes know more of the world in solitude, than when he is mingling with the busy throng. Does God, in the riches of His grace and by the power of the Holy Ghost, exalt His Christ in the affections of an elect vessel of mercy? Satan will by his accursed accusations dispute the right of God's Christ to that throne which he usurped so long during the dark days of unregeneracy. Does JEHOVAH the Father favour us in the Son of His love with gracious realizations of the indwelling of His Spirit? Can we sing sometimes with a little sweet assurance:

"And Thou Eternal Spirit vast,

What love can Thine transcend?

Since Thou Thy lot with me hath cast,

Indwelling God and Friend?"

If so, you may depend upon it, the experience set before us in Lam. 1:16, will be ours: "The Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me." There will oftentimes be no bright shining on the way, no consolation of the spirit, no witnessing with our spirit that we are children of God. Spiritual night must be ours, as well as spiritual day the clouds of sin and unbelief will gather thick around us, and the Sun of Righteousness will descend beneath our spiritual horizon, when the beasts of the forest will prowl forth. What beasts? Discontent, doubt, fear, pride, unbelief, come forth from their lurking places. Assailed and surrounded by these, we feel ourselves to be the make sport of Satan. This is his time also to work presumption, which engenders accursed indifference to the blessings God has graciously promised, and to the bounties with which He surrounds me.

SIN is our hateful enemy which came in like a flood at the time of the Adam-fall, spreading devastation, desolation, and death over the whole creation. See how this is described in the latter part of chap. 5 of the Epistle to the Romans: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous. Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death." (Rom. 5:12,19-21) Here we see sin as a master, a tyrant, an oppressor, and such it is experienced by every living child of God. He who knows nothing of the overwhelming power of sin, will never know the Lord Jesus Christ as his gracious Deliverer. He who is ignorant of sin as a tyrant, can never rejoice in that liberty with which Christ sets His people free. He who never experienced the surgings and seethings of indwelling corruption can never know

"the deep mysterious joy

Of peace with God within."

He who was never tossed upon the billows of temptation must be destitute of the quietness of God which passeth all understanding. Water and fire are very good servants, but awfully bad masters. Rivers and seas, in low-lying countries, are oftentimes dammed up; but when they break through their bounds and overflow the land, desolation and ruin are the results. We have had a painful illustration of this within the last few weeks. We have been startled and our sympathies have been roused with the accounts of the terrible inundations in Hungary, where thousands of our fellow-creatures have been reduced to poverty, want, and beggary. He who binds the floods from overflowing can let them loose when He pleases. Godless politicians and graceless philosophers are occupied with second causes and see not God's hand in all this; but it is our gracious privilege to see God in everything, and sing with dear old Joseph Irons:

"The Great First Cause of all events,

He gives decrees, and ne'er repents;

And Holy is His name."

"He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?" (Dan. 4:35) Yes, water unchecked is a terrible enemy to man. So is sin unrestrained to the living child of God. The Psalmist knew this and cried, "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me: O LORD, make haste to help me." (Ps. 40:12,13)

THE WORLD with its spirit prove awfully antagonistic to the life of God in the experience of the living in Jerusalem. See how James declares this in his 4th chapter, 4th verse: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Can any words be plainer than these? Look at the world's hatred to the people of God as described in the language of our blessed Lord and Master in John 17:14, "I have given them Thy Word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." The whole of the Scriptures of truth declare most pointedly, and that beyond the reach of refutation, that the world with its spirit, influences, and associations is dead set against God and His Christ. If we are spiritually one with God's Christ, the world, pious and profane, will prove itself a terrible enemy to us. It is of God's mercy that we enjoy His gathering and protecting power within the walls of Grove chapel, and His children throughout this land have great occasion to praise and adore Him for fencing them about with the hedge of the civil law. They can meet together according to their several modes and manners, none daring to make them afraid. If the truth is in the pulpit, it matters little what may be the form of worship or the mode of service. If the truth of God is in the pulpit, that is everything to me. Times of refreshing are experienced in God's house on Sunday; but where are you on the Monday? Think of the deadening associations of the past week, and then of "the anxious, dread tomorrow" when the stern realities of every-day life must be met, Satan's brood of every complexion must be encountered, godless competition will tax your patience and try your faith, the overreaching of one and the holding back of that which is due by another will almost take away your breath and cause your very soul to quiver with fear. This enemy will come in like a flood, ay, even while we are worshipping before the throne of our God. As assuredly as the Spirit has brought us into blessed and hallowed association and identification with Him who is holy, harmless, and undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, so shall

we know something of the world's hatred, enmity, and opposition to God, His Christ, His truth, and His people. But mark! There is another enemy

