

REFLECTIONS.

READER! we have a very solemn subject in this short but striking prophecy. When we consider the nearness of natural alliance between Jacob and Esau, and behold the bitterness of Edom to his brother, and that from generation to generation; when we look at the source, and trace it to its end; when we call to mind that this is the enmity of nature to grace, the son of the bond-woman to the free; when we contemplate what scripture declares, that there never can, nor ever will be an union between them, in time or to all eternity; how truly solemn, and how tremendously awful doth the whole appear!

Reader! let us seek relief from a subject so abundantly distressing, on the sweet assurances given to Israel, that *upon mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness.* Blessed Lord Jesus! thou art indeed the holiness, and thou art the salvation of thy people. We thank thee, O Lord, for this sweet morsel of scripture prophecy; pointing, as all prophecy doth, to thee, *to whom give all the Prophets witness.* And oh! Lord, let it be blessed to all thy Church, that all of thine who read it, may through thy Spirit's teaching, be enabled to set to their seal that *GOD is true.* Farewel, *Obadiah,* faithful hast thou been in thy testimony. Short as it is, it is sweet. May God the HOLY GHOST be adored for thy ministry, and the ministry of all his servants who have written to us the word of GOD. Give us grace, O Lord, *to follow their faith, considering the end of their conversation, JESUS CHRIST, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.* Amen.

THE

PROPHET JONAH.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

WE now enter upon the writings of Jonah, the *fifth* of the minor Prophets, so called from the lesser extent of their sermons. He is called *Jonah* the son of *Amittai,* both which names are significant, as most of the Hebrew names are: *Jonah* signifying a *dove,* and *Amittai,* *truth.* His writings have been called by some *sepher* *Jonah,* that is, the book of Jonah. And indeed the book itself is more historical than prophetic; for, excepting one fragment in it, in which Jonah cried and said, *yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,* Chapter iii. 4. there is nothing of pro-

phesy in it. I rather venture to consider *Jonah* himself as an eminent type of the LORD JESUS CHRIST: and therefore his writings became very sweet, as the record of his typical character.

The time of *Jonah's* ministry is not so accurately stated as to mark it with exact precision. Of himself we have a full account, when he lived and where he sprung from, 2 Kings xiv. 25. And this refutes the account of those in our Lord's days, who declared that no Prophet arose out of Galilee, for *Gath-hepher* is well known as a town in *Zebulun of Galilee*, John vii. 52. It also makes *Jonah's* ministry to be more ancient than either of the Prophets; *Hosea*, *Isaiah*, *Joel*, or *Amos*, being during the reigns of *Joash* and *Jeroboam*. But his ministry being directed to *Nineveh*, and not to *Israel*, makes it in some measure unconnected with the general thread of the Church's history.

The authority of *Jonah* as a Prophet, and of those his writings, can need no other than what the LORD JESUS himself hath given of both, Matt. xii. 39, 40, 41. And in respect to our improvement of this part of scripture, I should hope, that independent of the humbling lesson we here learn in *Jonah's* character, of attempting to flee from the presence of the Lord, as well as his infirmity of temper on the withering of the gourd; the views such things give us of poor fallen nature in its highest characters, will be always profitable. And no less at the same time, the blessed representations here made of divine goodness, patience, and long-suffering towards his servant's frailties; I say, independent of these things; which are highly improving; if we read this book, as setting forth *Jonah* the type of the ever blessed JESUS, a large scope of the sweetest and richest improvements will, under the LORD's teaching, arise out of it. May that Almighty Lord of his Church and people, who hath given us this scripture, give both Writer and Reader grace also to the wise understanding of it, that as it is given by inspiration, so it may be profitable to us for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of GOD may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. Amen.

CHAP. I.

CONTENTS.

Jonah receives a call from the Lord to go to Nineveh. He fleeth to Tarshish. A storm overtakes the ship in which Jonah is embarked. At his request the mariners throw him into the sea, and he is swallowed by a fish.

