

restlessness and homelessness which sin produces. There is but one home for the heart, "the sacred place of the Most High." Those only are at home and at peace who are united with God and who know Him. Others, like Cain, wander wearily for ever, finding no rest for the sole of their feet, and unmindful of the call of Jesus, "Come unto me ye weary and I will give you rest."

The Effect of the Punishment upon Cain.

It is not sin but the punishment of sin that affects Cain. He is concerned merely with the question of the curse upon himself. The sin against God, and the sin against his brother, does not seem to torture him. The appalling growth of self in Cain comes to a climax here. Even judgment from the lips of God brings nothing but the thought of himself and of what he will suffer in consequence. He cries out that the heavens and the earth will be to him as brass, and the consciousness of sin within him makes him feel that every man will wish to slay him as he has slain his brother.

God's Compassion on Cain.

God spares his life and forbids that he should be slain by man. The sin which he has committed is beyond human vengeance. Its atonement is between God, the avenger of the righteous, and Cain, not between man and man. Men are taught that God will avenge guilt and that blood feuds are not according to His will. What the mark was which was put upon Cain's forehead we do not know, God spared his life, and he was allowed to go forth to live and to work. But wherever he went men knew that God's judgment rested upon him, a token to them and a token to us that there is a King who will "take account of His servants." Matt. xviii. 23.