

SERMONS,

PREACHED

IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF

HIGH WYCOMBE.

BY

THE REV. CHARLES BRADLEY,

VICAR OF GLASBURY, BRECKNOCKSHIRE; AND MINISTER OF

ST. JAMES'S CHAPEL, CLAPHAM, SURREY.

THE SIXTH EDITION.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO.

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1833.

TO THE
REV. GABRIEL VALPY, A.M.

THIS VOLUME IS INSCRIBED,
AS A TOKEN OF THE ESTEEM AND AFFECTION
OF HIS GREATLY OBLIGED FRIEND,
THE AUTHOR.

High Wycombe, May 20, 1820.

SERMON I.

GOD AN ETERNAL DWELLING PLACE.

PSALM xc. 1, 2.

Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.

As we contemplate the world we inhabit, we are often ready to conclude that its firm foundations never can be moved, and its scenes of beauty and magnificence never be destroyed. But while we are admiring and speculating, “the fashion of this world” is rapidly passing away, and its glory hastening to an everlasting end. The heavens above us too must perish. The sun and “the stars in their courses,” are measuring out their own appointed years, as well as ours; and when their numbered revolutions are completed, the sun will cease to rise, and the moon to shine; the stars of heaven will fall, and the place thereof know them again no more.

And yet, brethren, we who are surrounded by these fading worlds, are not thus limited in our duration. We shall be alive ages and ages after the earth has been consumed and the heavens dissolved, and shall still want a habitation to dwell in, a refuge, and a home. Where then is this habitation to be found? The psalmist tells us. He bids us lift up our eyes to the throne of God, and shows us a dwelling place there, standing on everlasting foundations, and able to receive and shelter every immortal soul. “Lord,” says he, “thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.”

The subjects of consideration suggested to us by these words are three;—the eternity of God; the relation in which this eternal God stands to his servants; and the feelings which the contemplation of him in this relation ought to excite.

I. Our attention is directed, first, to *the eternity of God*. And here we perceive at once, that we have a subject before us, which baffles all our enquiries. We use the word eternity, and we seem to understand it, but no sooner do we strive to comprehend its meaning, than we are startled to discover how little we know of it. Like men attempting to fathom a bottomless sea or to trace the shores of a boundless ocean, we enquire and labour; but all the fruit

of our labours is a humbling conviction of our own weakness, and an overpowering sense of the divine greatness.

But though our feeble minds cannot grasp the eternity of the Almighty, there is nothing presumptuous or sinful in making it the frequent subject of our meditations. The scripture allows, yea, invites us to think of it, and has connected with the thought of it, some of the sweetest and richest consolations the gospel can bestow. The psalmist evidently speaks of it, in the text, as a subject of contemplation delightful to his soul; and the elevated language which he employs in describing it, is calculated to impress on our minds a deep and lasting conviction of its importance.

1. He tells us, first, that *the existence of God never had a beginning*. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting, thou art God.” He here brings before our view the lofty mountains which seem to oppress the earth with their weight; and while we are admiring their solidity and grandeur, he tells us that before these were formed, his God lived. He then bids us look on the earth itself, and as we are thinking of the ages which have passed away since its foundations were first laid, he tells us again that before the earth was built, the living God was reigning on his throne. Neither does he leave us here. Our eyes are now directed to the rolling worlds around us; and when we begin to contemplate their number, vastness, and magnificence, we are ready to imagine that the day of their creation must have been the beginning of Jehovah’s endless life; but no; “Before the world was made, thou art God.” And here the psalmist stops. He leads us back as far as our imaginations can accompany him, and then intimates to us that we are no nearer the source of the Almighty’s existence, than we were at first; that if we would discover the beginning of his life and glory, we must seek it in the abyss of that eternity which lies beyond the remotest boundaries of time.

