

not have been the case. Matt. iv. 24. Some are of opinion, that a popular superstition among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour, was that the insane were possessed of evil spirits, and that Jesus connived at this vulgar notion, as at a matter of no importance. This opinion is most wicked and absurd. However it may be accounted for, demoniacal possession was a reality. Most probably, this calamity, was at this time, sent into the world to manifest the power of our blessed Saviour, and to attest the truth of his mission.

III. The demoniac cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee, who thou art, the Holy one of God."—Luke iv. 34. These words the man cried out, influenced by the evil spirit, with which he was possessed, for Jesus addressed not him, but the demon; saying, "Hold thy peace, and come out of him."—v. 35. Various opinions are entertained, as to the reason why the evil one should have borne this extraordinary testimony to the character and mission of Jesus. From the fact, that the Lord so promptly and decidedly silenced him, some think that the evil one, like a runaway slave, found out by his master, fearing the stripes which he might be about to receive, endeavoured by flattery, to avert his Lord from taking vengeance upon him. Others believe that the demon, by thus showing that he was acquainted with Jesus, wished to impress upon the Jews that Christ was in collusion with the evil spirits; and that our Saviour's rebuke was to obviate such a delusion. The latter opinion is doubtless founded upon the fact, that the error of Christ's performing his miracles through satanic influence soon manifested itself among the unbelieving portion of his countrymen. A third supposition is, that this was an unwilling testimony, extorted even from a wicked spirit, by the Almighty power of God. If we examine this testimony, however, we shall find that it is not a true one. It is, in fact, a mixture of truth and error.—"Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come here to destroy us?" The father of lies strives by every means to keep souls from Jesus. When the word comes with power, and touches the sinner's heart and conscience; is he not frequently tempted to use means to banish it from his mind? When wounded by that "quick and powerful word," how often does the sinner endeavour to heal his wound by closer attention to secular affairs, by carnal diversions! What is this, but saying to Jesus, "let me alone, what have I to do with thee?" How prone is the natural heart to use to Jesus the same language as the widow of Sarepta did to the prophet, "What

have I to do with thee, art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance?"—1st Kings: xvii. 18., or that of the Israelitish tyrant to the same man of God; "Hast thou found me O mine enemy?" Satan would fain have man to view the Holy One of God as his enemy.—"Art thou come to destroy us?" See he would sink poor souls into doubt and despair. He would have them view their best friend and only Saviour, as their destroyer. But Jesus quickly expels this evil spirit of mistrust and unbelief. 'Tis he alone who can do so, and take possession of the sinner's heart. By this miracle did Jesus show forth his glory. He showed that all things, even the evil spirits were subject to him. What then has the Christian to fear? When he has Jesus in him, "the hope of Glory," what then can do him harm?—See Rom. viii. 35., to the end.

Learn 1. We should be bold in the performance of duty.—Mrtt. x. 28. Acts v. 29.

2. The preaching of the Word to be effectual, must be accompanied with power.—1 Cor. ii. 4.

3. The dreadful effects of sin.—Rom. i. 24 to the end.

4. Jesus has power to deliver his people from all their and his enemies.—John xvi. 33.—Eph. i. 21.

### HAPPY SERVICE.

When the Queen of Sheba came to visit Solomon, she was so struck with the grandeur and magnificence of his palace, the order and supplies of his household, the wisdom he communicated, and the gracefulness of his utterances, that she considered it both happiness and honour to be allowed to serve in his court: she exclaimed, "*Happy are these thy servants*" (2 Chron. ix. 7). But I have been thinking if servants of Solomon were happy, how much more happy must the servants of Jesus be. Yes, they are happy, and that on many accounts; we will confine our attention to two.

First, *because they are connected with the King.* They are of the court, and of the court of the King of kings, and the Lord of lords. Solomon is in every sense outdone by him. Solomon was wise, but in him dwelleth all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Solomon's wisdom was a drop; his, an ocean. Solomon's, a tiny spark, his, a glorious sun. Solomon was wealthy, but Jesus has unsearchable riches. All created wealth is his, and all uncreated