

This was the commencement of the travail of His soul. Then began to be visible the fruits of His sufferings. This was the purpose for which He hath instituted the Gospel Church, and sent forth His servants to proclaim the way of salvation through His cross, and hath committed to us this precious volume of eternal truth, that we may send it to the ends of the earth; and every successive period of history bears testimony to the manifestation of this work. Multitudes, with hearts as corrupt and depraved as it is possible for them to be, have been attracted by the power of the Redeemer's cross, subdued from their natural enmity, made willing in the day of His power, fighting the good fight of faith, and overcoming by the blood of the Lamb. Many of different nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues have heard or read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, have believed and been saved. If there are those who are disposed to cast ridicule upon the efforts that are put forth to convert Mahometans, or Hindoos, or degraded Hottentots and Caffres, let them consider the effects of the word of the Lord in former ages. That word is still the same, "His hand is not yet shortened, that it cannot save, neither is His ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

Look at the actual success of the various missionary operations of the churches, and of Bible Societies—look at the revolution in the opinions of men—whole islands of the sea turning to the Lord, and nations, such as Japan, throwing down all barriers to the entrance and spread of Christianity.

And surely it is encouraging, and ought to stimulate the zeal and energies, and prayerfulness of believers, to see the word of God's grace extending its triumphs to the utmost ends of the earth, gathering in the heirs of salvation out of all lands, so that, even now, there is scarcely a known language on the face of the earth into which the Bible, or portions of it, have not been translated by the Bible Society, and in which the praises of Jesus have not been sung and the wonders of His love proclaimed.

All this is an earnest of the full harvest that is yet to be gathered in. For thus it is written, "*He shall see of the travail of His soul.*" Success depends not on anything human, for then there would be no firm foundation on which to rest, but on the word of God, and that is sure and stable as His own eternal throne. "The mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken it." "The zeal of the Lord will perform it." This is the never-failing resource of faith, on which the Church must cast itself amidst all its difficulties. Whatever discouragements there may be, let not the hands hang down in feebleness, neither let the heart become desponding—let the work be prosecuted in faith, remembering that the covenant stands sure, that the word of God shall certainly be accomplished.

III. The text sets before us the joy and satisfaction of Christ when He sees converts brought unto God—sinners ransomed and saved by the power of His cross. "*He shall see,*" &c., "*and shall be satisfied.*" It was the prospect of this which led Him to overlook, as it were, His approaching sufferings and death, and to meet all without one murmuring complaint, yea, rather with holy anxiety and fervent desire. "For the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, despising the shame." All that He had to endure was well known to Him—the cruelties of men, the hidings of His Father's countenance—the punishment of sin, unmitigated and severe. Yet such was His love to guilty men, so great was His anxiety to pave the way for the outpourings of mercy to our fallen race, and to bring in sinners to His fold, that He stedfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem to be put to death; and these were His own memorable words when seated with His disciples at the institution of the sacred feast which commemorates His death. "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

We cannot but here observe what encouragement is thus held forth to the convinced, awakened sinner to cast himself at once upon the mercy of the Saviour. In the first pangs of conviction raised in the soul—in the first feelings of dread and alarm, which are stirred up to disturb your peace in the very beginnings of any movement towards salvation, the Redeemer sees of the