

THE  
HIGHEST WISDOM  
AND  
GREATEST GLORY.

BEING

A SERMON,

*Preached on Lord's-day Morning, Feb. 11th, at the Surrey  
Tabernacle, Borough Road, London,*

BY J. WELLS,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE DEATH OF

MR. W. GADSBY,

MANCHESTER,

*Who entered into rest on Saturday Evening, about Six o'Clock,  
Jan. 27th, 1844, in the 72nd year of his age.*

“They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever,” *Dan. xii. 3.*

BRIGHTON:

J. TYLER, 83, NORTH STREET.

LONDON:

S. GILBERT, 51 AND 52, PATERNOSTER ROW.

SOLD ALSO AT THE SURREY TABERNACLE.

PRICE SIXPENCE.

—  
1844.

ADOLESCENT

THE

MONTHLY

BRIGHTON

BRIGHTON:

PRINTED BY W. H. SMITHERS,

WESTERN ROAD.

## P R E F A C E .

As it is rumoured that there was an unpleasant feeling existing between Mr. Gadsby and myself and that this feeling arose from my preaching at Manchester being the means of causing a division in the church; and so embittering his last days—as such a report as this has been industriously circulated, I think a word of *explanation* and of *expostulation* may not be out of place or out of season, especially, as this Sermon will be read by many of the friends at Manchester.

When Mr. Gadsby was in London last summer, he made some remarks from the pulpit which led some to conclude that there was a division in the church at Manchester; this was the first I ever heard or knew of the matter. Some few weeks after this, I was informed that a new cause was rising in Manchester; I received several letters from persons connected therewith, some inviting me to come to Manchester and help them; but as I feared there was some unchristian feeling towards Mr. Gadsby, I refused to go. Several letters I received also from

some of Mr. Gadsby's congregation, most earnestly entreating me *not* to come to Manchester ; but some few weeks after this I received several letters from those connected with the new cause, assuring me that there was no hostile feeling whatever towards Mr. Gadsby, and that the main body of the people desirous of having another minister of truth at Manchester were not persons who had separated themselves from Mr. Gadsby's, but persons from other places ; as also some who were hearers of Mr. Gadsby many years ago, but had not heard him lately, the Lord not being pleased to bless Mr. Gadsby's ministry to them ; and that these people forming the new cause had no other end, feeling, or desire, BUT the good of their own souls and the glory of God ; nor did I ever receive one letter from those connected with the new cause, in which Mr. Gadsby was spoken of disrespectfully. Matters assuming this form and appearance, and looking at the *vastness* of the population of Manchester, seeing it as one great field of dying men, and knowing, of all mercies, there is none like that of salvation, having also myself obtained mercy, I began to feel pleased with the hope that the Lord was about to extend his mercy and his truth in Manchester ; and this, with me, swallowed up comparatively every other consideration. I therefore felt at liberty to recommend ministers to them ; I recom-

mended one, and wrote to another; and as soon as I could have seen my way clear, I should have gone myself; indeed there was but one reason that I did not go, and that was, that I feared that, as I had been well received at Manchester, that if I went, many of Mr. Gadsby's hearers would come to hear me, and make his chapel appear not so full as it usually was and that Satan might take advantage of this to irritate his mind; and as I had a sincere love towards him as a man of God, I desired to avoid appearing in any way hostile to his comfort; but thought in my own mind, that if I did go to Manchester, it should be when he was preaching elsewhere, and thus keep as clear as possible from any thing tending to unpleasantness; and my whole congregation are witnesses that I never spoke of Mr. Gadsby but in terms of respect and veneration, except it be that the petty jealousies of the flesh made him at times as weak as another man—that he was a man subject to like passions with us. Would his dearest friends wish to deny this?

As far as I can get at the matter, there appears to me to have been a great noise about *almost nothing*; for, after all, what division was there in the church? did the congregation appear less, in number? did pecuniary supply fall off? nay, did it not rather *increase*? Was Mr. Gadsby less beloved? was his ministry less useful? Why, then, all the wrath, the

bitterness, the evil speaking, which have been manifested? Can the wrath of man work the righteousness of God? is biting and devouring each other the *same* as building up ourselves in our most holy faith? My brethren, these things ought not so to be; nor can such things bring any thing but hardness of heart, darkness of soul, and carnality in every shape and form.

And if there were two or three persons among those who left that manifested an unchristian spirit, is it right to follow their example? Shall we ever be able to overcome evil otherwise than with good? I say not this to condemn, or even to accuse any one; while I desire no other rules of Christian feeling and brotherly love, than those laid down in the scriptures of truth—namely, vital union to Christ, a renunciation of all confidence in the flesh, a separation from an ungodly world, a real thirst for God and godliness, a walking in the truth, the love, and the ordinances of God, and thus making it manifest to each other's consciences that we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth, and that salvation is our supreme delight. These are the paths of life, of holiness, and righteousness; these truths are that way of the Lord which is strength to the upright. If we cannot receive the children of God in these relations, then we do not receive one another as Jesus Christ hath received us, namely, to the *glory of God*.

I know it is much easier thus to write, than to follow out these things in practice; yet I am not, either as a Christian or as a minister, altogether a stranger to the practical part of this matter.

When a minister (at Plymouth) left his people and came to a chapel very near to the Surrey Tabernacle, there were not, I should say, less than from two to three hundred of my hearers who left me, and instead of having from eight to ten hundred persons of a Lord's-day morning, there were only perhaps from six to seven hundred; yet it made hardly any perceptible difference to the evening congregation, and but very few months to the morning congregation, being very soon attended as well, if not better than ever. And how wonderfully was I kept; for, instead of wrangling, and throwing out hints, and cutting others off, I was kept in the love and liberty of the truth; and that to the great disappointment of many, who thought I should rave and rage like a madman; and so I should if I had been left to myself—but the *Lord stood by me*, and strengthened me, and enabled me to endure the hard speeches of those who *were left to themselves*; while I believe some among them still hold me in respectful remembrance, and some are come back again. This is now nearly three years ago; and never has the mercy of the Lord, both temporally and spiritually, appeared more conspicuously among

us than during these last three years. Bless his dear and precious name; I do not feel a little indebted to him for thus appearing for me, and keeping me from the spirit of the flesh; for I most freely, to my own confusion, confess that no poor worm would sooner be driven to speak and act unadvisedly than I should, and therefore it is that I feel I am not safe one moment, only in the hands of his almighty grace; *and I now see there was no occasion for me to be jealous.*

Ministers have a great many trials, and are sure to manifest weaknesses, more or less; and so also have the hearers a great many trials—beat about in the world, annoyed and buffeted by the enemy, shut up and lifeless in their own souls, and perhaps get nothing in hearing for weeks and months together. It is very easy for the minister to stand up in the pulpit, and tell them it is their *own fault*; whereas, if the minister were in the place of such a hearer, he would manifest as much, and perhaps more impatience and peevishness than such a hearer does, and be tempted to seek after a minister he could hear with power. For my own part, I do at times wonder at my own hearers coming and continuing so perseveringly as they do, for I do at times feel so dead, so powerless, so destitute of thought and feeling, and so helpless, that it seems nothing but awful presumption ever to attempt to preach again,



and fancy I can read the thoughts of the hearers in their countenances; they look as though they were saying in themselves, "Well, if this be a gospel ministry—if this be all you have to tell us, and some of us have come seven or eight miles to hear this poor, poverty-struck sermon, you may well call yourself a poor creature, for really you are. Why, any of us could preach better than that. You had better leave off, and never attempt to get into a pulpit again." O! how often, under these feelings, have I stammered, and hesitated whether I should say any more; and have felt, at the end, completely ashamed of myself, and of the *nothingness* of my sermon. And yet such sermons sometimes are wonderfully blest; yes, and I have, too, found such seasons profitable to my own soul; they help to keep me in my place, to mortify my pride, and lead me to pray the more *earnestly*.

