

some great effort, the souls of men. Where lesser judgments have been tried in vain, some greater ones must be inflicted. Have you hitherto resisted the calls and warnings of God? Have you remained impenitent under His successive mercies and judgments? Has year after year revolved, and found you still destitute of true and vital religion? What shall the merciful and gracious Father of Heaven now do to restore you? He has not, we will suppose, yet given you up to your idols. He has not yet solemnly sworn that you shall never enter into His rest. He is still bending over you with the gaze of Parental affection, and saying, "How shall I give thee up Ephraim, how shall I deliver thee Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah, how shall I set thee as Zeboim?" And what course do you imagine He will adopt, in order to avoid this fatal issue? Perhaps He will lay some deep affliction, some painful dispensation upon you, He will do to you, as He did to Ephraim and Judah. And what was this? Hear it in His own words, "I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion and as a young Lion to the House of Judah. I, even I will tear and go away. I will go, and return to my place, and they shall acknowledge their offence and seek my face. In their affliction they will seek me early."

There is yet more however, implied in the words before us. They suggest, and this is indeed the most important intimation they afford, *the fatal issue of such a state, if persisted in, notwithstanding these repeated efforts on the part of God.* Wherefore does this pathetic language issue from the lips of Jehovah? Wherefore does He ask with apparent concern and grief, what course He shall adopt towards such persons? Because He knows it to be impossible to extend the blessing of His friendship to them in their present state, and, as a necessary consequence, that unless they are changed, and brought to a very different one, their souls must perish forever.