2. But the text reminds us also, that *the existence of God will never have an end*; that it stretches into futurity farther than our minds can follow it or angels trace it; that it is an everlasting life, a deep and mysterious stream which never began, and will never cease, to flow; “From everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.” And how can it be otherwise? Who can deprive him of his existence, who received it of none, and owes to none its preservation? He is “the incorruptible God,” and decay and death can never touch him. He is “the Lord God omnipotent,” and no arm can overcome him. He is the unchangeable Jehovah, and “no variableness neither shadow of turning;” can come near him. Hence says the psalmist to him, “Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed; but thou art

the same, and thy years shall have no end.”

Observe too, brethren, that the eternity which the Holy One of Israel inhabits, is his own eternity. He sits on no borrowed throne, but “hath life in himself,” and is the author of his own boundless existence. We ourselves are immortal, but we owe our eternity to another. We shall live for ever, simply because it is the will of him who gave us life, to preserve us in being. Without him, our souls are as liable to be destroyed as our bodies; yea, let him for one moment be unmindful of an immortal spirit, and in that very moment that spirit has ceased to be.

This truth is not sufficiently remembered by us. We seem to think that our souls have some natural claim on the eternity before us, and that omnipotence itself has no power to destroy them; but the thought is vain. The God who is “the Father of our spirits,” could annihilate as easily as he made them. Crowded as is the universe with the living heirs of immortality, a word from his lips would leave it for ever without an inhabitant; it would turn his own heaven into a desert, without a spirit rejoicing in it or an angel worshipping before his throne. How forcibly does this consideration remind us of our dependence on God, and of the mighty and incomprehensible exercise of power and goodness, by which he is every moment preserving in existence the beings he has formed! How low in the dust does it sink the most exalted of his creatures; and with what overpowering feelings of humility, adoration, and gratitude, does it constrain them to cast down the crowns of their glory at his feet!

II. Such then is the view which the psalmist has here given us, of the eternity of God; and faint as our conceptions may be of it, we must surely be ready to enquire, with no common degree of anxiety and earnestness, what connection there is between this everlasting Being and ourselves, *in what relation he stands to the people who love him*. The text answers this enquiry; and how graciously does it answer it! It represents the Creator of the heavens and the earth as the “dwelling place” of his servants, as their refuge, their habitation, their home.

It might have been expected, that this description of the divine eternity would have been employed by the Holy Spirit to show forth the terrors of the Lord, and to make his enemies tremble before him; but no word of terror accompanies it. He employs it to teach us how ready the everlasting Father is to shelter, and how able to bless us. We are reminded of the power by which he formed the earth and the worlds; we are reminded of the eternity in which he dwelt before there was a creature to know and adore him; and for what end?—that a world of destitute sinners may be encouraged to consign themselves to his care and to trust in his love.

Neither is this the only passage of scripture, in which we find the greatness of Jehovah brought forward to invite and cheer, instead of to dismay and alarm. The twenty-ninth psalm supplies us with a remarkable instance of this mode of reasoning with the fears of the humble. It begins with calling upon the great and the mighty to give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name. He is described as a powerful king, thundering on the waters, breaking the cedars of Lebanon with his voice, making the mountains dance, shaking the wilderness, laying open the forests, and controlling the water-floods. And for what purpose is all this magnificent imagery employed? Only to introduce and give force to this gracious promise, "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." A similar instance occurs in the first chapter of the prophecy of Nahum. After a description of the power and majesty of the Deity, which almost overwhelms the mind with its grandeur, the goodness of the Lord is abruptly made the theme of the prophet's song. "The Lord," says he, "hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet;" and then, in the midst of trembling mountains, falling rocks, and a burning world, this still, small voice of mercy is heard issuing from his throne, "The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him." O brethren, how strange is it that so glorious a God should thus labour to strengthen and comfort the fallen children of men! but how much stranger still, that there should be found among the people who know him, one heart desponding and aching!

But let us proceed to take a somewhat closer view of the figurative description which is given us of the living God in this text.