Is it not, then, much better to be weeping with those that weep, than to be nursing the partialities and prejudices of the flesh? and are we to deny others that liberty which we feel essential to our comfort?

My conscience beareth me testimony that it was not from any hostile feeling whatever to Mr. Gadsby, but in the exercise of that which I feel to be my Christian liberty, that I so far took the part of the new cause to recommend ministers; and if

those who think I did wrong, never do any thing worse than this, I think they may deem themselves highly honoured.

I desire ever to be a lover of good men, but I desire that love to be regulated by the principles of the gospel, and that without partiality and without hypocrisy. It is not whether a man be of Paul, or of Cephas; but whether he be of *God*—whether he be one with Christ—whether he is led by the spirit of truth; and if the boundless breadths and fathomless depths of the love, the mercy, and grace of God, be not capable of swallowing up all the mere temporal, fleshly, party differences of the children of God, then—*farewell Christian freedom.*

I have, in the eyes of some, committed great error in recommending the *Gospel Ambassador*; but I deem it a part of my liberty to hear those ministers and to read those books by which I feel the most profited. I prefer the *Gospel Ambassador* to any other; and I should smile at the poor mortal who would attempt to *dictate* to me *how* I am to preach, *who* I am to hear, or what books I am to read; and those who do not choose to receive me only by becoming, as I fear many are, the slave of party—why then they must reject me. I have no desire for any fellowship but that which is holy, just, and good, peaceful and profitable.

Mr. Gadsby preached at the Surrey Tabernacle

several times. The last time he preached there was Wednesday evening, May 19th, 1841; his text was, *Psal. lxxxix.* 16, "In thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Five weeks before this we had a collection (as is an annual custom) for the Aged Pilgrims' Society; there was a collection for the same purpose on the evening that Mr. Gadsby preached for us; so that, in his last visit to us, he was with us in that which is good, spiritually and temporally. The collection on the Lord's-day, April 11th, was £20 10s.; on the evening Mr. Gadsby preached, £11 10s.; he brought 18s. with him which had been given him for the collection, and which he called *eighteen arguments* in favour of the Aged Pilgrims' Society. How high, how great is the privilege of being made lovers and followers of that which is right and good.

The main points or objects of this preface are to show that I was not in any way the *wilful* cause of hurting the mind of the late Mr. Gadsby, but quite the reverse; secondly, that the *wrath* of man worketh *not* the *righteousness* of God; thirdly, that each Christian has a right to that holy liberty which God hath given. So I believe, so have I spoken, so have I written—that this party availeth nothing, and that party avail nothing—but a *new creature* in Christ Jesus. As many as *walk* according to this

rule, peace be on them ; and mercy upon the Israel  
of God.

So prays a willing servant in the Lord,

J. W.

## S E R M O N .

---

“They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever,” *Dan. xii. 3.*

I have three reasons for taking notice thus publicly of the departure to a better world of the late William Gadsby, of Manchester.

First—That having known him some years, having preached at his chapel in Manchester two months, one month in 1840, and one month in 1842; having on both occasions enjoyed much of the power and presence of the God of all grace, power attending the word to some among the hundreds to whom the word was spoken, as many now living can testify; being thus favoured to enjoy liberty myself, and describe the nature and way thereof to others, I felt very much at home with the people who treated me with every possible kindness. Travelling to and preaching as I did in different parts around Manchester, I witnessed the fulness of Christian feeling which existed towards Mr. Gadsby, which feeling

arose from the *use* his ministry had been to them. All this increased in my mind the union of soul I already had towards him. I *felt* and *saw* that he was a highly honoured servant of God; nor have the petty quibbles of the flesh in the least been able to overcome the great principles of truth, or affect that life eternal *in* the soul by which, among the children of God, union is formed and continued. This union of heart and mind is, then, one reason for my taking the present step.

Secondly—Because I wish to do honour to his memory. Of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, it is written, that at Hezekiah's death they did him honour; I would therefore wish not to pass by such an event in cold indifference, knowing that a prince, and a great man, and one that feared God above many, is taken from us; who unto many was as an iron pillar to support, as a brazen wall to shelter, and as a defenced city to encompass. He was, by the Holy Spirit making him, an able minister of the New Testament, being made strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus; he was the means, in his ministry, of strengthening others; he being nothing—God, the God of armies and of salvation, all in all. Am I, therefore, doing wrong in endeavouring, by an humble testimony to his usefulness, to do him honour?

Thirdly—I desire to make some observations upon the ministerial office, with a view to our highest good, that God, even our own God, may in all things be glorified.

The union of heart and mind thus formed, a desire to do honour to his memory, together with a hope of good to ourselves, are the reasons and motives which have constrained me thus to notice this solemn event.

We notice—

- I. His ministerial usefulness.
- II. The truths by which he was thus useful.
- III. The spirit in which he advanced those truths.
- IV. The end to which he came.
- V. The prospects of those who are walking in the same steps.

I. His ministerial usefulness.

*Usefulness* depends upon that power with which the Holy Spirit is pleased to clothe the word. Usefulness is seen in contrasting the state in which the gospel finds the sinner, with the state into which it brings him. The word of truth finds him dead in sin, ignorant of God, at enmity against him, running the downward road, unconscious that he has in him all the elements of his own condemnation and destruction — unconscious of the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of sin and guilt, of the curse and wrath of God — unconscious of the pit, ready at every step

he takes, at every breath he draws, every moment he lives, to swallow him up in remediless woe; a chaotic illusion and delusion carry him along, he knoweth not whither he goeth, and is offended if told what and where he is; and though sleeping as it were upon the top of a mast, the vessel being in the midst of the sea, yet, so sweet is his sleep unto him, that, if he be made somewhat uneasy, still he will yet seek the delusion—yea, the condemnation of his own soul; the prince of darkness working upon the passions, and raising clouds of darkness over the soul, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into their hearts.