NOW the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

2 Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

By the word of the Lord coming unto *Jonah*, is meant the impression made on his mind, either by vision or revelation; and *Jonah* perfectly understood that the direction to go to *Nineveh* was of the Lord. The reason for *Jonah's* commission is assigned; *the wickedness of the place was come up before the Lord*. Reader! think what a mass of sin and iniquity rising like a cloud, must daily, hourly come up before the Lord, from every great city, and from every place! Think how precious, on this account, must be the person of the LORD JESUS, whose holiness in our nature becomes the preservative of all nature from going to instant destruction. Here it is in this sense I venture to believe the Apostle was directed to teach that Christ is the *Saviour of all men*; that is, in providence. For he upholds all things by the word of his power, and by him *all things consist*. See I Tim. iv. 10. with Coloss. i. 17. *Nineveh* itself must have been a great city indeed, the chief city of the *Assyrian* empire, taking three days journey to go through it, and containing six-score thousand persons. Chap. iii. 3. and Chap. iv. 11. And yet all ignorant of the Lord! Reader! what an awful thought it is now, in the present hour, of the millions that are in darkness respecting salvation! Will you not learn herefrom to admire and adore the Lord's distinguishing mercy to this our land? And will you not still stand more amazed in the recollection, that amidst such fulness of gospel light as is vouchsafed our land, so much depravity should abound? Is there a nation under heaven deeper sunk in transgressions? And yet it remains! To what and to whom shall this be ascribed, but to Him whom John saw as a *Lamb which had been slain*. Rev. v. 6.

3 But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa: and he found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

It is probable that this *Tarshish* was *Tarsus*, a sea-port in Israel. But what an awful attempt in Jonah to run from the Lord, and how foolish as well as presumptuous, the endeavour. Reader! let not us by the way overlook the instructions it brings of human nature in its best men, manifesting its corruption. Alas! what is man, yea, every man, uninfluenced by grace?

4 ¶ But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.

See how every thing ministers to the Lord's pleasure, when and where the Lord designs? Some of the ancient Jews have said, but by what authority I know not, that this wind was only directed to the ship in which Jonah was; for that other ships passed and repassed in safety at the time. But be this as it may, I hope the Reader will not fail to make a spiritual improvement of it, and remark herefrom, how the Lord sends storms and winds into the consciences of men, when rousing them by his grace to the consideration of their ways, while others around are in a calm.

5 Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them; but Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

What a striking instance doth Jonah here afford, how men's minds are hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. He, for whom this storm was raised, was the only one insensible of danger. Sinners asleep in a storm of national judgments, are the Jonah's of the present day.

6 So the ship-master came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.

The Lord sometimes sends preachers like this ship-master, from even the unawakened, to rouse his own people. But had *Jonah* considered it: *what* a reproach was this to him; that he, whom the Lord of heaven had sent to reprove a great prince and his people, should be brought down to the humbling state of being called to account for neglect of prayer by the master of a little vessel? Reader! what can any man mean, that is asleep in the present hour to all the concerns of eternity, while death is opening before him in every view?

7 And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots: that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us: so they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

It should seem that those shipmen thought that there was somewhat very singular in this storm, and so far they were all led to interpret a divine judgment in it, by this plan of casting lots for the discovery.

8 Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us? what is thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country, and of what people *art* thou?

There is somewhat very interesting in this history, simply as an history, but considered spiritually it riseth in importance. When in the threatened shipwreck of our whole nature by reason of the fall, and when the Lord's lot, in the person of Jesus, fell on him, every eye, and every thought, is directed to enquire into the cause. When the sons of Jacob went down into Egypt, and were all detained there by reason of Benjamin, how strange and mysterious was it to the whole to find the cup, in Benjamin's sack. Gen. xlv. 12, 13. In the Patriarchal history, we see the hand of Joseph to detain his brethren. In Jonah's history, we behold the hand of the Lord to bring Jonah into the state for which, as a type of Jesus, he was to be brought, and in both the hand of the Lord bringing mighty things to pass.

