

together, and bent his body double. This cruel punishment seems to have been the customary mode of dealing with such as were accounted false prophets by the authorities. It was the treatment which Hanani endured in return for his warning to king Asa (2 Chron. xvi. 10), some three centuries earlier than Jeremiah's time; and a few years later in our prophet's history, an attempt was made to enforce it again in his case (Jer. xxix. 26). Thus, like the holy apostles of our Lord, was Jeremiah "counted worthy to suffer shame" for the Name in which he spoke (Acts v. 40, 41); and like Paul and Silas at Philippi, after enduring "many stripes" his feet were "made fast in the stocks" (Acts xvi. 23, 24). The message of Jeremiah was a message of judgment, that of the apostles was a message of forgiveness; and both met with the same response from a world whose heart was estranged from God. The heart that loves its own way, is only at ease when it can forget God. Any reminder of His Presence, of His perpetual activity in mercy and judgment, is unwelcome, and makes its authors odious. From the outset, transgressors of the Divine law have sought to hide *among the trees of the garden*—in the engrossing pursuits and pleasures of life—from the Presence of God.

Pashchur's object was not to destroy Jeremiah, but to break his spirit, and discredit him with the multitude, and so silence him for ever. But in this expectation he was as signally disappointed as his successor was in the case of St. Peter (Acts v. 24, 29). Now as then, God's messenger could not be turned from his conviction that *we ought to obey God rather than men*. And as he sat alone in his intolerable anguish, brooding over his shameful wrongs, and despairing of redress, a Divine Word came in the stillness of night to this