Death in the soul, sin's mighty fetters, the sentence of an infallible law, together with the enemy, and cares of the world, are the powers which hold fallen man in the regions of the unclean; and they delight most in those things which are the most hateful to God—enemies, deadly enemies to God, and would destroy both law and gospel, and even the Son of God himself—“Away with him, crucify him;” and yet it is by that which they so much love that they are ruined, and by that grace and truth alone which they so much hate can they be saved. What hope, then, can there be of such? where is the salvation, free, full, and mighty enough to deliver these from the



strong-holds of sin and death? Such a salvation cannot be gotten for gold; its price is far above rubies. The natural man knoweth not; the depth of human treasures saith, "It's not in me;" the sea of human greatness saith, "It's not with me;" destruction and death say, "We have heard the fame thereof with our ears." But where shall salvation be found? who can redeem his brother, or give to God a ransom for him? God looked, and there was *none to help*; not one that doeth good—no, not one.

What, then, under these circumstances, is to be done? The Lord loveth the people, though they hate him; he hath chosen them, though they receive him not. Shall, then, the wonders of eternal redemption remain unknown, and the stores of the promised land remain unsought for? Verily, no. He who taketh up the isles as a very little thing, and in whose hands all nations are as nothing, and as it were less than nothing—he brings into the soul, life, supernatural and eternal; then is the conscience alive—sin, in its loathsomeness, guiltiness, power, and hatefulness, is felt; a fallen nature sends forth clouds of abominations like locusts, the soul feels that it is awfully benighted, and has been destructively deluded. All the forms that men devise may be tried, but the prison will grow darker, the sea of iniquity within will rage and foam more and

more, and such helplessness felt in attempting to pray, or to exercise real love to God, that it will seem utterly in vain to attempt to serve him; peevishness, impatience, irritability, blasphemous suggestions—yea, hosts of evils never before seen or felt, will make their appearance. These, unto the soul, are as wormwood and gall. The free-will, the duty-faith, the mere doctrinal physicians may all be tried, but will prove to be of no value. These priests all go on *the wrong* side of the way; they know not what are the wounds and feelings of a sinner truly alive to his condition. It is not until he who speaketh as never man spake, passeth by, that any *effectual* mercy can be found; he poureth in the oil and the wine, he bindeth up the broken-hearted, he finds means to *carry* the poor creature along, and places him where he is protected from thieves and robbers—stays with him until the morning, until, as we say, he is out of danger, supplies his present needs, becomes his surety, and leaves nothing to fear, except it be that of acting at any time contrary to this kindness, this mercy, this good will, and these good deeds.

Brought now to walk in knowledge, in love, in holiness, in righteousness; pardoning, cleansing, and redeeming blood, daily groweth more and more precious; it endears the sacred three, the Father, the Word,

and the Holy Ghost; it is by this infinite price, this ransom, that the Father abideth by us; by this the Saviour hath removed all our sins; by this the Holy Spirit carries on his work, the law established, magnified, and honoured, redemption wrought. Now, instead of being enemies to God, instead of hating his truth and covenant, his grace and salvation, these things are now become our glory and all our desire. Bless his dear name; having thus begun to show mercy, he continues to do so; and how wonderfully does the Lord meet his children by the ministry of the word—the solemn reproof, the searching description of character separating the precious from the vile, the living from the dead, the real from the mere nominal—hedging up the way of sin and error with pointed denunciation against all ungodliness, stripping off the finely-worked web of Phariseism, burning up the very roots of hypocrisy, that the people may be Israelites indeed, in whom is no guile. Having this good ground to work upon, the word is received in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghost; the word of the Lord runneth very swiftly, meeting us with bread and wine, speaking unto us when we are weary, being a light unto our feet and a lamp to our path, leading us on from strength to strength—yea, when we sleep, it keepeth us; when awake, it talketh with us.

What access to God, what communion with him, what refreshing, what burdens are lost, peace enjoyed, and mercies received, in hearing the word of eternal life; what glories are opened to our minds, what effectual transformation of soul into the same image by the Spirit of our God; how are the feeble knees confirmed, the weak hands strengthened, the hungry fed, the thirsty satiated, the sick visited, the stranger taken in and made wise to salvation, the prisoner set free—the miserable, the despairing sinner made to leap for joy, running through troops and leaping over walls of sin and error, the dear, dear Saviour's feet as it were washed with tears, while his name is as ointment poured forth—the leper, the palsied, the maniac, the Magdalenes, the Manassehs, the Sauls of Tarsus, the prodigals.—yea, sinners of every form bear joyful testimony of his power to save. This is ministerial *usefulness*. Is it, therefore, any wonder it should be written, “Esteem such ministers highly, for their *work's* sake?” Is it any wonder it should be written, “Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm?”

This is the living ministry, established in the church of the living God; this is Jehovah's established means of feeding lambs and sheep; and those of the children of God who become consequential enough to boast of not needing the public ministry of the word, will soon find other paths to be but

a wilderness. Men may write and reason, and rave and rage against this order of things; yet they may as well attempt to hinder the sun from rising, the sea from rolling, or the mighty winds of heaven from going their accustomed circuit, as to stop the progressive course of that ministry, which can melt the hardest heart, swallow up the highest mountain, drive oceans backward, sever the greatest river, darken in the sinner's view the skies, open graves, penetrate rocks, and bring the daring rebel to the bar of God. A few poor men, armed with power from on high, made kings and princes, devils, nations, kingdoms, and empires tremble; and by these spiritual, righteous, and mighty wars, brought millions of perishing men into life and glory, making them kings and priests to God. Such, then, is the nature of ministerial usefulness; such is the way in which grace reigneth; thus brought from the dung-hill to the throne of glory, from filthy garments to royal robes, from the slavery of Satan to the service of God, from the company of swine and spirits unclean to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born, the spirits of justified men made perfect, and to God the judge of all; and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel.

Who, then, in his right mind, could be an enemy to men thus sent of God, and whose ministry is thus owned and honoured of God? Does not all this give emphasis to the exhortation, not forsaking the assembling ourselves together, as the manner of *some is*?