9 And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew: and I fear the LORD the God of heaven which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

It appears by the following verse, that he not only told who he was, but his whole history, and particularly that part of it which referred to his running away from his duty; and for which this singular storm was brought upon them. Jonah interpreted it right. So did the sons of Jacob, in their cruelty to their brother, when they were brought into prison. Gen. xlii. 21.

10 Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? for the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD; because he had told them.

11 ¶ Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

12 And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you.

13 Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring

it to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought and was tempestuous against them.

14 Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, Let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee.

15 So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging.

16 Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

This is a beautiful part of the history. The modest enquiries of the mariners; the honesty of Jonah; the reluctances in the minds of the ship's-company to cast Jonah into the sea; their cry unto the Lord; and the offering they made when they had done it, to be freed from the guilt of his blood; all these form most interesting points for improvement. But it is high time to pass over the history to what is infinitely more interesting, and to inquire for that which no doubt was the one great point to which Jonah's ministry was directed, and for what the Holy Ghost hath caused it to be written; namely, to consider him, as the Lord Jesus points him out, an eminent type of himself. Here the subject riseth to a sublimity and importance which demands our closest attention in every part of it. When we behold the storm thus pursuing the mariners, we behold in it the wrath of divine justice represented as pursuing our whole nature unto universal destruction. In the person of *Jonah* embarked with the ship's company, we behold the representation of Christ in our nature; who though he had no sin of his own, neither *was guile found in his mouth*; yet *was he made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* 2 Cor. v. 21. In the throwing Jonah into the sea as the only means to abate the storm, we behold the total helplessness of any thing short of Christ saving our whole nature from the wrath of God. In Jonah's being thus given for a ransom, and the storm as instantly ceasing, we behold how Christ hath borne the sins of many, and by his voluntary offer of himself, thus once offered, he hath satisfied divine justice, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness. It is true indeed, Jonah himself was the sole offender in this storm; and the Lord Jesus Christ altogether holy. Yet, as Christ became the surety of his people, he stood forth with all the guilt of his people before Jehovah, and both bore our sins, and carried our sorrows; and in this state was strikingly represented by Jonah when cast into the sea. Wonderful working God is our God, *whose ways are not our ways, nor his thoughts our thoughts!* Isaiah lviii. 8.

17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah : and Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

I stay not to enquire what fish this was. Our Lord Jesus himself hath said it was a whale. Matt. xii. 40. Neither do I consider myself as called upon to shew how Jonah could remain the time here spoken of, without being suffocated. The subject itself is miraculous; and as such, he that appointed the means, made it effectual to the end. I only beg the Reader to observe with me, that the time here mentioned of three days and three nights, doth not mean, neither was it ever intended to mean, three whole days and three whole nights; but only part in each, of the first and third of those times, that is to say, One whole day, and part of two others. For the Jews have no way of expressing a day and a night separately, but together. So it was by Christ when he lay in the grave; that is, part of the day of his crucifixion, from the time he was taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb; then the whole following day; and then to the next morning before sun rise; for that Christ was risen before the sun is evident from what is said of the godly women. Mark xvi. 2. And as Jonah was an express type of the Lord Jesus, it should seem that the time in both events was the same.

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PRECIOUS Lord Jesus! improving as the history of Jonah may be found in numberless instances, I cannot, I dare not for a moment lose sight of thee, while beholding thy type in the wonderful account here given, and which so strikingly sets forth thy glorious person, as three days and three nights *in the heart of the earth*. If Jonah was the only sign given in the days of thy flesh, to an evil and adulterous generation, let my soul bless the Lord for the sweet testimony this brings with it, to thy sovereign grace and salvation. Yes! dearest Lord! Jonah did resemble thee, when delivered to the raging sea for the salvation of the people. Thou didst indeed bear the overwhelming torrents of thy sufferings, when the vials of justice were poured out upon thy devoted head, and when thou didst tread the wine-presses of thy Father's wrath alone. And although in thy holy nature there was no shadow of guile; and never wert thou otherwise from one eternity to another than the unceasing object of thy Father's love; yet, as the sinner's surety, like Jonah, thou didst stand the only cause of the dreadful storm; and all the cataracts of tempest came in upon thy soul, until thou wert *sorrowful even unto death, sore amazed, and very heavy*. And hence those cries of soul; *I sink in deep water where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters where the floods overflow me*. Blessed Lord Jesus! may my soul frequently meditate on thee in this endearment of character! And as often as I read of Jonah's being cast forth, and the tempest of the sea ceasing in consequence, may I feel my soul refreshed in the contemplation; Jesus I will say was made this and infinitely more for me, that I might be made *the righteousness of God in him!*

