

books you can estimate the amount of your property; and ought you not to be desirous to make your calling and election sure, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of your Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Of all your duties this is the most necessary and important, it is the one thing needful; and therefore it ought by no means to be deferred till some more convenient season. Whilst there are so many instances of mortality even among the young, the healthy, and the prosperous around you, whilst you are so frequently reminded of the vanity of human expectation, and the shortness and uncertainty of human life, can you remain calm and unmoved, as if you alone were exempted from the stroke of the king of terrors? Whilst the great Judge of the world is viewing your conduct, and seeking in it the fruits of piety and holiness, can you be thoughtless and immoral? Be persuaded to give an immediate attention to your everlasting interests, and "work whilst it is to-day, for the night cometh when no man can work." If you should continue barren and unfruitful, have you not reason to fear that the kingdom of God will be taken from you, and given to others bringing forth the fruits thereof, whilst you are cut down as cumberers of the ground? Which leads us

4. To attend in the fourth and last place to the awful sentence which is here denounced against the unfruitful professor: "Cut it down," saith our Saviour, "why cumbereth it the ground?" Such a threatening as this ought to arouse the attention of the most careless and indifferent, and have a meliorating influence upon our thoughts, our views, and our practice. If there is any sign of repentance and amendment yet remaining, surely, the terrors of the Lord ought not to be disregarded: for whilst his favour is better than life, his displeasure must be worse even than death itself. The condition of the Chaldean Monarch was distressing indeed, when "a watcher and an holy one came down from heaven, and cried aloud, and said