II. We now bring before you the truths by which Mr. Gadsby was thus useful. Those truths were these two—law and gospel. He used the law lawfully, setting forth its terrible majesty; and where this is not the case, the law is, instead of being the means of showing the need of the gospel, is absolutely made to *obscure* the gospel. The law is naturally a *friend* to the gospel; when, therefore, it is so handled as to be made an enemy to the gospel, there must be something wrong somewhere. When the law is brought in in the *mere* moral sense, it is used unlawfully; the law is holy, just, and good, spiritual and infallible. This law is not scripturally used nor truly known, where it is not made to work wrath, to gender to bondage, to make sin appear exceeding sinful. This is brought about by that entire contrast which exists between the creature and the law of God; being felt in its power, the holiness of the law, and unholiness of the creature—the justice, the goodness, the infallibility of the law, and the unrighteousness, evil nature, and no-

thingness of the creature, come as it were in collision. What is there but despair? "Unclean, unclean," is all the creature can say of himself. The law can do nothing but condemn; the creature can do nothing but go on vowing and promising to be better, but never can make a real *beginning*. He feels he has nothing of his own but sin; he thinks he sees what he ought to be, and what he ought to do; he feels he ought to be holy in thought, word, and deed—that he ought to have a heart supremely to love God; but, alas! feels that he is unjust still, unholy and filthy still; while the trumpet, instead of lowering its tone, lessening its demands, and almost ceasing to sound—instead of this, the trumpet of Sinai waxeth louder and louder; its terrific sounds increase, its demands seem more and more imperative, it shakes the very ground; access to God impossible, conformity to the law impossible, escape from judgment is also impossible—temptations of every shape (sometimes even self-destruction) present themselves. Never shall I forget the nights of horror and days of misery I endured when in the state I am here describing. I dared not encourage the thought that I could escape the damnation of hell, for nothing at that time possessed my mind but I had committed the unpardonable sin; and the awful and malicious thoughts to-

wards God which I had, have made me tremble as I walked along, feeling that it was impossible for God to bear the sight of such a wretch upon the earth; and though I knew many had been as bad and even worse *outwardly* than ever I had been, but I could not think there was a creature under the canopy of heaven with such wicked thoughts, with such an utterly unfeeling, impenitent heart, or were one millionth part so deserving of the lowest hell. Do whatever I would, I was the same, and in the midst of it all; when in sleep, dream that I swore the most awful oaths. Oh! what a release, when I awoke and found it was a dream. Yet my misery continued, and when I attempted to pray, I seemed more beset with wandering and wretched thoughts; a dreadful sound was in my conscience, the trumpet waxed louder and louder, and I felt sometimes so tried as though I could burst out and curse myself and every thing in existence; and though kept *outwardly*, yet I daily committed most awful sins in my heart. Holiness, purity, peace, and righteousness, I felt, were treasures that the wicked one himself could not be more destitute of or further from, than I was. I am not setting up the way in which I was led as an exact rule for others; but still all *must* know every one the plague of his own



heart, far enough for all legal hope to die, and be no more.

The Lord alone knows what my feelings were when he led me first to discover that his dear Son came to save even such dying, helpless worms, such awful sinners as I felt I was; and from the first moment the everlasting gospel of God was brought home with almighty power to my soul—from that day to this, the same everlasting gospel has been *dear to my heart*. I love the dear truths thereof more and more, and I am every day more and more indebted to the grace and mercy of God. The Lord Jesus Christ is at times, in the infinite efficacy of his all-atoning blood, so precious, that I know of no language fully to describe the glory I see and feel; it is indeed a joy unspeakable and full of glory. Yes, bless his dear and precious name, he knows our love to him is real, and that our praises are substantial and sincere.

But, again: I have said the law is naturally a *friend* to the gospel; and is not this shown in the law being made the means of driving to self despair, and thus showing the necessity of the gospel? And if the law be a friend to the gospel, much more is the gospel a friend to the law, seeing the law is not abolished, but established and infinitely honoured thereby. But where there is not this knowledge of our lost state, the

preciousness of the gospel is not sought after; hence those (as was William Gadsby) who are sent to preach among the Gentiles the *unsearchable* riches of Christ, are called, by dead professors, *high doctrine, extravagant, dangerous* men; but such people know not what they say, nor understand whereof they affirm. He, who is spiritual, judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man; he who is sent of God—not by man, but of God, such are made to know what they preach, and to understand whereof they affirm; such know the dear atonement of the Lamb is deeper than hell, high as heaven, longer than the sea, and broader than the earth; that there is a chosen people, that God hath loved them with an everlasting love, that he hath formed an everlasting covenant, that he will not turn away from them to do them good. Our destitution commend the treasures of the gospel; having nothing yet by the grace and power of truth, possess all things, and that in a way that accords with all the perfections of God, and shows forth the exceeding riches of his grace.

Now, let us see whether by these eternal truths we make *void* the law. First, The Lord Jesus is the end of the law unto us, who receive him as our alpha and omega. Secondly, He hath magnified the law, that is, spread it out, and made its real majesty

appear; and where do the holiness, the justice, the goodness, and faithfulness of God shine forth, as by the work of Christ? Holiness, justice, goodness, and infallibility, are qualities which make up the majesty of the law, while sin makes this law a terror to the awakened sinner. Thirdly, The Saviour hath honoured the law; he restored that which he took not away. The great, the main principle of the law, is supreme love to God, and a love to man that worketh no ill to his neighbour. This love in Christ Jesus shone forth in perfection; he did no violence, neither was deceit in his mouth; his life was pure without a spot, and all his nature clean. But, Fourthly, The law hath no glory by reason of the glory that excelleth; for how little is known of God by the law, compared with what is known of him by the gospel. The gospel it is that bringeth life and immortality to light. Who, then, makes void the law? He who feels not his need of the fulness of the gospel, and so is content with a sort of half-way, yea and nay gospel. Who, then, I say, makes void the law—such an one as this, or one who feels utterly undone, and receives the tidings of eternal mercy in their life, power, and fulness, and loves with all his heart, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost? *Not* the latter, but the former.

He loves God the Father in the *fulness* of that provision which he hath made for the poor; he loves the Lord Jesus in the *fulness* of his salvation; he loves the Holy Spirit in the *fulness* of his testimony: *against* such there is no law. Make void the law!!! Why, the holiness, the justice, the goodness, the faithfulness of God, are unspeakably dearer to these, than to a free-willer or low Calvinist; the Lord Jesus being not merely *for* them—mind this—not merely *for* them, but *to* them, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Talk of these making void the law—why, they *glory* in the God of holiness, righteousness, and goodness; all the qualities of the law shine forth by Christ Jesus with more than tenfold brightness, and this is the light that ariseth upon them; and those who are thus made wise unto salvation, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament.

Such is the glorious gospel of the blessed God. This is the rod of Jehovah's power, by which he brings to nought the gods of Egypt, renders their rivers nauseous, confounds their skill, and defies their power. The learned and the pious may come with their free-will rods, and may to a very limited extent imitate the rod of God; but their folly soon, to those taught of God, becomes manifest. The rod of Jehovah's power shall go on,

the enemy's land shall be darkened, the sea shall be driven back, the manna shall come to the hungry people, water from the rock shall satiate their thirst.

The rod of Moses and Aaron would not have been thus powerful in the hands of others, unless the Lord himself had given them this authority; the sons of Sceva could not do that in the name of the Lord Jesus, which the apostles were honoured to do in his name. Thousands take this name to profess it, and many to preach it, but they have no power with God, nor with men, except it be to delude them—in this they succeed to a very awful extent; this the Lord foresaw, and has therefore said that many should come in his name, and should *deceive* many. But where the Lord himself records his name, where he sends the word, he will come and bless, and his word shall not return void. The rod of Aaron shall bud and bring forth fruit, while all other gospels shall, to the children of God, be dry, dead, fruitless, and powerless. That is the true gospel which bringeth forth fruit to the delight of their souls, and enables them to love, bless, and praise the name of the Lord their God, who hath dealt wonderously with them. Those are the true spies of the promised land who bring the grapes of Eschal to *prove* the excellency of the land. “By their fruits

ye shall know them ;” and be assured that those ministers who bring no fruits to the children of God, have no communion with the King, no admittance at those gates at which are laid up all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old ; and, therefore, the people whose taste is formed for things spiritual, for royal dainties, for the finest of the wheat, and for that river of water which is clear as crystal—these turn away from the leeks and onions of Egypt, from the husks upon which the swine feed with such zest.