DEATH. Turn to 1 Cor. 15:26, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." The apostle knew something of the power of this terrible enemy. He said, "I die daily;" (verse 31) "In deaths oft." (2 Cor. 11:23) The thought of natural death is anything but pleasant. The experience of spiritual death is too grievous to be borne. The dread of eternal death drives the soul for refuge in Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. Yet these will sometimes come in like a flood in the experience of the child of God, causing him to tremble, as it were, on the very brink of eternity, ay, on the very brink of the burning lake. When the enemy persecutes my soul and smites my life down to the ground; when he hath made me to dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead, and my spirit is overwhelmed within me with desolation and dread, I fear I shall perish, and a sword more terrible than that of Damocles appears to hang over me. Yet, blessed be God, the certain accomplishment of the first part of the text is sure to be followed by the certain accomplishment of the latter. "When th enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him."

Those of us who read this chapter studiously know that the word "flood" is a figure of speech taken from the ravaging, devastating, and destroying progress of a victorious army. There is an army of wicked spirits and wicked men with Satan at its head incessantly warring against the armies of the living God. I believe this has reference, in the first place, to the literal enemies of God's ancient people; and, secondarily, in the deep which coucheth beneath the letter of the Word there is a reference to the spiritual Israel of God throughout all time. You will find this metaphor if you will turn with me to Isaiah 8:7,8: "Now therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth up upon them the waters of the river, strong and many, even the King of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks: and he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." Ah, my dear friends, in the experience of the glory of Immanuel's land we may well sing,

"With mercy and with judgment,

My web of time He wove,

And, aye, the dews of sorrow

Were lusted with His love

I'll bless the hand that guided,

I'll bless the heart that planned,

When throned where glory dwelleth

In Immanuel's land."

When JEHOVAH'S judgments are abroad in His land, when He has no mercy on my wretched flesh, and when the enemy comes in like a flood reaching even to the neck, but, blessed be God, not over head, then, while the Head is above all floods, the body must swim. A risen, ascended, and glorified Christ is the Head of the body, and far beyond the reach of all the floods of sin, corruption, evil, depravity, and death; so, though these may reach even to the neck of a true Zionite, and hide the beauties of the land of spiritual

promise from view, the glorious truth shall hold good, "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." (Isa. 43:2) You see the same figure used in chapter 18:2, "That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye swift messengers, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled." This reminds us of the rivers of sin, debauchery, profanity, error, superstition, and infidelity which abound on every hand in professing Zion. The same figure we have in the last verse: "In that time shall the present be brought unto the LORD of hosts of a people scattered and peeled, and from a people terrible from their beginning hitherto: a nation meted out and trodden under foot, whose land the rivers have spoiled, to the place of the name of the LORD of hosts, the mount Zion." Now turn to Psalm 18:4, where we find David in experimental oneness with the whole Church of God declaring,

"The floods of UNGODLY MEN made me afraid." You may depend upon it, the floods of ungodly men oftentimes make Thomas Bradbury afraid. I do not mean the profligate and profane who frequent the gin palaces and dens of infamy. There are more ungodly men than these in God's eyes. What think you of those who have sworn before the God of heaven that they believe, hold, and maintain the glorious doctrines of grace as set forth in the Thirty-nine Articles of England's Church, yet whose preaching pronounces them to be naught better than a tissue of lies.

If these are not ungodly men, I do not know what ungodliness is. These promise to renounce and denounce that lie of Satan, Free-will, yet every time they open their mouth they proclaim and defend it. These are deceivers indeed; but the world is swarming with such, seeking their own, not the things that are Jesus Christ's, maintaining their own proud fleshly will, and ignoring the will of a sovereign covenant-keeping God. Yes, these seek their own peace at the expense of JEHOVAH'S honour, they are bent upon their own ease at the expense of JEHOVAH'S glory.

But we may come a little nearer home in this matter. We find some who profess marvellous love and attachment to the Gospel of God's sovereign, free, and uninfluenced grace, to His pure and unadulterated Word, which is all of a piece, and which reveals a full and finished salvation to all the election of grace, yet will bring in something of the creature's duty, doing, or willing. These come so blandly and say, "You won't ignore the creature altogether! Do not make man into a mere machine!"

Oh, my dear friends, I am not going to make man into a machine; but I do declare he is ten times worse. See! If a man makes a machine, he may be able to make it work in perfect order; but wretched man is perfectly disordered and disorganized in every part. Solomon says, "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Eccle. 7:29) What does that mean? If the unregenerate sinner has not a way of sinning ready made to his hand, he is sure to invent one.

