

even the appointment of His Father were it possible; to conceive the counsels of the Father and the Son other than harmonious. It was his own pleasure to suffer for his people. He might have left them in their sins. He might have allowed them to bear the wrath of an offended God. He need not have interposed for their deliverance. But their salvation was in his mind from all eternity. From eternity it was his purpose to save them, and when he came into the world, tabernacled in the flesh, and gave himself to suffering and death, it was spontaneous, his own voluntary act: neither God nor man could require him to die. "I go my way I have voluntarily undertaken the work, and I voluntarily prosecute it. I lay down my life: no man taketh it from me: I lay it down, and I take it up again." "Thou couldst have no power at all against me," said Christ to Pilate, "except it were given thee from above." "I go my way."

But Christ was going further than to suffering: he was going to glory. He was to ascend to Heaven and to God.—That was his ultimate destination. Suffering was on his way: death was on his way; but glory was at its termination.—He was to go from whence he came.—There was a sad conflict before heaven should be reached; there was an awful struggle with his enemies, with the powers of darkness themselves: He had to contend with the wrath of God: it was a gloomy portal he had to pass through; he had to drink the cup of inconceivable agony; but beyond that portal was heaven, and although in that cup was Death, he was to swallow up death in victory! The heavens should receive him till the final restitution of all things. After his resurrection—for he could not be holder of death—he said to Mary, to whom he discovered himself in the garden—"go to my brethren, and say unto them: I ascend unto my father and your father; to my God and your God." "I came forth from the father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the father." Christ, then, meant that he was going to the Father, going whence he came, going to heaven, to be invested with his original glory, and to receive the glory of the mediatorial kingdom, which should be the reward of his suffering. "I go my way." How awful the announcement which follows: "and ye shall seek me, and die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."

This was a curse pronounced by Christ against the Jew for their unbelief, and it has been fulfilled in their national history ever since. A simple sentence of Christ has the effect of a law. It is not a prediction merely: it is a decree.—Their national doom was sealed, "Ye shall seek me, and die in your sins." The Jews would not receive Christ as the Messiah. He was not the Messiah they wanted. They would on no account submit to his claims. They would not acknowledge his character. He would soon be taken from them. They should put him to death, but in three days he should rise again. Even then they should not acknowledge him. They persisted in their unbelief, or in an obstinate rejection of his claims. He was soon taken up to heaven—and then they sought other Messiahs. They said: "lo here, and lo there." They joined the standard of any who pretended to be the Messiah, and who promised to lead them to victory and conquest. It was a temporal Messiah they desired. They did not care about deliverance from sin, and the consequence of it. They remained therefore in their sins, and died in their sins.

We are here taught the danger of unbelief. It is by faith in Christ alone that we can be saved. Nothing else will avail us. All else is presumption. Christ must be admitted to the place of *Saviour* in our hearts. His must be all the honour of saving us. We must believe him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God. We must confide in the efficacy of his atonement.—We must see the glorious character of his righteousness. We must take Christ as *our Saviour*. Christ is held forth, and offered to us, as a Saviour. He comes to us in his word; and he presents to us his salvation. He holds out to us the offers of his grace. He proclaims his truth in our ears. He calls upon us to believe; and he tells us that "he that believeth shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned." This Christ is doing by every sinner to whom his word comes.—He is as effectually speaking to us, and pressing upon us his claims, as in the case of the Jews. He did not more certainly do so then, than he is doing so now. And with the same effect—with the same result—with the same consequences.—Those of the Jews who believed were saved; and he promised to his disciples a place in his father's house; while those who believed not, but rejected the Messiah, were to die in their sins, and whither