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### THE DANGER OF UNBELIEF.

There is something very solemn and very touching in the announcement of Christ to the unbelieving Jews: "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." They had refused to believe in Christ, to acknowledge him as the Messiah, had resisted every appeal to their understanding and to their hearts, and put away from them the offered salvation. Instead of believing in Christ, they had endeavoured to entangle him in his talk, had wilfully misinterpreted his words, had blindly rejected his doctrine, and withal had persecuted him, and sought his life. Christ had long borne with their unbelief: he had answered all their cavils and objections; he had turned against themselves their own statements;—until his patience seemed, as it were, worn out, and he could bear with them no longer, when he makes the solemn announcement: "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come."

This was, first, an announcement that Christ was to prosecute his work irrespective of the unbelief of the Jews: "I go my way." "I hold on my course: I have my work to discharge and I must finish it: It is irrespective of men's belief or unbelief: it will accomplish its object; it will fulfil its ends: it must be done: I go my way." Christ's work was to accomplish its end in the salvation of all who should believe on him. For them he behoved to die: if others rejected his salvation they, at least, should have the means, and the opportunity, of salvation. He must lay down his life for his sheep. He must bring in the lost wanderers whom he came to seek and to save. Nor

would his death be abortive with respect even to those who rejected him, who would none of his salvation. It should still have its effect even with respect to them. They should have the offers of salvation made to them, and if they rejected these offers their guilt would be their own. "If our Gospel is hid," says the Apostle, "it is hid to them that are lost." Christ, then, had his work to fulfil. "I go my way."

His way was one of obedience. He came to fulfil the law, to work out a righteousness for his people. That law they had broken, and they could not keep, they could not fulfil themselves. It was now impossible for them to fulfil the law of God, as it was impossible for them to atone for its breach. Christ came to do both.

His way was one of suffering. He had to endure the accursed death of the Cross. He had to die on the accursed tree. "I go my way": "I go to lay down my life, to endure all that the Father hath appointed me, to die that sinners might live. It was a dark, a troubled, way. It was through the ranks of his enemies: it was through the hosts of the powers of darkness: it was along the rugged road of privation: it was under the night of his father's anger: it was amid the clouds and storms of the divine wrath: it was through the billows of deepest sorrow, of overwhelming affliction, of tremendous agony. It was in Gethsemane, to Jerusalem, to Calvary! "I go my way."

These words intimate, also, that Christ's work was voluntary. In all that he did it was of his own will, by his own consent. God gave him the work, but Christ undertook it. He needed not have undertaken it. He might have refused