The proud professor whose heart has never been broken through a sense and sight of the heinousness of sin, with the self-sufficient pietist whose spirit knows nothing of the melting power of Jesus' precious name, are enemies indeed, flooding and overflowing the professing Church with their will-worship and hypocrisy. Cast your eyes around you now and let your mind rest upon certain spots where the venerable champions for God's whole truth, valiant men of Israel, stood a few years ago.

What see you now? Ichabod written upon everything. Temporizing, trimming, and toning down the truth to please the fleshly religious crowd is all the fashion. "So they wrap it up" may be written upon ten thousand pulpits where speculators spout only to deceive. I need not mention names, or places where once the

testimony was all of a piece, and the glorious Gospel of the grace of God was proclaimed fully, fearlessly, and feelingly; but now truth is torn and mangled, and a loathsome hash of truth and error, grace and human merit, spirit and flesh, is dealt out unsparingly. But we may come a little closer home.

"The enemy shall come in like a flood." Oftentimes I mourn and sigh because of the floods of doubt, which overwhelm my mind in reference to God's own work of grace in my heart, and to the reality of the blessed Spirit's presence and power in me. Has the Spirit witnessed with my spirit that I am a child of God? The enemy is sure to cast a flood of unbelieving thoughts into my mind. His accursed ifs, buts, and perhapses will cast a cloud over my spirit and cause me to call in question the life of God within me. Satan suggests, "If thou hadst the faintest claim to sonship, frowns would not darken thy face, neither would trouble, trial, or disappointment ruffle the equanimity of thy temper." The children of God, in the experience of these perplexing doubts and fears are brought to ask the question of Rebekah when the twins struggled within her: "If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD." (Gen. 25:22) You may depend upon it, if you are a true-born child of God there will be an almost continual conflict between the flesh and the Spirit, nature and grace, natural reason against spiritual revelation, and as the struggle increases you will often wonder when and where the scene will end.

"If sometimes I strive, as I mourn,

My hold of the promise to keep,

The billows more fiercely return,

And plunge me again in the deep.

While harass'd and cast from Thy sight,

The tempter suggests with a roar,

'The Lord has forsaken thee quite,

Thy God will be gracious no more."

"The enemy shall come in like a flood." Yes, he will come in with a flood of fears. Fears of what? Concerning my standing in grace, of my making shipwreck of my faith, lest my hope should be destroyed, my religion prove a delusion, my feet should not be kept from falling, and I be left through the craft and subtlety of the devil to bring a disgrace upon the name and cause of my precious Lord and Master. Yet here I can testify, to the glory of His great name, He has always proved better to me than all my fears. As we look around us we cannot help but mourn at the sight of the desolation wrought by the floods of error on every hand. Satan is a cunning, crafty enemy. True to his nature, he is a creeping, crawling foe. Thousands of his brood are like him in this respect. See how the apostle writes of them in Gal. 2:4, "And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage." Again he describes them: "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they who creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts. Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." (2 Tim. 3:5-7) These will creep into a Church. Mark! They do not rush in, but creep and crawl like their father the devil. On their very belly they will go to obtain place, position, and power. When they have reached the goal of their expectation, what then? They are a continual source of discontent and discord. Murmurers are they, who can sit and listen to truths most

glorious, walk out of chapel and circulate tales the most grievous. As they retire from the solemn worship and service of JEHOVAH, the first topic engaging their time and their tongues is something earthly, sensual, devilish, with which they intend to draw the pastor, deacons, or someone else over the coals. May the Lord of His infinite mercy and goodness preserve us from all such creepers in.

"The enemy shall come in like a flood." He will come into a man's house and ravage it with his hellish influences, not merely into the domestic circle, but into the thoughts, purposes, imaginations and desires of the true-born child of God, causing the spirit to tremble with fear. With flood after flood of temptation, lust, and sin he will seemingly overwhelm and swamp the very life of God in His child, but this will only prove to be the Father's way to draw forth the cry,

"When rising floods my soul o'erflow

When sinks my strength in waves of woe,

Saviour, Thy timely aid impart,

To raise my head and cheer my heart."

This leads us to consider the next point, the Person by whose power and might the enemy shall be finally overcome.

II. THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD." But the time has gone. Next Sunday morning, God willing, we will look at the remaining portion of the text.

May the Lord graciously add His blessing for His name and mercy's sake. Amen.