How clearly manifest is it that William Gadsby was endued with power from on high to feed the lambs and sheep of Christ. The Lord alone knows how many hundreds were, by means of his ministry, brought to a saving possession of these eternal things. He did not preach about war with sin and error, without being himself engaged sincerely therein ; he did not point out the path of life, without he himself walking therein ; nor talk of pleasant fruits which he himself had not tasted ; he preached the law and the gospel of God as he himself had experimentally known them. The law leaves nothing for the sinner but despair, while no mercy can be needed which the gospel does not supply.

Such, then, is the nature of ministerial usefulness, and such the truths by which

Jehovah goeth forth for the salvation of his people.

III. The spirit in which he advanced these truths.

First, *Carefulness*. Lest in any way some might be deceived, he felt the necessity of clearly describing the way in which the children of God come by their religion, as also the way in which the work is carried on, and that unto the end; putting men off, neither with mere outward forms, nor with a sound creed in the head without life in the soul, without grace in the heart; knowing that, wherever the work is real, the instruction is sealed home to the conscience, not by the wisdom of men, but by the power of God. Sin, death, judgment, eternity, the necessity of a living union to Christ Jesus, are matters that become the great burden, the feeling of the mind; strength to obtain what is needed is turned into weakness; the husks, the vanities of the flesh no longer please; the world appears as a dunghill, a heap of ruins; it is felt to be the congregation of the dead, enmity against its Maker, against the God who daily feeds the millions therein, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. None, in the salvation sense of the word, saith, "Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night?" but when eternal life is brought into the heart, there

is a rooting up from the forest of this world, the soul is hewed out and severed from the general quarry, is sought out from among the rest, is shut up as a leper, held in bonds as a debtor, and summoned to the bar of God as one who is verily and awfully guilty; his sins engraven upon his conscience as though they were never to be erased, the denunciations of the Bible against sin are felt; and let the poor creature go where he may, or do what he may, he is still the same poor, helpless, worthless, miserable mortal; many, many may be the infirmities under which he groans, many may be the temptations and entanglements which perplex and drive him to his wits' end, and that make him stagger to and fro like a drunken man.

Where a knowledge of sin and self, and the emptiness and miserableness, and every thing short of God and his salvation, be not obtained thus from personal solemn feeling in these things; where knowledge is not obtained in this way, the soul is *de-luded*, and walketh in the darkness of death, and knoweth not whither it goeth. No one could charge Mr. Gadsby with passing lightly over this *root* of the matter, nor with trying to silence godly jealousy, heart-searching fears and tremblings, with presumptuous claims upon the promises of God; knowing it is one thing for us to



take his name as *our* God, and another thing for this name to be written upon the heart by the great High Priest. For the promises to be exceeding great and precious in themselves, is one thing; for the Holy Ghost to seal them with almighty power, and make them ours, and bring us into the exceeding love, grace, mercy, and peace, of which they speak, and cause us to realize the savour and preciousness of his name—this, and presuming upon God without the power of God in us, are indeed things very and essentially different.

If, then, the Lord wound, he alone can make whole; if he kill, he alone can make alive; if he bring down, he alone can exalt to safety; if he imprison, he alone can set free; and who can deliver out of his hand? How dreadful, then, is the delusion of those who boast of health and liberty, safety and assurance, of enjoyments and exultations, of which God is *not* the author. Unto such, will it not be said, “Who hath required this at your hands? how comest thou in the garden of the Lord? thy heart savours not of life, but of death; thou art not broken-hearted; but thy heart is whole; thou dost not *feel* after mercy;—depart from me, I never knew you.”

Again: Mr. Gadsby was careful to follow out the work of God in its sure and *practical* effects, that it makes “wisdom’s ways,

ways of pleasantness; and all her paths, paths of peace;" that it leads *from* the swinish pursuits of the flesh, turns the back upon Babylon, and sets the face Zionward; that it leaves them not to go back to Moab, but *cleaves* unto Naomi, feeling at home only with her people and with her God, under whose wings they are brought to trust; they may have opportunity to return, but they desire a better country; wherefore God hath prepared for them a city, and is not ashamed to be called their God.

Every advantage which sin gains over them, is to them distress and mourning, lamentation and woe; fearfulness seizes them, and they are a terror to themselves, and can be happy only in denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and living righteously and soberly in this present evil world. This, and the presence of the Lord, are essential to their peace and satisfaction. Shall we, then, sin, that grace may abound? God forbid; for how shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Fleshly lusts do and will war against the soul, so that we cannot do the things that we would; *yet we are not of the world*. The old man, with his deeds, must be put off. Oh! how precious, to a soul born of God, is the preserving, the daily delivering and preserving mercy of God. His elect cry to him day and night. Com-

munion with God is the good part chosen, the precious mercy sought, and mourn when we find it not. Bless his dear name! Real godliness maketh us serve him with our whole heart, and with our whole soul. Yes, he knows—yea, he is our witness, that we do above all things desire to fear his name. It shall be well with them that fear him: in this fear is strong confidence, and his children have a place of refuge.

Grace thus gaining the ascendancy, gaining and keeping our hearts and affections, we feel that, as there is nothing else which has done or can do that for us which grace hath done, does, and will do for us, so there is nothing else can have an equal claim upon our souls, our time—yea, all we are and all we have. Safety is of the Lord; safety, then, is the first and essential feature in the true ministry of the gospel of God.

*Variety* was another feature in his ministry. There is a variety in the means by which the Lord brings his people to a saving knowledge of himself—hearing the word, afflictions, losses, bereavements, dreams, conversation, reading, sudden thought of sin, death, hell, or eternity.

There is a variety in the feelings of different people who are brought to know the Lord—some suddenly and awfully arrested;

some who are pricked in the heart, some whose heart the Lord openeth so as to make them attend to the laws of the kingdom of God; some just enough moved to desire to hear the same things next Sabbath; some attracted by an almost sudden manifestation to them of a supreme beauty in the religion of the Son of God. These come, by after experience, into real soul trouble, into the wilderness, into great searchings of heart; yet all this variety tendeth to one and the same end—that is, to bring into the dust before God, to know from bitter experience the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and to lead us into the possession of the all-sufficient and exceeding riches of the grace of God. All must, whatever be the variety of means connected, or whatever be the diversity of manner by which they come to a saving knowledge of God—all must meet in the exceeding riches of his grace; to the heights and depths, and lengths and breadths of the love of God, all must feel indebted.

