

mourners cry and refuse to be comforted. Who has not witnessed such scenes, and looking on has not wished the unavailing wish, and wept and prayed ?

Then, letting the mind take another direction, thinking on those that we have known lost to good, lost to God ; our own friends and companions who once went with us, turning back, looking like as if they were becoming outcasts, forsaken of God, can we refrain from grief ?

Parents who have to look on children wayward, disobedient, and dead to reproof ; ministers who see their people unbettered, who groan over disappointed hopes, and think of the latter end : have they not bitter sorrow ? Is this selfish in parent and pastor ? It is selfishness in its one noble form,—the desire for my sake and for their sake that I may be able to say to God at last, Here am I and those whom thou hast given me.

In heaven all that, too, is past. Parents and children ; ministers and flocks ; the good and the bad : all have been before the Judge. There have been reunions of families and Sunderings. Elect and reprobate have been found in all congregations. There has been a meeting together of the followers of Jesus who lived in remotest ages and in most diverse circumstances, and a gathering together of all that was hurtful, to be cast out. Some are saved whom no one expected to see in garments of salvation. Some are cast away whose shame and agony filled the redeemed with awe and terror.

But it is all over. The ransomed of the Lord are with Him who redeemed them, and no spectacle of woe shall they ever look upon again. All are holy and happy, and all things are bright and beautiful in heaven. God shall wipe away all tears of commiseration from their eyes, and the pain of sad recollection shall visit them no more.

So it is in heaven.

THE CHILDREN OF THE COVENANT.

From the beginning, but notably from the calling of Abraham, *children* were included in God's covenant with his people. The ancient Israelite was privileged to present his children to the Lord in their earliest infancy and to regard them as the Lord's. The children had a part in the covenant, and faithful parents were ever careful to preserve intact their children's rights and privileges under the covenant. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament state explicitly that the covenant of grace and salvation includes believers *and their seed*.

Nature itself teaches us that parents must *act for* their children while they are unable to act for themselves. Scripture assumes this principle : God deals on this principle with mankind. Hence the unutterable importance of a godly parentage ; of an early training for glory, honor, and immortality ; hence the value of dedicating children to Christ in infancy and regarding them as members of the visible church, to be nurtured for Him with ceaseless care during that critical period of their being, when their character is usually formed for time and eternity.

Infants are members of the Church in virtue of the membership of their parents. The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the believing wife ; the unbelieving wife by the believing husband ; and hence are the children *holy*. They have a right to the blessings involved in pious parentage. Infants, being members of the church *in fact*, should be acknowledged as such by administering Baptism to them, which is the sign and seal of their covenant relationship.