IT was our lot last Sunday morning to consider the state and condition of poor human nature as declared by the prophet through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in the first eight verses of this chapter. We also noticed the experience of the same as flowing from the hearts of those who are under the direct power, grace, and guidance of the ever-blessed Spirit, and the account these persons have to give of themselves. They give a faithful and ungarnished description of their state when left to themselves, their own imaginations, surmisings, wills, and determinations. The description is too depressing to dwell upon, and the regions of darkness and death here discovered to the living child of God are too painful and gloomy to linger in. He loves to be raised out of them by the power of sovereign love and grace, and to experience that which is blessedly set before us in Eph. 2:4-6. After a very painful description of the natural state of the saints, the apostle says: "But." That "But" is God's breakwater, over which the floods of sin, death, enmity, and wrath can never pass to hurt or destroy the scattered refugees of hope. This is God's own glorious declaration which cannot be disannulled or made of no effect: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins," He loved us, and "hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." All this is brought about by that glorious One set before us in Eph. 1:17, where the apostle prays: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him: the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to usward who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places." By the power, grace, and indwelling of the Spirit of Christ we are lifted

up far above all those corrupt, earthly, sensual, and devilish principles so graphically and painfully enumerated in Isaiah 59.

Last Sunday morning we were privileged to dwell upon the humbling truths recorded here, especially the portion preceding this morning's text: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood." Whatever form the enemy may assume, he will come in like a flood, seemingly swamping the very life of God in the experience of His children. The thought of this causes me to sigh,

"When rising floods my soul o'erflow,

When sinks my strength in waves of woe,

Saviour, Thy timely aid impart

To raise my head and cheer my heart."

From the dark, gloomy, and creature side of the picture we gladly turn to contemplate the light, reviving, and Divine side of the picture, and there see the triumphs of the Holy Ghost over sin, error, death, and the devil, in the experience of all the members of the body of Christ who are blessed with spiritual oneness with their great and glorious Head. "The Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a Standard against him."

II. THE GODHEAD OF THE HOLY GHOST "The Spirit of the LORD."

III. HIS GRACIOUS WORK "Shall lift up a Standard against him."

IV. THE GLORIOUS RESULT "Shall put him to flight." (Margin).

II. THE GODHEAD OF THE HOLY GHOST "The Spirit of the LORD." As I pointed out to you from Matt. 13:39, the enemy is that wicked one, the devil. He ever manifests his enmity against the Christ of God, and against all in spiritual oneness with Him. At this time he usurps the crown and sceptre of our glorious King Emmanuel in these death-doomed regions. During the dark days of our unregeneracy he usurped a dear Redeemer's place in our lives and affections, and now he oftentimes comes in with a flood of evil suggestions, vile injections, and accursed unbelief, causing us to question the reality of the Spirit's gracious dealings in us. With craft and subtlety he also steals in gently, and we are caught in the swamps of hellish indifference. Here we are taught feelingly to confess,

"And more the treacherous calm I dread,

Than tempests breaking o'er my head."

But the testimony of God's blessed Word is: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a Standard against him." In the face of this and other kindred declarations, we live in a Spirit-dishonouring day. In some places His existence is slightly acknowledged. In others He is mentioned only to be insulted. In the cathedrals and churches of the Establishment you will hear Him mentioned in the Doxology; but when you listen to the preacher, you find He is ignored altogether.

You may hear something concerning the Father's love; but, what is it? It is spurious love, and therefore no love at all. It is declared to be love to everybody, which in the long run may prove to be love to nobody. The God of the Arminian loves, and leaves His children to themselves, neglects and leaves them to starve and perish. You know what they do in this country to fathers who neglect their families. You may listen to

something about the Son trying to save, but failing in the attempt something about Him as a Husband who is a general lover.

Such love is wanton and adulterous. According to this, harlots must be attended to while the true wife is neglected or lost. You may hear something of the Divine Spirit, something about His influence, something about His striving, something about His doing His best; but rarely anything about His glorious sovereignty. I love that clear confession of faith in the Nicene creed, recited in all the churches of the Establishment on Sunday mornings: "And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified."

That just suits me. It is in perfect accordance with the experience of my heart. I love to honour the Spirit, because without His power, grace, and indwelling, the Father's love is nothing to me, and the Son's affection is but a fancy. Without the Holy Spirit, God Himself must cease to be, so far as the experience of His children are concerned. I love to sing with all my heart: "Glory be to the Father," for His electing love; "and to the Son," for His redeeming love; "and to the Holy Ghost," for His regenerating mercy.

"As it was in the beginning." What? Glory, glory, glory to JEHOVAH, Three-in-One and One-in-Three. "Is now." Where? In the hearts of the living in Jerusalem, and, thank God, in the hearts of His children in Grove Chapel. "And ever shall be," according to the Saviour's declaration in John 14:16, "I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever." "World without end." What world? The world of the Father's election the world of the Son's redemption the world of the Spirit's regeneration the world of JEHOVAH'S preservation and glorification.