CHAP. II.

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We have here the prayer which Jonah offered up to the Lord in his dreadful distress. The Lord's gracious answer also in his deliverance.

THEN Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly.

2 And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; Out of the belly of hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice.

3 For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.

Let the Reader here learn, and learn with trembling, that sin will bring trouble even to God's dear children. So runs the charter in the covenant of grace. Psalm lxxxix. 30, 31, 32. Learn also, that it is nothing for the most part brings the heart home to God, after departures, but the Lord's sanctifying affliction. And let the Reader learn moreover, that the greatest of all afflictions, is the thought in those afflictions, that they are the Lord's. A soul deserted of the Lord, or supposed to be so, is the heaviest of all distresses. It was the sense of this which aggravated the Redeemer's sorrows. Psalm xxii. 1, 2. But Reader! when you have duly pondered those weighty considerations, look at Jonah again, and behold him in this state as a type of the ever blessed Jesus. None but Jonah, among all the sons of men, ever experienced a state like this. It was none but the Lord Jesus that ever experienced the soul agonies of the garden, and the cross. *Of the people there was none with him.* Isaiah lxiii. And as Jonah remained here the exact time which the Lord Jesus in after ages remained in the heart of the earth, so Christ expressly declared that this was in Jonah a sign of Jonah's Lord. Matt. xii. 39, 40.

4 Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

5 The waters compassed me about *even* to the soul, the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.

6 I went down to the bottoms of the mountains: the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

7 When my soul fainted within me, I remem-

bered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

8 They/that observe lying vanities, forsake their own mercy.

9 But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the LORD.

The words of Jonah are very remarkable when he saith, though he was cast out of the Lord's sight, yet he would *look again*. A plain proof that he had *looked before*. But what I particularly beg the Reader to notice in Jonah's resolution of looking again is, that he would look towards the Lord's holy temple. Every one knows that reads the Bible, that this temple was the type of Christ. God in Christ, is, and was, the sum and substance of the whole temple, and of the whole furniture. Hence Jonah, like all the holy men of old, was looking for salvation to a God in Christ. And, Reader! I pray you to keep in remembrance, that let the afflictions and exercises of God's children be what they may, there can be no relief to any, or to all, but faith's confidence and hope in God's Christ.

10 ¶ And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*.

See! what a gracious prayer-hearing, and prayer-answering God our's is! Sweetly did another Prophet bear testimony to the same. Psalm cxxx. 1, 2, 3. But, Reader! do not lose sight of the typical representation in all this to the person and work of the Lord Jesus. As the belly of the whale could not detain Jonah, when the Lord commanded his deliverance, so neither could the grave detain Christ, when he had paid the debt of our sins, and satisfied both law and justice. Jesus was *justified in the Spirit*, it is said, when he came forth from the tomb; and God the Father took to himself the glorious name of *the God of peace*, when bringing again from the dead the Lord Jesus Christ, *through the blood of the everlasting covenant*. Such, and so blessed, are the great events of the Redeemer's deliverance from the grave, as typified by the Prophet's detention in what he calls the belly of hell. See 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. xiii. 20. Hosea vi. 2.

