

present that goeth before me ; " he thus distinctly admits that he was really trusting to his own counsel and wisdom for deliverance, and did not depend upon any answer that God might give to the prayer that he had but just offered up. This is not the mark of the true child of faith, who really places his whole trust in a faithful God. How unnecessary all this arrangement was, is shown in *chapter xxxiii.*

4. God was faithful to His promise,—He had already appeased Esau.

We now come to the most interesting part of the thirty-second chapter,—the wrestling: " And Jacob was left alone ; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day." When Jacob was left alone, separated from everything that he prized on earth, then the Lord meets him ! When God has purposes of mercy towards a sinner, He often separates him *from* and strips him *of* earthly idols first, so that his whole heart may bow in submission to His will. And note especially that *The Man* wrestled with Jacob ; this man is shown to be Christ in *Hosea xii. 5.* What a wrestling was this of the strivings of spiritual influences with the carnal nature of Jacob ? (see *Ephesians vi. 12.*) But was his natural character one that was likely to be influenced without special power from on high ? His deceit and cunning, his wealth, and position of power as a prince among men, all tended to foster pride and prevent his yielding his heart and will to the gentle wrestling of the Lord. But Jacob was one chosen of the Lord : the foreknowledge of God pierced the future. Now was the Lord's time to