1. He is called "our dwelling place," and the term obviously implies that he is to his servants a *refuge from dangers*.

We are all encompassed by many and great dangers. Some of them we perceive and feel, but there are innumerable evils besetting us every moment, of which we are altogether unconscious. Our situation is as helpless too, as it is perilous. Mountains are ready to fall on us, and yet we are so feeble, that a worm can destroy or a moth crush us. But God can preserve us in the midst of all our dangers; and if we have entered into that covenant which he has made with his chosen, he has pledged himself to watch over and shelter us, to make our situation as secure in this world of peril, as though we were already standing in his own peaceful heavens.

Even our worthless bodies are the objects of his care. He has commanded one of his servants to tell us that "he keepeth all our bones, so that not one of them is broken and he has sent his own Son from heaven to assure us that even "the hairs of our head are all numbered." As for our souls, they are as safe in his hands as omnipotence can make them. We have only to take refuge

under the shadow of his wing, and Satan cannot injure nor temptation overcome us; our corruptions may harass, but they cannot prevail against us; and the world, instead of leading us captive, will be trampled underneath our feet. "I will say of the Lord," exclaimed the confiding prophet, as he contemplated the strength and safety of the habitation to which he had fled, "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God; in him will I trust. Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day, nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness, nor for the destruction that wasteth at noon-day." "Because thou hast made the Lord which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling."

2. But our houses are something more than places of shelter from the attacks of enemies, from winds and storms. They are the abodes of our happiness, and the mansions in which we seek our peace and rest. When therefore the eternal God styles himself our dwelling place, he teaches us to regard him as *the seat of our comforts*.

And there are thousands among his afflicted people, who can testify, with hearts glowing with thankfulness, that there are indeed comforts in God; such comforts as they who know him not, have never tasted or thought of; substantial and satisfying comforts; comforts which can sweeten a world of misery, and make the dreary desert around us blossom as a rose.

How is it then, brethren, that the blessings of our heavenly home are so little enjoyed? We know that there is happiness with God; and there have been seasons in which we have wondered at the blessedness he has imparted to our souls. The calamities of life have lost their power to trouble and perplex us. Though chastened and afflicted, we have risen above every trial, and have been ready to bid an eternal farewell to fear and sorrow. And yet perhaps in one short hour this calm has been disturbed. Peace has forsaken us, and our harassed minds have again resembled "the troubled sea when it cannot rest." We have been disappointed, and the disappointment has been more than we could bear. We have received some unexpected stroke of our Father's rod, and we have fainted under it. We have lost the idol we had loved, and we have felt as forlorn and comfortless, as though there were no God to be our helper, or we had never leaned on his arm. And to what cause are we to ascribe this painful change in our feelings? We have forgotten our God. We have forsaken the seat of our comforts. We have been seeking abroad the blessings which are to be found only in our home. Could we but constantly live above in the dwelling appointed us, could we but abide hour by hour "in

the secret place of the Almighty,” how little should we heed the storms that are now so often disquieting us! “The waves” of this troubled sea over which we are passing, “might toss themselves,” and the waters thereof roar and lift themselves up; but we should be dwelling far above their reach, and should dread not their fury. The man who is surrounded in a peaceful habitation by the comforts of his home, heeds not the tempests which rage around him. He hears the winds blow and the rains descend, but they disturb not his blessedness. Neither can the storms of life materially disturb the peace of the Christian. He feels himself to be sheltered in a “sure dwelling and in a quiet resting place,” and the agitating scenes of life only make him value its safety the more, and sweeten to him its comforts. He may be afflicted and troubled; he may be bowed down with sickness, and have not a lover or friend to help or pity him; the world may persecute him; intricate and mysterious providences may throw many a cloud over his path; but “none of these things move” him. The man is in the bosom of his God, and he is happy there.

3. The figurative language of the text implies thirdly, that the eternal God is not only a refuge to his people from their dangers and the seat of their comforts, but that he is also *the place of their abode*; not merely a house in which they are occasionally found, but their constant residence, their home.