When I look into my Bible and experience the truths recorded therein, in my heart, I delight in the three-fold cord of everlasting love which can never be broken. This is the cable which bears the strain of all the storms, temptations, and tribulations of this sinful world. One end of it securely holds my heart and will not let it go, while the other end is held by the anchor of hope within the veil, which firmly holds on to the Rock of eternal Ages. It matters not how much strain may be brought to bear upon it by floods of sin and blasts of hell, the cord of everlasting love and unchanging affection can never give way.

I love to contemplate the Divine Three-in-One JEHOVAH as set before us in the written Word, and revealed in the heart by JEHOVAH the Spirit. Here I know the Holy Ghost in His eternal and unchanging oneness with the Father and the Son. In the work of creation I behold Him. Turn to Gen. 1:26,27 and there you see the plurality of persons in the Godhead: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him "that is, after the image, pattern, or design settled upon in the eternal counsels which the Son should assume in the womb of the virgin.

JEHOVAH'S designs in covenant stretched beyond His works in creation, to the new creation of which Christ Jesus is the Beginning and the Ending, the First and the Last. He created this world as a platform for the display of His mysteries of redeeming love, and for the revelation of His manifold wisdom in the salvation, preservation, and glorification of His Church by Christ Jesus. Read the first verses of Genesis: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep."

The creation of chaos and confusion, darkness and disorder, was wholly of God, and is a representation, spiritually, of the first movings in the new creation when darkness and distress abound in a new-born soul. "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. And God said, Let there be light, and there was

light." Turn to Psalm 33:6, "By the Word "that is, by Christ the eternal Word "of the LORD" that is, JEHOVAH the Father "were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the Breath of His mouth" that is, JEHOVAH the Spirit.

He moved, or brooded over the darkness and disorder, out of which He brought forth light and life, order and perfection. He moved upon the face of the waters before the command went forth: "Let there be light." So it is in the spiritual experience of every true-born child of God. Disorder, then order. Darkness, then light. Imperfection, then perfection. But, disorder, darkness, and imperfection are in self, while order, light, and perfection are in Christ alone. Let us look at another portion where the Spirit appears in His glorious equality with the Father and the Son.

You will find it in Isaiah 6:3, "And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy is the LORD of hosts." Holy Father; Holy Son; Holy Spirit. "The whole earth is full of His glory," or, "His glory is the fullness of the whole earth." When Isaiah saw the glory of the Great Three-in-One, he cried: "Woe is me! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips." A live coal touched his lips. His iniquity was taken away. His sin was purged. He heard the voice of the Lord saying: "Whom shall I send?" There we see unity. "And who will go for Us?" There we behold plurality. Father, Son, and Spirit in undisturbed oneness and equality.

The New Testament also describes the Godhead of the Spirit with the Father and the Son. Turn with me to Matthew 28:18,19: "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto Me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Because all power is Mine, and I will manifest it by the operation of My Spirit: "Go ye therefore and teach all nations." Has this been done? The May meetings are coming on, and pretty meetings they are where the sovereign power of the Holy Ghost is hated and despised. If you could listen to the speeches which will be delivered at some of the missionary meetings, you would hear of a disappointed Christ, and a defeated Holy Ghost. They say, in so many words, that the purpose of the Father in Christ Jesus has failed in its accomplishment, that the intention of the Father and the command of the Son have come to naught. But I say they have not. "All nations." What nations are these? The nations of the saved, who shall walk in the light of Christ's glory. (Rev. 21:24) All the subjects of the King of these nations, who have existed, have been taught through the testimony of Christ. "Baptizing them." Baptizing who? All nations. Not a few here and there in the midst of these nations; but all the nations of them that are saved. All these nations must be taught and baptized "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Now, you go through the Acts of the Apostles, and, I tell you, you cannot find a single instance of baptism in, or with, water performed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. All the cases mentioned were in the name of the Lord Jesus. But where a God-sent man goes forth with a God-given testimony, and he preaches the Gospel with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, (1 Pet. 1:12) it is his gracious privilege to baptize testimonially in the name of the Father electing, the Son redeeming, and the Holy Ghost regenerating and confirming. That is the baptism which my soul truly loves, and I look for it in the experience of every one brought by a precious Christ into His house of wine, to sit at His table, and to feast upon His love. Every soul that enters into the gates of glory must, by Divine testimony, own and acknowledge the sovereignty of the Father in the choice or rejection of whom He will the right of the Son to redeem or reprobate whom He will and the right of the Holy Ghost to call or harden whom He will. At Calvary, one thief soared away to the heights of eternal delight, while the other sank to the depths of eternal despair. The saved one had no personal obedience before or after regeneration to glory in, but he rejoiced in the experimental possession of that blessed One, upon whose bosom he was privileged to lean.

