

creatures, sanctified, because rendered in the spirit and with the humble faith of a Christian.

*The ungodly are not so, saith the next verse: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.*

If the righteousness of the just is sometimes followed by temporal prosperity, the wickedness of the profane is yet more frequently attended by temporal punishment. The cause of this is obvious: he that does not fear *God*, will not regard *man*. He that has disbelieved or defied the divine commandment, has only the fear of temporal punishment left to prevent him from invading the laws of society; and the effect of this last barrier must be strong or weak, in proportion to the strength of passion and the greatness of temptation. And hence that frequent introduction to the history of great crimes, that the perpetrators began their course by abuse of public worship, breaking the Lord's day, and neglect of private devotion, and thus opened the way for themselves to infamy and to execution. How many in a higher class in society, languish under diseases, which are the consequences of their own excesses, or suffer indignity and contempt, through their own folly and extravagance!

But, as prosperity in this life is neither the genuine nor the certain reward of the righteous, so neither is temporal adversity the constant requital of the ungodly. On the contrary, we have seen the wicked great in power, and flourishing like a green bay-tree; yet could we have looked into his bosom at that moment of prosperity, how true we should have found the words of the Psalmist! The sophistry which he borrowed from the counsel of the ungodly, gives no assurance of happiness, and leads him to no solid or stable conclusion; the wit with which the scorner taught him to gloss over his infidel opinions, has lost its brilliancy—*behind him there is remorse; before him there is doubt*. While the godly is fast moored on the Rock of Ages, he is in a stormy sea, without a chart, without a compass, without a pilot. The perturbed reasoning, the secret fears of such a one, make his thoughts indeed like the chaff which the winds drive to and fro, being as worthless and profitless as they are changeable and uncertain. A person distinguished as much for his excesses at one period of his life, as he was afterwards for his repentance, mentioned after his happy change, that one day, when he was in the full career of wit and gayety, admired by the society of which he appeared the life, while all applauded and most envied him, "he could not forbear groaning inwardly, and saying to himself,

"O that I were that dog!"

looking on one which chanced to be in the apartment.\* Such were the secret thoughts of one who had followed the counsel of the ungodly, walked in the way of sinners, and sat in the seat of the scornful. Regretting the past, sick of the present, fearing the future; having little hope beyond a gloomy wish for annihilation, he was to exchange all the privileges and enjoyments of wit, understanding, and intellectual superiority, for the mean faculties, and irresponsible existence of a beast that perishes. He must have been indeed like chaff tormented by the wind, ere he could have formed a wish at once so dreadful and so degrading!

The fifth verse following out of the theme which the Psalmist proposed, informs us, that *the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous*. After death cometh the judgment. How strict, how terrible that judgment shall be, we may learn from the blessed Apostle in the second epistle to the Thessalonians.† *Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming*. Will it then be received as an apology, that the sophistries by which the ungodly were

\* See Doddridge's Life of Col. Gardiner.

† 2 Thess. ii. 8.