Again: There is variety in the degrees of liberty obtained by the children of God while in this world. Some go mourning all their days without the light of the sun, are shut up and cannot come forth, and are alarmed at the shaking of a leaf; their days of darkness are many, yet they are at times holpen with a *little* help, have a *little* reviving in their bondage, and now and

then catch a momentary glimpse of the King in his beauty, and can almost believe the Lord will receive them at last, and feel an encouraging hope that at eventide it will be light.

Others share more largely in the peace of God and liberty of the gospel; their peace rising as a river, and the ample folds of eternal righteousness rolling round them like waves of the sea, their souls expatiating in the open and widely-ranged glories of Christ. But they do not always thus wash their steps in butter; the rock does not always thus pour them out rivers of oil; the candle of the Lord does not always thus shine upon their heads, nor the dew rest always all night upon their branch. No; they must be sifted again and again, they must go through fire and through water, lest they either become exalted above measure, or settle down in carnal ease. *Manifold* are the temptations and the trials which must come upon *all* the children of God to try them, that they may know what is in their hearts, and learn to cease from the flesh and from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, and, both from necessity and choice, keep and hold fast the words of eternal life; and thus come into the hands of the promise, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them."

As there is a variety of means and of experience by which the redeemed of the Lord return and come to Zion, so there is a variety in the provisions of mercy, for, at the gates of truth, are laid up all *manner* of pleasant fruits, new and old; the garner are *full*, yielding all *manner* of store; the tree of life beareth fruit not only continually, but beareth twelve *manner* of fruit. Seasons revolve, day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge—great and mighty things are yet to be revealed.

The tribes of Israel are scattered over the land; some near the river of Egypt, hardly out of the house of bondage, as well as many yet in the house of bondage, and in the wilderness of Sinai; some in close contact with the gigantic Philistines; some by the borders of the Dead Sea, and walking in gloominess; some in the valley of Jezreel, with abundance of corn and wine—in a word, the Lord hath chosen their inheritance for them; he hath fixed the bounds of their habitation—the lot is cast into the lap, the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.

That ministry, therefore, that is the most *searching*, and branches out into the greatest *variety*, is generally the most useful. About such a ministry there is, more or less, always a *freshness* so indescribably different

from  
tole  
the  
else  
tale  
em  
a n  
mo  
flov  
ma  
pre  
wit  
the  
bre  
the  
one  
to  
fun  
pec  
wo  
afte  
the  
lea  
car  
get  
pul  
the  
knc  
as  
bef  
nat  
sen

from the preaching of many, who, though tolerably sound in creed, yet, whatever text they take, their sermons consist of but little else than either a dry thousand-times-told tale about experience, or else a wordy, empty noise about abstract doctrine. Such a ministry, if it may be called a ministry, is more like a stagnant pool, than a fresh and flowing spring. The regenerated man, the man exercised unto godliness, finds such preaching full of emptiness; a great noise with the flagons, but not a drop of wine; the table seems set in order, but there is no bread to eat; there seem to be the altars of the Lord, but there is no sacrifice upon the one, nor incense upon the other; there seems to be an alabaster box, but there is no perfume; and after wearying the poor sleepy people with half an hour's repetition of worn out phrases, which they call prayer—after thus eking out the say-prayer terms, then come the old unmeaning sermon sounds, leaving the people to get at the sense as they can. These men are often boasting of not getting a text before they get into the pulpit; whereas it matters not a rush whether they have a text or not, for the people know almost as well what he is going to say as does the formalist with his prayer-book before him. Those who are alive unto God naturally ask how it is, if these men are sent of God, that they are not abidingly

useful to the people? how is it that a few weeks or a few months so wear them out, that they are literally not worth hearing, and hence we have such a number of these labourers *out of work*? And yet how many churches are thirsting for a living, real, flowing, spiritual ministry. How is it, then, we have so many ministers out of work? What reason can be assigned but—*the Lord hath not sent them?* for if he had, he would find work for them. Let me not here, however, be misunderstood. I do not mean that the Lord does not often keep his ministers destitute of any thing to say until they go into the pulpit, and then and there furnish them with both text and sermon, and these sometimes prove the most profitable both to the minister and the people; nor do I mean that men sent of God are not often powerless, and dead in their own feelings, or that they may not be heard at times without either power or profit; nor do I mean, that if a man have not the gifts, or do not succeed to such an extent as William Gadsby, that therefore he is not sent of God; nor do I mean that mere variety of thought and idea, acquired by reading and study, can make up that freshness in the ministry to which I allude; no—it must be the heart and soul exercised with groanings which cannot be uttered. It is going down into the depths and rising into the heights of



salvation, that are the means of keeping up variety and freshness. Do I mean any reflection upon those whose gifts may make them acceptable to ten, to fifty, or a hundred, instead of a thousand? No; certainly I do not; for the Holy Spirit giveth to every man severally as he will. But when a man is wanted in reality nowhere, is it not clear the Lord hath not sent him? Such are troublers in Israel, and a pest to those who are sent; their life being more like that of a *mendicant*, than that of a minister of Jesus Christ.

But to keep to our subject. *Boldness* is another feature of the spirit in which Mr. Gadsby advanced the truth of God. The righteous are bold as a lion. There are four things which will make a man bold for God. One is, when a man knows what he is talking about. His state as a sinner, the majesty of the law of God, the freeness and fulness of saving grace, the workings of the enemy, and the mighty operations of mercy, are no hearsay matters; they are matters of every day's experience. The good man thus out, not of the good treasures of human learning and human wisdom, but out of the good treasure of his *heart* bringing forth good things. It is not the handling of the harp and the organ, things without life, giving to the flesh musical and pleasing sounds, but it is the handling the words of

*eternal life.* A man thus being made a true, an able witness, he delivers his testimony with boldness—he knows it is the truth—he is not led by humble opinions, or haughty opinions, but by the Spirit of the living God; and as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

Secondly, *The presence of the Lord.* This it is that enables them to stop the mouths of lions; to quench the violence of fire, to put to flight the armies of the aliens, and to speak with a mouth and wisdom which the adversary can neither gainsay nor resist. The presence of the Lord it is that makes preaching easy, and that makes hearing pleasant; the presence of the Lord it is that makes life happy, death joyful, judgment glorious, and fills heaven with pleasures for evermore; the presence of the Lord it is that gives true eloquence to the speaker and right feeling to the hearer; the presence of the Lord it is that puts Satan and his service under our feet, endears eternal things, makes the Saviour more precious than gold, even than fine gold; the presence of the Lord enabled the holy prophets and holy apostles of the Lamb, and all who have ever suffered for his name, to stand fast against all the torrents of persecutions rolled in upon them. Truly “his presence lays proud nature low,” and guilty fears depart.