Come with me now to that marvellous declaration in Col. 2:2, "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Not simply in Christ, but in God, the Father, and Christ. Here the Holy Ghost as God is named first. Why is this? Because of that which is so clearly stated in one of the Creeds, and which I endorse with all my heart: "And in this Trinity none is afore, or after other; none is greater, or less than another; but the whole Three Persons are co-eternal together; and co-equal. So that in all things the unity in Trinity, and the Trinity in unity, is to be worshipped." In Matthew 28:19, the Father is named first, the Son second, and the Holy Ghost third. Turn to 2 Cor. 13:14, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." Here you see the Lord Jesus Christ is named first, the Father second, and the Holy Ghost third; while in Col. 2:2, the Holy Ghost is named first. Why is this? To show that one Person in the sacred Trinity is not afore or greater than another. We thus see that the Holy Ghost is equal with the Father and the Son, and "Who with the Father and the Son together is eternally worshipped and glorified."

We now come to notice the Spirit operating in providence, for, mark you, He is not confined to gracious operations in the experience of God's children, neither is He limited to His works in the elect. He works in, with, and by, reprobate persons for the accomplishment of the Father's purposes of grace toward His elect. "Where do you find that?" is your inquiry? Turn to Numbers 24, where you have a description of that wretched character Balaam. At the 2nd verse we read: "And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding, according to their tribes; and the Spirit of God came upon him." Read the 4th verse: "He hath said, which heard the words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling, but having his eyes open." Mark well chapter 23:5, "And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth." With solemn, sacred feelings we may well think of these things. Depend upon it, I think about them frequently. The question arises within me, "Has the Lord put words in my mouth, while all that I call experience is nothing but fleshly fancy?" My heart is wrung with the bitter suspicion that my religion has been brought about through association with men of God, acquaintance with spiritual hymns, and experimental biographies. I have some awful reckonings up sometimes in the court of conscience before my God. In the divisions of God's Reuben there are great searchings of heart, and the men who can stand the searchings are few indeed. The Holy Ghost came upon Bezaleel and others "to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carrying of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship." (Exod. 31:2-6) The Spirit of the Lord moved Samson with strength to kill a roaring lion, (Judges 14:5,6) to slay thirty men of Ashkelon, (verse 19) and at last to pull down the house of the lords of the Philistines about their ears. (Judges 16:25-30) According to carnal, fleshly religious notions, these were pretty ways of working under the power of the Holy Ghost. I can see the blessed Spirit working in creation and in providence; but I love most all to experience His gracious inspiration to find corroborative evidence of it.

But look at Him, as He is described in the blessed Book, as the Author and Maintainer of spiritual life in the souls of God's living children. Turn with me to John 16:8, "And when He is come." "He." The Comforter, the Paraclete, the inward Advocate of God's people. "When He is come, He will reprove," or convince the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. This is the world of God's redeemed, who are taught that all they have, and all they can do independently of God-wrought faith, is sin. Do we sing? We sin. Do we attempt to pray? We sin. Do we preach? We sin. Do we listen? We sin. Everything apart from Christ is sin. "Of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more." Righteousness to be found alone in the finished work of Christ. "Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." Not of judgment to

come; but of the judgment of sin, Satan, death, and hell by the glorious Surety of the covenant upon Calvary's tree. "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now." There are many of God's weaklings now who cannot bear, but have to be borne with. "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself." The Spirit is not egotistical. He seeks not His own glory, but the glory of Christ. When the Saviour was upon earth, He sought not His own glory, but the glory of Him who sent Him. So the Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, speaks not of Himself, but delights to glorify the Father in His purposes and promises, and to glorify the Son in His person and perfections "But whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will shew you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I, that He shall take of Mine, and shall shew it unto you." From these Scriptures, and from the experience of my own heart, I know that the Spirit is not a mere emanation not an influence. He is a real, true, and proper person. He wills, He speaks, He acts, He teaches, He searches, He intercedes, He helps, He comforts, He guides to glory. See how blessedly He is described in Isaiah 11:2, where I would have you notice the number seven, denoting abundance, diversity, and perfection: 1st. The Spirit of the LORD. 2nd. The Spirit of wisdom. 3rd. The Spirit of understanding. 4th. The Spirit of counsel. 5th. The Spirit of might. 6th. The Spirit of knowledge. 7th. And of the fear of the LORD. In reference to every one of these there are spiritual necessities and perplexities created in our experience in which the Holy Ghost will meet us and open up to our astonished gaze the riches of the Father's love, the treasures of the Saviour's grace, and cheer and comfort our hearts with His own infinite and inexhaustible resources. Thus we see Him a glorious Person, the Sovereign JEHOVAH, whom we worship and adore.

