

I. *The fact*—Death is man's enemy.

II. *The promise*. This enemy shall be destroyed.

I. I remark death is man's enemy, inasmuch as it is the infliction of punishment in consequence of sin.

It is not an original law of man's nature, but is the result of *disobedience*. While our first parents stood in their primitive innocence, disease and death had no dominion over them. The tree of life, that stood in the midst of the lovely Eden, was a perfect safeguard against both. The first pair, in their purity, had free access to it; but they sinned, and the consequence was, exclusion from its healing leaves. A cherubim and a flaming sword turned every way to guard the tree, lest man should pluck and live for ever. This separation from the healthful properties of the tree of life, left them and their posterity not only exposed to the ravages of disease, but to the reign of death. Hence *death is the legitimate result of sin*. Transgression against the righteous law of Heaven has armed him with his sovereignty, and placed the fatal dart in his hand. So argues the Apostle—"For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one." "Sin hath reigned unto death." "The wages of sin is death."

Man, therefore, in the prospect of death, turns pale, shivers and shrinks back. He meets all other foes with a firm step and undaunted face, but the approach of his last foe fills him with dismay. Why? Because conscience, true to itself, confirms the testimony that we are consigned to death, as the fruit of our rebellion. Man labours to ward off the fatal blow, but he finds it impossible. The stern decree of Heaven has gone forth, and it must be met. Other enemies may be conquered, but this adversary pursues his course steadily, through every lane of life. How wide-spread and fearful the desolation! No age, no class, no position in society, is exempt from his tyranny. As we look upon the slaughtered millions we must remember that the curse of God has fallen upon them, as an expression of His holy hatred to transgression.

Again, Death is our enemy, because he dissolves our *earthly connexions*.

He separates the soul from the body, and places that part of our nature, so essential to the enjoyments of time, in circumstances in which it is compelled to turn to corruption. Strength departs, beauty fades, and we lie powerless with the clods of the valley. In