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READER! let us pause over this wonderful subject, and behold the miracle here related with fixed attention and regard. Many are the blessed instructions, simply as an history of the Lord's dealings with his people, which it holds forth; and which, under the Holy Ghost's teachings, may and will be profitable. Surely it is consolatory to a deserted soul, to behold in this instance, that his case is not singular. The Lord may, and the Lord will correct the backslidings of his children. They may during the sharp exercises of correction, fear that they are cast out of the Lord's sight. But in the midst of all

they still possess precious testimonies, could they but see them, that the union with Jesus is still the same, and cannot be lost. Else how would they resolve still to look to the holy temple? Else how would they groan under a sense of sin, and earnestly pant for a deliverance from it. Evidently Jonah had the same views of God's rich mercy in Christ as ever; and was alive to proclaim the Lord's honor while dishonoring himself. Reader! make application of these things to your own case and circumstances, and those of the Church at large, and the improvement will be blessed.

But chiefly, dearest Jesus, and above all other considerations in the history of Jonah, may our souls be led to behold in him thy type, And oh! for grace to bless thee, and adore thine holy name, that in an age so remote and distant, the great event of thy detention in the heart of the earth, for the salvation of thy people, should have been so wonderfully set forth! Cause the heart both of the Reader and Writer to be often meditating on Jonah's history, and there in figure behold by faith the wonderful mystery of thy humiliation, when for us and our salvation, thou didst condescend to lay in the grave until the morning of thy glorious resurrection! Amen.

CHAP. III.

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We have here the Lord again calling Jonah to the service of preaching to the men of Nineveh. The Prophet executeth the commission. And this Chapter records the effect.

AND the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

2 Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

Reader! I pray you observe the grace and condescension of the Lord in again calling Jonah to this service. Was it because the Lord had no other servant to employ? that is impossible. But because the Lord will send by whom he will send. Methinks here is a sweet and gracious lesson for ministers. How condescending is it in the Lord to employ any; and more especially such as have before slighted, or run from his service, and done the work of the Lord negligently. Malachi i. 13, 14.

3 So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

4 And Jonah began to enter into the city, a days' journey, and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.

According to all historians, this city was greater than Babylon, and yet in gross darkness respecting divine things. Reader! think of

the mercies of our land! And then stand amazed at the wonderful subject of our abuse of them, and the Lord's forbearance! I admire the faithfulness of Jonah. See how the Lord can, and the Lord doth, and will, strengthen his people!

5 ¶ So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

6 For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

7 And he caused *it* to be proclaimed, and published through Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing; let them not feed, nor drink water:

8 But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands.

9 Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish nôt?

What! but the sovereign grace of God could have induced such effects! What nation, what kingdom or people shall we look to, for similar humblings, at the preaching of a poor despised Prophet? Do we not see in it the Lord's Almighty hand disposing all orders of the people to this conduct!

10 ¶ And God saw their works that they turned from their evil way: and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

Who but must admire and adore the goodness and mercy of the Lord in this pardon to *Nineveh*. The change here mentioned is not in the Lord's mind, but in the Lord's providence. What is said through all the scriptures concerning the Lord's repenting of what he had before said he would, and doing it not, is meant to shew the change by his grace wrought in man, and not the least change in himself. See this doctrine more fully explained in my Commentary on Gen. vi. 6. and Jeremiah xviii. 7—10.

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READER! mark with me the wonderful properties of grace, both in the heart of the Prophet and of the people. See the change in *Jonah!* behold the change in the *Ninevites.* What cannot God accomplish, when by the sovereign act of his love he inclines the sinner's heart, and turns the whole tide of the affections back again.

But here, Reader, as in all other instances, do not forget to behold the blessed cause in the provision made for Prophet, Priest, and People, in the person, and by the one all-sufficient sacrifice, of the *Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.* To this, and this alone, God hath respect in all his dispensations, both in providence and grace. It is for Jesu's sake sin is pardoned, and the sinner forgiven and received into favour. Christ is both the mercy seat, and propitiation; and we have *redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

CHAP. IV.

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We have here a sad view of the mind of Jonah; the Lord's grace to Nineveh excites the Prophet's displeasure. He is reproved by the Lord under the figure of a gourd.

BUT it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.