III. HIS GRACIOUS WORK "Shall lift up a Standard against him." Against whom? Against the enemy. Whatever form the enemy may assume, the Spirit of JEHOVAH, or JEHOVAH the Spirit, shall lift up a standard against him. What is a standard? Every Briton who has a spark of British pluck in him, delights to think of the honour attached to the standard of his country, and he cannot divest himself of this national pride. Even when God in the riches of His grace, and the communications of His Spirit, gives him to know that he is a citizen of no mean city, even then, the child of God in these realms of England loves to see Judah's lion displayed upon the standard of his country, and to feel that he is an Englishman. JEHOVAH has thrust signal honour upon this country. Here and there His elect are found in clusters. Go to America, the land of boasted freedom, and where will you find a gathered company of God's elect? Where will you hear God's election of a people in Christ Jesus declared? Where will you find a church, chapel, or meeting-house where God's Gospel is faithfully preached? I have knownd one or two who have visited the United States, who, when there, would gladly have crept into any out-of-the-way place to hear an unconditional Gospel preached, but they were unable to find one. Destitute as England is, it knows of no such spiritual destitution as this. Thank God we have, in some churches of the Establishment, in many Baptist chapels, and in some Independent places of worship, the truth of God enunciated in its purity, preciousness, and power. We can sit under our own vine, and under our own fig-tree, a precious Christ, none daring to make us afraid. Thanks be to our preserving and protecting God, we live in a day when the fires of religious persecution flame not. Denominationalism, or sectarianism was ever the cause of this hellish work. In the days of Mary the Papists persecuted the Protestants. In the reign of Elizabeth the Protestants persecuted the Papists. In the days of the Stuarts the Episcopalians persecuted the Puritans and the Covenanters of Scotland, while the Puritans in their turn became persecutors on the other side of the Atlantic. That is what religion, without spiritual life, will do for a man. "Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." But here we are, in the gracious providence of God, free from all such fiendish persecutions, and may He in His mercy continue to us an immunity from them.

What is a standard? Sometimes it is styled, in God's Word, an ensign, or, a banner. We Britons call it a flag. And we rejoice in the fact, that in every part of the known globe, where the flag of Britain waves in the breeze, slaves cannot exist, and oppressors are not tolerated. But when we are led from the natural to the spiritual, how grand and glorious does the truth of God appear! The British standard sinks into insignificance here. Turn with me to Exod. 17:15, after Amalek was defeated by Joshua, "the LORD said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua: for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it JEHOVAH-NISSI: The Lord my Banner." The British standard is made of perishable material, but this is indestructible, enduring, a banner of everlasting love (Song of Solomon 2:4) JEHOVAH-JESUS Himself is the Banner, Ensign, and Standard of His people according to Isaiah's prophecy: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people: to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious." (Isa. 11:10)

Thus the standard is the rallying-point for all true and faithful soldiers. Around it are gathered the followers of their leader and commander. So to Jesus shall the armies of the redeemed be gathered, and distinguished as chosen, and called, and faithful. (Rev. 17:14) Turn with me to Ps. 60:4, "Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of Thy truth." Because of the word of the truth of the Gospel the banner shall be displayed. Mark you, it is not because of mere abstract truth, but God's truth in the love of it. What is truth without love? Something that I do not want. In the experience of God's love and truth, I feel my heart burn with love to Him in return. Here I glory in His everlasting Gospel, rejoice in the sovereignty of His grace, and in the eternal salvation and security of His people. The moving of the standard is the sign for the advance of the army. The standard is unfurled, the trumpet sounds, the ensign goes forth, and the army follows at the commander's bidding. Let the standard be struck, dismay and consternation may seize the troops; but as long as it is maintained in its position, the soldiers are inspired with confidence and encouragement. We see this illustrated in the account of Caesar's invasion of this country. On the approach of his fleet to the shores of Kent one of the soldiers leaped into the sea with the Roman standard, in the face of the opposing Britons. This inspired the Roman army with courage, and following their standard they were eventually flushed with victory. This is the case when the standard of eternal love, life, light, and liberty is unfurled before the soldiers of the Captain of our salvation, the Leader and Commander of the redeemed armies. Then they are inspired with hope and courage, they proceed from strength to strength, they advance conquering to conquer, until they are more than conquerors through Him that loved them. But oftentimes the soldiers of King Emmanuel feel themselves put to rout. Those of you who know what it is to wrestle with wicked spirits in heavenly places, and to meet the world, the flesh, and the devil in daily conflict are frequently conscious of failure and defeat, the ranks around you are thinned, many fall beneath the fiery darts of Satan, yet you are preserved. Many depart from Zion's ways, yet you are kept faithful, and enabled by His grace to fight the good fight of faith. Sometimes when faith has seemed to sink in black despair, the appearance of the Standard has inspired you with hope, and you have been blessed with the sweet assurance of salvation, succour, and security in the person and work of Christ.