It is this living in God, this habit of flying to him for protection and peace, which distinguishes the real Christian from the mere professor of religion, and makes his soul so unruffled and fearless. There are seasons in which we are all disposed to seek refuge in God. The troubles of life force us to implore his aid. But then, brethren, let us not deem ourselves Christians, because sickness can alarm and adversity afflict us. Let us not say that we are dwelling in a house, into which we have been unwillingly forced by a storm, and which we intend to leave as soon as the fury of the tempest has passed. It is true that God is “a refuge from the storm, and a hiding place from the wind a near and open refuge, to which every helpless and wearied pilgrim is invited to fly, and where he is promised a welcome and a blessing; but to the Christian he is something more. The Most High is “his habitation whereunto he continually resorts.” “He dwelleth in God” in the hour of security, as well as in the season of danger; and in the brightest day of his prosperity, he still “abideth under the shadow of the Almighty.”

Without this habitual communion with God and constant dependence upon him, the scriptures plainly tell us that we shall be strangers to the safety and peace which he vouchsafes to his children. And does not matter of fact tell us the same? Who are the people among us, whom the world cannot move nor temptation overcome? whom disappointments cannot ruffle nor afflictions depress? The careless and inconsistent followers of Christ? the men who give one hour to prayer and the Bible, and the next to vanity and sin?

No; the man who is “in the fear of the Lord all the day long;” the man who is living every hour at his footstool and within sight of his throne. How then, brethren, are we living? with God or without him in the world? Is he our dwelling place, our home? or is he as a strange and foreign house to us, the door of which we may have seen, but never entered; and the comforts of which we may have heard of, but never tasted or sought?

III. This then is the light in which we are encouraged to regard the everlasting God. If we are numbered among the people who are seeking and serving him, he is our refuge in danger, the seat of our comforts, and the abode of our rest. It becomes us therefore to enquire, thirdly, *what feelings the contemplation of this eternal dwelling place ought to excite.*

1. The text may be considered as the language of *grateful acknowledgment*. The psalmist seems to have been taking a review of the never-failing loving-kindness of the Almighty towards his beloved church, and he here acknowledges his hand in all the multiplied mercies which he and his fellow-pilgrims had experienced.

We too should imitate his conduct. Mercies are not given us merely to be received and forgotten. They are designed to be lasting blessings, to be treasured up in our memories, and to be made the means of warming our hearts and renewing our confidence, in every future season of despondency and coldness. The history of our own lives then is a record which we are bound to study. God himself has commanded us to “remember all the way” wherein he has led us, to keep all the events which have befallen us fresh in our recollection, and to connect them all with him. Some painful emotions must, it is true, arise in every mind, as it retraces the past. Hours wasted in folly and days in vanity, talents unimproved and duties left undone, afflictions despised and warnings slighted, sins heaped upon sins must rush into the soul as it looks back on the years that are gone, and excite in it many a sorrowful and almost sickening feeling. But these are not the only things which a retrospect of life brings to our remembrance. It forces us to see that the eternal God has indeed been our dwelling place; that in the midst of our iniquities, goodness and mercy have been hourly going before and following us; that blessings exceeding in multitude the hairs of our head, yea, numberless as our sins, have been poured into our bosoms. Indeed it seems to us at seasons, as though we had been from the day of our birth the only objects of Jehovah’s care; as though he had forgotten all the concerns of the universe, to help, support, and comfort, our sinful hearts.

2. The words of the psalmist may be regarded also as the language of *satisfaction*. They imply that, in all generations, the people who have dwelt in God, have been “abundantly satisfied” with the goodness of their house;

that they have found in it all that their wants needed, and more than their souls desired.

Some of us perhaps have been tempted to pity the Christian; to regret that he should deny himself the comforts and joys, which we still find in the pursuits that he has abandoned. We are ready to think that he has been disappointed in his expectations, and that were it not for the workings of obstinacy and pride, he would again rejoice to share our society and to enter into our pleasures. But could we once see the intense earnestness with which the most sorrowful Christian desires to cling to his God, and the rich and full satisfaction which he finds and enjoys in him, we should learn a lesson that would astonish and humble us. That man disappointed, who has the eternal God for his dwelling place! That heart unsatisfied, which is lying on the bosom of Jehovah! Never. You, brethren, who are thirsting for pleasure, and seeking it with all the energies of your souls in an empty world, you are the men whose hearts ache with vexation and sicken with disappointment; you are the men to whom solitude is irksome, to whom existence itself is often a burden, death fearful, and eternity appalling.

