

mind him how he rejoiced too soon; how he woke up to the consciousness, that even Death had lost his allegiance, and had begun to disobey him; and that this same Jesus, through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is the devil. Tell him of the irritated soldiers, and of the broken seal, and of the empty sepulchre, and of the ascension amidst the clouds into heaven. Tell him of this. Resist him when he tempts you, by the memory of these things. Ah! he shrinks, he pales, he flies, he cannot bear to hear of them. Pursue him, and, as he flies, tell him that your faith anticipates—anticipates the accomplishment of the vision which the Saviour saw in prophetic anticipation in the time of His incarnate life; “I beheld Satan as lightning fall down from heaven,” and then, as the Spirit comes gently to your side, and whispers in your ear, for your own private benefit and comfort, the message of God’s grace to you, God will bruise Satan under your feet, and you will exult in the might of your deliverer, and go on singing—

“Though the sons of night blaspheme,
More there are with us than them;
Hell is nigh but Christ is nigher,
Circling us with hosts of fire.”

He is able to keep us from falling, because he has overcome the world, and is greater than our hearts and has destroyed the devil. So much for God’s people preserved.

II. But the thought will not improbably suggest itself. “What should induce the Redeemer to exert his abilities on our behalf?” We have insulted him, we have refused his service, we have stood back when he has even stretched out his arm to succour us, we have repelled his assistance, like churls, with no emotion of gratitude, and gathered ourselves up in the very haughtiest stature of our mind. He is able to keep us from falling—able—but that saving power were without meaning to us unless we had the warrant that mercy will wield the weapon. He is able to keep us from falling, but will he take the trouble? Well, a comforting expectation of the Redeemer’s exercise of power for us may be gathered from his general character, and from his dealings—his former dealings with us. The good shepherd who left the folded flock, and went after the straying lamb, and followed it over hill and stream, until he heard

its piteous bleating, and rescued it from the verge of the cliff to which it had wandered; the good father, whose affection flowed on in even calmness towards the elder son, but leaped up into a flood when the prodigal came home again; the good Master, who felt tenderly towards all his disciples, but who sent special tidings to Peter that he had risen from the dead lest the bruised spirit should become broken—he is not likely to withhold the power from those who need it, and from those who need it most. Now, there is reason for trusting in him, timid one. He knoweth thy frame, and he remembereth that thou art but dust. But that is not enough; we may have a deeper conviction than can be inferred from the mere general character of the mercy of God in Christ. Well then, the text gives encouragement by presenting us with a reason why he should keep us from falling. There is a suggestion in it that the preservation of the redeemed involves to Christ himself a richer revenue of glory. “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling.” Why? “And to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.” Every soul—that seems to be the doctrine—every soul redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ, and kept by the power of Jesus through faith unto salvation, attests his ascendancy, and exalts yet higher his already pre-eminent name. Christ, the Conqueror, is glorified by the numberless captives that he can bring to his own sphere. Christ, the teacher, is magnified by the hosts of disciples who follow his footsteps, and who hang on his words. Christ, the Saviour, from the unnumbered sinners whom he has snatched from hell, then gathers the jewelry of his many crowns. Believer, take to your heart of hearts, the comfort of this thought. Think of it in your moment of bitterness. Let it chase your fears away. Christ’s glory is involved in your preservation. Only cleave to him and you are safe. He will not let you perish. You are necessary, in some sort, to swell his retinue at the last great day, when he shall lay down the office of Mediator. He will have a grand pageant then. He will have a nobler pageant then; and he will preserve you that he may present you “faultless before the presence of his glory.” “For this same cause,” as the apostle has it, in the epistle to the