

THE MISSIONARY RECORD

OF THE

Free Church of Nova Scotia.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, N. S., MAY, 1852.

No. 17.

REMARKS ON PSALM CVII. 1-7. Lord, for he is good; for his mercy endureth for ever!"

All may join in giving thanks unto God—acknowledge his goodness—confess that his mercy endureth for ever. He is essentially good; and but for causes which hinder it, his goodness would never but be in exercise towards us. God is good, and it is causes in ourselves which prevent his goodness from always operating. Suffering in the world is not a proof that God is not good; it is a proof that we are sinful. But for sin, God's goodness would have free and continual scope to operate. Let us see God's goodness even while sin prevents it from being exercised towards us. But if his goodness is not exercised, his mercy is; and his mercy endureth for ever. The mercy of God is an attribute which had no scope for exercise till there was sin. Still it was an attribute of God—it existed even when there was not an object towards whom it could be manifested. Yea, it endureth for ever. God entered into counsels of peace from all eternity respecting our lost and guilty world. Before man was yet called into being, God had thoughts of mercy concerning him. As soon as man fell God's mercy was seen, was exercised; and it has been in exercise ever since in the plan of redemption, in sparing a guilty world, and dealing with it by the ministry of reconciliation. What has spared any of us in our sins? What has extended to us, and is extending to us still, the overtures of peace. Is it not the mercy of God?—That we are not yet suffering punishment is of the mercy of God—that we are not the monuments of God's wrath—that we are not visited according to our deserts—that we have not been cut off in our sinfulness. "O give thanks unto the

But the redeemed of the Lord are especially called upon to say so: "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy."

These words had primarily reference to the deliverance of God's ancient people from Babylonish captivity. Those whom God had redeemed from that captivity were called upon to praise the Lord for his goodness, and to feel and confess that his mercy endureth for ever. For that was an instance at once of God's goodness and mercy. It was mercy as well as goodness that delivered the people from the bondage into which their sins had brought them; and many of the prophetic strains which are so often applied to spiritual blessings had their application first of all to the Lord's doings for his people Israel, when they were still slaves or captives in Babylon. God's dealings in their case had a double sense, and temporal chastisements and blessings, were but the outward marks or signs of a procedure in which the soul after all was the grand object—its punishment—its spiritual good—its rescue from eternal misery. In God's dealings with his nation every Israelite saw his dealing with himself, and that to bring him to God, and to redeem him from sin. Spiritual blessings were couched in the language of temporal deliverances or mercies.—They were represented by these, and the one were to be sought in the shadow of the other.

Not only emblematically, therefore, but literally, spiritual redemption is here referred to—and the spiritually redeemed of the Lord are called upon to give