3. We may consider the text, further, as the language of *humility*.

The consideration of the divine eternity humbles, as well as elevates. It leads us involuntarily to compare ourselves with him who is reigning on his everlasting throne, and then it abases us under a sense of our own littleness and vileness. No sooner has the psalmist spoken of God as his eternal dwelling place, than we find his thoughts passing abruptly to the frailty of man, and afterwards to his sinfulness. He speaks of him in the verses following the text, as fading away suddenly like the grass; as traversing the earth in the morning, and in the evening returning again to the dust from which he was taken.

How mysterious then is the condescension of the Lord in setting his love on a creature so mean! and how fearfully bold is the pride of that creature, when he presumes to sit in judgment on the actions, and to censure the counsels, of an eternal God! And yet how prone is man to cherish this presumptuous and foolish pride! Though born yesterday, and dying tomorrow, so ignorant that he cannot comprehend the nature of his own existence, and so short-sighted that he cannot tell what a single hour will bring forth; yet is he continually lifting up himself against the incomprehensible God, and daring to bring the Lord of eternity to the bar of his own poor little mind. We glory in the intellect of man, when it is exercised in submission to the word and ways of him who is its author; but we tremble and blush for it, when it is striving to exalt itself against the Majesty of heaven. The eternity of God sets him far above the reach of our feeble comprehension; and he who would act

agreeably to the rational nature of which he is so willing to boast, must struggle with the workings of his own proud heart, must labour to cast down its “high imaginations,” must never rest till every thought within him is brought “into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

But the words of the psalmist remind us of another ground of humiliation. We are sinful, as well as frail beings; and the same eternal God who has taught us to regard him as our refuge, has “set our iniquities before him, and our secret sins in the light of his countenance.” Many of these sins we have seldom or never thought of, and many more we have long since forgotten; but not one of them is forgotten in heaven. They are all as fresh at this very moment in the mind of the Lord, as in the hour when they were committed. Though infinite mercy may pardon, infinite wisdom can never forget them. “A thousand years in his sight are but as yesterday when it is past,” and ten thousand more could not efface from the book of his remembrance a single sin. How solemn is this thought! Who can press it home to his heart, and dare to make light of his past transgressions? They may be pardoned, fully and eternally pardoned, so completely remitted that they may be said to be “cast into the depths of the sea;” but where is the Christian who is not constrained to mourn over them, as he thinks of the eternity of God, and to humble himself in the dust at the footstool of his throne?

4. The language before us may be regarded also as the language of *confidence*.

If God has been the dwelling place of his people in all the generations that are gone, we are warranted to conclude that he will continue to shelter and bless them in all the generations that are to come, even to everlasting. His eternity assures us of his unchangeableness. It tells us that such as he was millions of ages before the mountains were brought forth, such he is now, and such he will be millions of ages after the world has been destroyed, the same all powerful and mysteriously gracious God.

We are sometimes however tempted to doubt his unchangeableness. As we think of the mighty works which his hands have formed, and of the rich streams of mercy which have flowed through so many generations from his throne, we are ready to imagine that the treasures of his power and love must be diminished; but no. His arm is as strong now, as when he created the heavens and the earth; and as for his love to his people, it is as great at this moment, as when he gave his only begotten Son, and sent him to the manger and the cross to redeem their souls.

It is a heart-felt conviction of this truth, which makes the Christian prize so highly the refuge to which he has fled, and renders his confidence in it so firm. Stability stamps a value upon a habitation. We may be satisfied with the accommodations of a house and admire its beauty, but if we are told that

its foundations are giving way, we never think of taking it for our dwelling. Thus the Christian dares not rest his hopes of safety or happiness on worldly objects, however dear they may be to him, because he knows that they are hastening to destruction. He is an immortal being, and the rock on which he sets his foot, must be an everlasting rock; and the arm on which he leans, an everlasting arm. The eternal God therefore is the ground of his confidence, and he is so because he is an eternal God; because he knows that "his throne endureth for ever in heaven, and of his years there shall be no end."