I remember, some years ago, looking at some old colours as they hung from the roof of one of our old minsters. The names of places noted in military annals appeared upon them. I could see on one, Waterloo, and upon others Alma and Inkerman. You may depend upon it, that there are the names of many places inscribed upon the glorious old flag of Gospel grace. There we may see Gethsemane, where our Captain fought, and fell, and triumphed over Satan, death, and hell. Look again. There we see Calvary, where our glorious Leader vanquished sin, guilt, and condemnation, by which He brought life and

immortality to light by His Gospel. In Old Testament vision and prophecy He was promised to fight the battles of His people, while they should stand still and behold their salvation accomplished wholly by Him. In the Standard lifted up and unfurled by JEHOVAH the Spirit we behold and enjoy Gospel grace and glory, which is the cause of all true consolation and encouragement to the hearts of Christ's soldiers. But notice the Standard-Bearer. As an earthly ensign goes forth with the standard to battle, many a heart throbs with anxiety and hope for his safety. A shot at a venture, or one leveled with deadly aim, may bring down to dust and death. But our Standard-Bearer is invincible and invulnerable. He stands untouched and unmoved in the thickest of the fight. Let Satan's fiery darts and hell's dark arrows fly thickly around Him, still He maintains His ground. Let Him be unheeded by the vast majority of those who profess to be the soldiers of Christ, yet to the true-hearted He will appear in His sovereign power lifting up the standard, taking of the things of Christ and showing them unto us. Does sin assail me? He will reveal to my waiting and wanting heart the all-cleansing blood of my Saviour and Redeemer. Does a sense of condemnation distress me? He takes of the righteousness of Christ my God and tells me it is mine. Do doubts and fears prevail and perplex me? He takes of the faith of the Son of God and assures me it is mine. Do anxieties and cares cause my sad spirit to droop, and inbred corruption appear to stifle the life of God within me? The Spirit of the Lord alone can, and graciously will, make an utter end of them.

"When sins and fears preveiling rise,

And fainting hope almost expires

Jesus"

by the grace, energy, and anointing of Thy Spirit

"to Thee I lift mine eyes

To Thee I breathe my soul's desires."

Yes, when guilt is experienced in the conscience, when Satan, sin, and death seem to have all their own way with the living child of God, the Spirit of the Lord in His sovereign might will work and put them all to flight. Here we are brought to consider

IV. THE GLORIOUS RESULT "Shall put him to flight" (margin). Though enemy after enemy, and flood after flood shall come in to mar the sweet enjoyment of a Saviour's love, the chosen and redeemed of the Lord shall safely outstride them all. Fowler's sweet words are gloriously true of Zion's pilgrims:

"They may on the main of temptation be toss'd;

Their sorrows may swell as the sea;

But none of the ransom'd shall ever be lost,

The righteous shall hold on his way."

Do floods of accursed unbelief assail me? The Spirit of the Lord will reveal to me the precious truth that my Leader and Commander, the Captain of the Lord's host, the Captain of my salvation, has fought for me, believed for me, and relied upon every part of the Father's Word for me. Am I brought into dark and dreary spots, wounded and bleeding behind my shield, fainting and feeling my inability to cry for succour, and afraid I shall be left to perish on the field among the slain? The faithful Witness of the covenant, the

invincible and invulnerable Standard-Bearer will not fail me; but will lift up a precious trusting, believing Christ in my heart, which shall put accursed unbelief to flight. Am I beset by a dumb devil, and know not how to pray? The covenant Comforter will reveal One to me who opens His mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. (Prov. 31:8) He will sweetly interest me in the prayers of the Mediator, the intercession of my great High Priest, and the all-powerful pleadings of the Advocate with the Father on my behalf, and thus the dumb devil is put to flight. In the presence of my God I am accursed and assaulted again and again by Satan at my right hand; (Zech. 3) but the Spirit of the Lord reveals my covenant Angel, and the very moment He appears, Satan cannot withstand Him. Know ye anything of favours so precious, so glorious? If so, your waiting and adoring hearts shall know what that means, which is oftentimes set down as future, but which the favoured child delights in as a present spiritual reality: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony: and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Rev. 12:10,11)

May the Lord add His blessing for His name's sake. Amen.

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