

one was to suffer and die for the people, and how that this holy, spotless Lamb was to be wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. He must have been familiar with the great truth, so deeply engraven upon the Jewish mind, that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins. Besides that same morning he had seen and heard much that was calculated to enlighten his mind, and raise his conceptions of the worth and the majesty of his fellow-sufferer. He had seen a picture of suffering patience, of grace and dignity, amidst unutterable provocations, such as mortal eyes had never seen before. He had seen him going faint and bleeding to the cross, like a lamb led to the slaughter, while the daughters of Jerusalem followed, weeping, and testifying to his goodness. He had seen the title written in the three great languages of the earth, reared above his head: This is the King of the Jews. He had heard from the railing accusations of his murderers that he had saved others, and he had heard from his lips intercession for the transgressors, claiming the Almighty God as his Father, and saying, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Such were the materials—the fragmentary portions of truth thrown in this man's way by the hand of that Good Spirit that takes of the things of God and presents them savingly to the soul; and his soul, all alive in that dread hour for something to rest upon—some words of eternal life upon which he may build his hopes, seizes them, collects them, combines them into something like a consistent whole, and then forthwith there springs up in his mind the sublime faith that deals with the unseen, and he sees in that strange sufferer by his side, the Lamb of God, pure and spotless, that he had seen so often symbolised in the sacrifices of the temple,—in his eye that looked upon him with such tenderness,—

the glance of Omniscience, and in his hand, stretched upon the cross, dropping sacred blood upon the tree and upon the ground—the hand that is mighty to save—the hand which garnished the heavens of old, and which even then exercised sway over a realm of grace and love; and hence his penitence and prayer—his humble request—"Lord remember me, &c."

II. HIS PRAYER.—It was short, as earnest prayers usually are, and not without some error, as the prayers of penitents always are. He speaks of the kingdom of grace as if it were some far-off realm of material splendour, to which it was necessary he must go before he could exercise any dominion. He speaks as if Christ had no power upon earth, no pardon to grant, no blessing to bestow until he would make his journey after death to that distant realm which he claimed as his own. He did not understand that the kingdom of heaven must first be within us before it can be without us. He did not understand that the kingdom of Christ was a kingdom whose elements were, not material, not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. In one sense, indeed, this kingdom is far-off, and in another very near—nearer than the atmosphere in which we live and move and have our being. To the soul estranged from God, and alienated by wicked works, it is indeed a far-off realm of glory into which it cannot enter. The love of sin in this case makes it an impassable gulf over which there is no intercommunion—a gulf which separates the sinful soul from the holy God, "wide as the poles asunder." For what communion is there between light and darkness, and what concord is there between God and Belial. Even in the lower sphere of earthly unions we see how true this is. It is not physical contact that brings one near to another. It is not the joining of hand to hand that binds two