

nacle" begins to dissolve, but, then, the soul, released from its tenement of clay, flies away on angel's wings, to its "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Is there anything gloomy in the thought of that? No. There is every thing rapturous. There is every thing to fill the soul with joy. Well might David sing: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Well might Paul triumphantly exclaim: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?"

V. THE EVERLASTING BLESSEDNESS OF THE REDEEMED.

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. In this confession of the patriarch's faith and hope, he gives a thrice repeated expression to his joyful hope of personally meeting his Redeemer. His soul is so penetrated with emotion at the thought of seeing his Saviour face to face, at the morning of the resurrection, that he cannot but express his transport over and over and over again. "In my flesh shall I see God": again, "whom I shall see for myself": and again, "mine eyes shall behold, and not another." This was the joy that filled the heart of the patriarch of Uz. He would see his Redeemer. He would see Him not through "a glass darkly" but "face to face." He would see Him for himself and not by proxy. His blessed hope was that of the Psalmist: "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

From this subject we may learn, in what the blessedness of the redeemed in glory will mainly consist,—*the being ever with the Lord, and beholding His glory.* This is indicated in the Redeemer's intercessory prayer, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." When the apostle Paul would show the supreme blessedness of those who die in the Lord, he expresses it in these words: "absent from the body, present with the Lord." He does not say, absent from the body, present with Christian friends who have gone before, present with the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and saints of every age; but absent from the body, *present with the Lord.* No doubt, the redeemed will derive much enjoyment from the communion of saints in heaven, as they do on earth, but when the apostle would express the supreme blessedness of the righteous in the kingdom of their Father, he seems to forget these subordinate sources of enjoyment. They are to him as nothing, and less than nothing, in comparison with the felicity of being "*ever with the Lord.*" "In thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." "I shall see him but not now; I shall behold him but not nigh," was the utterance of Balaam. How different is the joyful hope of the sinner saved by grace: "In my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." "Now unto Him that is able to keep us from falling, and to present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."