We have not a similar instance in scripture, of a minister of the Lord being displeas'd at the success of his labors; and it is hardly possible on common principles, to assign any cause. Did Jonah dread being found a false prophet more than being made an unsuccessful preacher? Reader! what a character doth Jonah here appear in? Pause over the view!

2 And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.

3 Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me: for *it is* better for me to die than to live.

Is this Jonah, who offered such a lovely prayer but a little before? Can it be the same man? Alas! Reader! what is Jonah, what is any man, if for a moment left without the influences of grace?

4 ¶ Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?

Oh! precious, precious Lord Jesus! do we not see thee here, in this gentle tender expostulation? Reader, pray turn to Luke ix. 51—56.

5 So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

6 And the Lord GOD prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

7 But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.

8 And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, *It is better for me to die than to live.*

I cannot sufficiently admire, nor adore, the condescending benignity of the Lord, in the tender method the Lord took to recover the Prophet from his petulance. Reader! look at the Lord in those gracious acts, and then say what a blessed proof is here given of his own character; the LORD, the LORD GOD! merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Exod. xxxiv. 5, 6.

9 And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? and he said, I do well to be angry, *even unto death.*

Was there ever an instance of grace so recompensed with open contumacy? Was there ever an example of impudent rebellion more pointed than this?

10 Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured: neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:

11 And should not I spare Nineveh that great city, wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand, and *also* much cattle?

Reader! behold the conclusion! and say shall we not in the view of it cry out with the Prophet, *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage?* Micah vii. 18, 19.

REFLECTIONS.

HERE, Reader, let us pause as we finish the history of Jonah, and gather together into one view the wonderful subject, as it relates to the Lord's servant, and as it relates to the Lord himself, in his abundant grace manifested to such a wayward and rebellious frame of mind. We shall read the account of Jonah's preaching to Nineveh, and his displeasure at the Lord's mercy to little purpose, if we do not learn from the whole to bring the subject home to our own hearts, and under divine teaching discover that the seeds of the same sins, as we find in the *Ninevites*, and the Prophet, are in our nature also. *What* (saith the Prophet) *are we better than they?* No! (saith he) *in no wise. For we have before concluded all under sin.* And to whom, or from what cause do we ascribe the whole of salvation, but to Jesus and his wonderful undertaking in our nature? Chiefly let the people of God from this history learn, what man in his highest attainments is, if for one moment left to himself. Though like *Jonah* we have cried from the deep of affliction, when the wormwood and the gall of sin hath been bitterly drank by us; and though from the very belly of hell we have been brought to know the Lord, yet the withering of a gourd will open a-fresh our rebellion, if that thwarting providence, be it what it may, is not sanctified. Precious Lord Jesus! cause both him that writes, and him that reads, to live under the unceasing teachings of thy Holy Spirit, that a spring of humblings and sorrow may be constantly kept open in our souls. Lord, keep from us, as the most dangerous of all evils, every thought of any thing and every thing in ourselves as righteous; that a sense of the daily workings of corruption, however graciously restrained by thee from breaking out into actual commission, may cause us to go humbly and softly all our day. And above all, dearest Lord, let the daily consciousness of our need of thee, and of thy greatest salvation, make thee daily, yea hourly, more precious to our souls.

Farewell Jonah! I bless my God and Saviour for the profitableness I find under his blessed Spirit's teaching of thy ministry. Even the frailties of my Lord's servants, so faithfully recorded in his holy scriptures, afford instruction to my soul. Men of like passions with ourselves, are better suited in my Lord's service than angels of light. But oh! gracious Lord Jesus! what shall I say, or what shall I offer of thankfulness in beholding thy wonderful condescension in causing a *Jonah*, amidst all his unworthiness, to be a lively type of thine own person, when accomplishing the purpose of redemption. Here surely Lord, as in a thousand other instances, *thy thoughts are not our thoughts, nor thy ways our ways.* I bow, Lord, to the dust before thee, and thankfully acknowledge, that both in thine unequalled humiliation and exaltation, thou hast a name above every name, and all creation shall confess that thou art Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Amen.