If this attribute of the Almighty were more frequently made the subject of our meditations, if we thought more closely and habitually on the eternity of God, we should find our reliance on him less liable to be shaken, and the joy we derive from his gospel sweetened and increased. In the day of adversity, we should not so readily faint. We should remember that before the foundations of the world were laid, our wants were all foreseen by him whose "goings forth were from everlasting," and all provided for in his covenant of peace; that the very afflictions which are now filling our hearts with anguish, are parts of a stupendous plan, formed in the councils of eternity to throw a new lustre around the throne of Jehovah, by purifying a peculiar people unto himself from among our fallen race, and placing them in his heavenly temple as monuments of his incomprehensible mercy. He himself assures us that the love wherewith he has loved us, had its origin in eternity. "Yea," he says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." And when is this love to end? Not till eternity itself is past. "The mercy of the Lord," says David, "is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." And what is the language of God himself to his fainting people? "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer." "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed."

Are we then sincerely and heartily seeking the divine mercy? Let us rejoice in it as a mercy that "endureth for ever," the riches of which a whole universe of pardoned sinners could never exhaust. There is no fear of rejoicing in it too much, or of relying on it too confidently. The love of an eternal God can never fail or disappoint us. We have had indeed other friends who have loved us, and sweet has their friendship been to our souls; but where are they now? Where is the mother who bare, and the father who cherished us? Where are the companions of our childhood and the associates of our youth? Where are they who once ate of our bread and drank of our cup? They are dead. The greater part of them are gone far from us, and have left us to

weather the storms of life alone. But God is not gone. Death cannot dash him into the grave, nor separate us from his love. Our dwelling place is still standing firm on its everlasting foundations, and though “lover and friend be put far from us, and our acquaintance into darkness,” we will confide in its strength, and fill our hearts with its blessedness. “The Lord shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody. Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner; but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.”

5. There is yet another lesson suggested to us by the psalmist’s words. While they are calculated to excite in the hearts of the righteous the liveliest feelings of gratitude, satisfaction, humility, and confidence, they speak to the careless and ungodly the language of *terror*.

The eternity of God makes his favour infinitely desirable, but then it adds a fearfulness to his displeasure, which appals the soul. Other enemies may be incensed against us, but while they are preparing to execute their purposes of wrath, “their breath goeth forth they die; and there is an end of their terror. But an avenging God never dies. The weapons of his indignation are as lasting as they are strong. The sentence he pronounces on his adversaries is an “eternal judgment;” the punishment prepared for them is “everlasting destruction;” and the smoke of that pit wherein they are cast, “ascendeth up for ever and ever.” The worm which torments them, is a worm that “dieth not and the fire which burns within them, is a fire that can never be quenched. O brethren, “it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living,” an ever living, an eternal God! And yet how rapidly are many of us approaching this fearful fall! While we are suffering our minds to be occupied solely by the business of the world, or enslaved by its vanities, while our hearts are unsanctified and our sins unpardoned, while mercy is despised and grace forgotten, year after year is passing silently away, and death, judgment, and eternity, are all drawing near. A few more of these silent years will soon have run their course, and we shall have reached our everlasting home; yea, some of us may even now be standing on the verge of an unseen and unthought-of eternity, and may be hurried, before another sabbath dawns, into its mysterious and awful scenes. To trifle in such a situation is madness. To rest content with forming resolutions of seeking at some more convenient season a refuge in Christ, is no better than pitiable folly. There is only one line of conduct, which a rational being under such circumstances can pursue. It is marked out

for him by the God who is willing to receive and longing to bless him. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord.” “Turn ye to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope.” “Flee from the wrath to come.”