Thirdly, An *assurance* that the truth can never fall to the ground. What is ministerially bound on earth, is bound in heaven; and whatever the ministers of God, by the word of truth, by the power of the Holy Ghost, looseth on earth, is loosed in heaven; whosoever sins are retained on earth, they are retained in heaven; and whosoever sins are, by the power of truth, forgiven on earth, they are remitted in heaven—he *confirmeth* the word of *his* messengers. Babylon must come to nought; the building of mercy must rise, the top stone must be brought home; the last enemy must be destroyed; the true Israel must prosper; the city of God is to be established for ever; God is in the midst of her, and he will help her, and that right early.

What Christ hath said must be fulfilled—  
 On this firm rock believers build;  
 His word must stand, his truth prevail,  
 And not one jot or tittle fail,

Fourthly, A *good conscience*. “This,” saith the apostle, “is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and *godly sincerity*, we have had our conversation among you.” Oh! how dreadful the state of that man who can tamper with the truth of God, and walk in craftiness, shaping his course according to the advantages of the flesh, and making the word of God subservient to purposes earthly and

selfish, striving to please men, but is not the servant of Christ. A good conscience! how precious is such a treasure. When a man is honest and sincere, oh! how fearlessly can he tell out the truth as it is in Jesus; how fearlessly can he meet men and angels; how boldly can he repel the accusations of the adversary; his conscience bearing him testimony that his weaknesses are utterly against his will; his conscience bearing him testimony that the gospel to his heart is truly glad tidings, that he sincerely loves his Master and his work, that he is a lover of good men, and glories in the welfare of the children of God—that he thirsts for greater grace and greater power, for more of God and godliness, that he may be thoroughly furnished to every good word and work—that if he be but kept near to God, and can go on to be *useful*, he gains the objects at which he aims; while the God of patience bears with all the infirmities of his servants, makes manifest the sufficiency of his grace, and, by the weak and foolish things of the world, he confoundeth the things that are wise and mighty.

The minister thus favoured is as the goodly horse in the battle; he is strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; the Lord turns his infirmities into spurs as it were to goad him on in the paths of mercy and of truth. His conscience being honest,

he is daily sensible that he is more and more a debtor to the grace, the name, and the salvation of God; the mediatorial work of Christ appears increasingly in its glory, gathering up all the powers of the soul, making bold as the lion and swift as the roe upon the mountains, leaving every enemy far behind. Lions, when a minister is thus favoured, may roar against him, but they will as it were be rent in twain as a kid; and though, externally, it may be a cold and snowy time, the lion, however concealed under the mask of disguise, must be slain. The adder, the dragon, and the lion can, when the God of armies revealeth himself, be trodden under foot.

The neck of the man thus sent of God is clothed with thunder, armed with all the thunders of heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men—against all the enemies of Israel's God. These thunders must roll forth upon all the gods of Egypt, must discomfit the armies of the aliens, and awake those who are ordained to eternal life; they shall hear the majestic, the almighty voice of the Son of God; the conscience of the quickened sinner shall become the secret place of thunder, and though before he has heard of some small portions of his ways, yet is he now brought to ask with trembling, "The thunder of his power who can understand?" Well may the man,

armed with this panoply of heaven, be bold as a lion, be as the goodly horse in the battle: can he be made afraid, as the grasshopper? the poor, fearful, man-pleasing minister, hopping from one system to another, and that very often in the same sermon, having in his heart every fear except that of the fear of God? Not so the man taught and sent of God: he breathes after God, paweth in the valley, defies his foes, rejoiceth in the Lord, who is his everlasting strength; he goeth on to meet the armed men, pulling down strong-holds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against Christ; and when the Lord is with him, he mocketh at fear, and is not affrighted, neither turneth he back from the sword of persecution; the quiver may rattle against him, the glittering spear and the shield—the noise of the armour, whether it be that of his own, or that of the enemy's, shall fire him the more for the righteous and holy war, saying, “The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom shall I fear? the Lord Jehovah is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid? for he who in this war loseth his life, shall keep it unto eternal life.” He therefore swalloweth as it were the ground with fierceness and rage; all his powers concentrate in progressing, conquering, and to conquer; not for one moment intending to put the armour off, or to cease

from the war, until the last enemy be destroyed. Neither is he to be drawn aside by the many trumpets of uncertain sound; he can treat them with just contempt; he saith among these trumpets, "Ha, ha," and smelleth the battle afar off—he knows the victory is sure; he joins in the thunders of eternal truth, in the exaltations of the princes in Israel, already participating in the honours of a final conquest. Their strength lies in oneness with Christ, in the truth and grace of the living God. This strength is a secret which the world knoweth not of; and if the enemy at all find out wherein their strength lieth, his great object then will be to get them away from the truth, to send them to sleep in the lap of carnal ease, get them to trifle with their own dignity, until they become weak as other men, and find, alas! to their cost, that the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Yet mercy, unweariable mercy will not leave nor forsake; he will again turn the captivity, heal the bones that are broken, and again give victory over the enemy, and still lead on from strength to strength; and when they are old and grey-headed, and their strength faileth them, the Lord forsaketh them not.

Thus, then, a vital knowledge of God, the presence of the Lord, the assurance

that the truth cannot fail, and a good conscience, are advantages which will make a man bold for God; will keep him steady amidst the wildest storms, enable him to face the bitterest foe, to tread upon the greatest and highest of adverse powers, and make him feel sweetly at home in the service, in the ways, and work of the Lord. These precious advantages enable the mighty men of Israel to break through the ranks of the enemy, and draw water from the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate, that the God of victory may be glorified, and that in proportion as the people are profited.

IV. We notice the *end* to which he came. There is nothing favourable in any one's end; but is included in the last words of the Lord of life and glory, "*It is finished.*" Herein is the *end* of the law of wrath and bondage, the *end* of sin and death, the *end* of the enemy's power, the end of all unholiness, of mortality, lamentation, and woe; herein are answered all the purposes of love and mercy; hereby are fulfilled all the desires of the righteous—all the gates of truth lead to this great work, as the way of grace and glory. This it is that scattereth all the powers of death, while every perfection of God demands the safety and the salvation of the soul, by a vital union to God in the perfection of Christ. The



soul can outrun footmen, contend with horses, and go with safety through the swelling but divided Jordan.

A consciousness of moral consistency, in the general sense of the word, is a comfortable feeling; and in this moral peace, no doubt, thousands die, and pass for real Christians; their composure of mind is thought to be the peace of God; their natural confidence is set down for a divine faith; but all this is very different from, and very far short of, that peace and power of God realized by those who are born of God. Where the soul is alive from the dead, there must be the salvation of God brought nigh; pardoning mercy must be known and felt, the love of God must be shed abroad in the heart, the prison-house must be opened, liberty must be had, victory must be obtained; the presence of the Lord Jesus must be manifest—an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, must be unfolded; these things must be realized, before the soul born of God can be *satisfied*; and where these mercies are not realized, darkness, doubts, fears, tremblings, shrinking from the cold flood, a dread of meeting God, are felt. This sense of the *necessity* of the *power* of godliness, shows there is supernatural life in the soul; such are truly in sackcloth and ashes, are brought into the house of mourning, have the spirit

of heaviness, and are in bitterness because Jesus does not yet appear as *their* salvation; they know right well, they see clearly, they feel most solemnly assured that there can be no departing in true peace, in real joy, unless they can see God's salvation for themselves. Human prayers, taking the sacrament as a passport to heaven, priestly absolution, are to them rubbish of rubbish; they would, in a dying hour, as soon send for the devil himself as for any of these dead professors and empty priests; a noisy free-willer or a mongrel Calvinist are to them forgers of lies, miserable comforters, physicians of no value. And how truly is God all in all: he it is in whom they hope, he it is for whom they wait; no other voice, no other power, the presence of no other can give them rest; they mourn, they long, they thirst for God; their heart and their flesh crieth out for the living God, saying, "Oh! when wilt thou come unto me?" This is the enemy's last opportunity of bringing in a flood of temptation; he hath great wrath, for he knoweth that he hath but a short time: and dreadful are the struggles which some of the children of God have in a dying hour; their bands are strong, they themselves weak—feel no strength to meet the approaching moment; the heart sighs with groanings which cannot be uttered, Satan standing at the right hand, accusing and

trying to condemn the soul. Empty, chattering professors may talk and prate about resisting the devil, and he will flee from you; but if such had ever known what it is to encounter his fiery darts, to be surrounded with his floods of temptation, and to be confused by his accusations, they would very soon acknowledge that God, and God alone, could effectually rebuke the enemy; that God, and God alone, could tread Satan down under their feet. The sons of Sceva did not find the enemy so manageable as those who are strangers to his opposing and roaring voice and power, are led to suppose. The disciples learned that they could cast out the enemy only as the power of Christ rested upon them. "Resist the devil," is the command; but it is a command, not of works, but of grace; not at the creature's pleasure, but standing in the power of God. Where the word of the King is, there is power; and when the Holy Ghost reveals eternal love with power, then the enemy can be and is effectually resisted, and every evil surmounted; but if he hideth his face, who then can give peace?

The people of God all die in equal safety; comfort is not essential to their safety, though it is essential to their happiness; if, therefore, they do not, *before* they leave the body, arrive at satisfaction, they do as soon as they leave the body; for, absent from the

body, present with the Lord. Although some, to all human appearance, are scarcely saved, yet the scarcity is in appearance only. There is no scarceness, no narrowness in the love and salvation of God; but we are straitened in our own minds, in our own souls, in our own hearts; but when he appeareth and stayeth the mind on him, then there is peace—when he setteth the soul at liberty, then is the adoption of children made manifest—when he enlargeth the heart, then can the lame man leap for joy, the tongue of the dumb can sing, and glory *over* all the power of the enemy, and *in* all the goodness and loving-kindness of the Lord; feeling that he is good, and that his mercy endureth for ever. These exercises Mr. Gadsby underwent in his life, and during the few days of illness which preceded his departure from this dying world; he was tried with darkness, favoured with the manifestation of mercy, again felt darkness come over the mind, and again was revived, and clearly felt the power of godliness, the presence of the Lord, and was raised above the fear of death. “*Free grace,*” his last words, expressive of his hope, or rather, of that peace *with*, and joy *in* God, by which his hope was all but lost in sight; his end was peace, his end is everlasting life. He died in a good old age, full of the unsearchable riches of Christ, clothed

with the honours of his name, having fought a good fight, having kept the faith, having finished his ministerial course; leaving, in his life and usefulness, and in his death, this testimony—that happy is the people (and they only) whose God is the Lord, the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.

V. In conclusion, we notice the *prospects* of those who are walking in the same steps, which prospects are described in the language of the text—“They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever.” It is by his regenerating power that the children of God look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun; and being, by Jehovah’s everlasting love, more than human conquerors, they become at the last terrible as an army with banners. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father; they shall be as the sun, when he goeth forth in his might. Here, then, is a *three-fold* promise. They shall be *clear* as the sun, and therefore will need no *earthly* light; they shall shine forth as the sun; their glory shall be great, of all glories. The glory given unto them is the greatest; for the Lord is unto them an everlasting light, and their God their glory; they shall also be as the sun, when he goeth

forth in his might, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. The Lord Jesus, the sun of righteousness, arose in eternity for them; he was set up from everlasting; his goings forth were of old, even from everlasting; he went down on Calvary, but returned, and hastened to the place where he arose, even in eternity—there to appear in the presence of God for us; and still goeth forth to give light to them who are in darkness, and in the shadow of death. When the Lord puts his fear into the heart, then are the darkness and shadow of death felt; and unto such is the promise—the sun of righteousness shall arise, with healing in his wings.

To have in Christ Jesus the clearness, even clear as the sun, to shine forth in his likeness, and to pursue our course in his strength, are mercies of no small magnitude.

But again: The church of God is clothed with the sun; her earthly, her mortal array is for ever laid aside; she is raised up out of the dust, no more to return to corruption; mortality swallowed up of life, darkness driven for ever away; “all is light;” in him is no darkness at all.

The moon is under her feet; everything *changeable*, everything inferior: things temporal under her feet. The world and the things thereof passeth away, but the sun of righteousness will never go down. Truly

the house not made with hands is the only dwelling nigh which no plague can come: but not only clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, upon her head a crown of twelve stars. There were in the breast-plate of the high priest, *twelve* precious stones, embracing thus all the twelve tribes of Israel. They were precious stones: does not this denote that the Lord's people are precious to him. They were in the breast-plate:—does not Jesus gather the lambs with his arms, and carry them in his bosom—is not Jesus in the bosom of the Father—doth he not bear his people on his heart before the Lord, continually.—And again, in the temple were there not a golden crown upon the mercy seat, upon the alter of incense, and upon the table of shew bread.—And shall not the Children of God be crowned with mercy—shall not the Saviour's intercession for them be crowned with success—shall they not be crowned with plenty, with loving-kindness, with life, righteousness, and glory.

Again, do not the twelve gems or stones denote not only the twelve Apostles of the Lamb, but also the riches of Christ, and his delight in enriching the Church,—crowning her with every grace and glory; and therefore it is that she is called a glorious Church. Does not this diadem also denote her heavenly royalty,—the Queen upon the

King's right hand: "and this is the name whereunto *she* shall be called,—Jehovah our righteousness."

What then shall we say to these things—to such a glory revealed unto us as is this? Truly it is a glory that passeth knowledge. Never, never are we, or can we be so honored as when with open face we are favored to behold this glory, and are by the Spirit of the Lord, changed into the same image, from glory to glory.

Thus have I endeavoured to set forth the nature of ministerial usefulness, the truths by which that usefulness is wrought—the spirit in which the gospel is preached, when preached scripturally, and with power—together with the end of the perfect man, and the prospects of those who are "followers of them, who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises."—And now, what is our *petition*,—what is our *request*,—what is our *desire*—but that he who spake as never man spake, may so "Teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto *wisdom*."

FINIS.