

life, the good man can look forward to that which we have already mentioned as the day of adjustment; the day when the righteous Judge, banishing the ungodly into eternal exclusion from his presence, will say to his people, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord."

This very important course of thought is that over which the Preacher takes us in the verses read for exposition this morning: and, having given you in my own words an outline of what is involved in the passage, I now proceed to explain the verses in their order,—a task that will be easier if you have followed me in the remarks that have been made, and observed their bearings and the mutual connection of the ideas brought forward.

I. Ver. 15,—"*All things have I seen in the days of my vanity;*" that is, the following is the result of the observations which I have made during my sojourn in this vain world: "*There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness.*" The word "perisheth" must be taken in its widest sense, as embracing both great and small calamities; and the meaning is, that a righteous man often suffers loss and hurt, in different degrees, from his adherence to what is right. "*And there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in his wickedness;*" lives prosperously, and by his very iniquities secures worldly advantage and gratification.

This is what Solomon had observed. It always has been the state of things in time past, and is so as much now as ever. It is not necessary to prove this to any one who has opened his eyes upon the world; but a few illustrations of what the Preacher affirms may serve to place it more vividly before your minds.

My first illustration shall be drawn from the book of Scottish Church History. Think of the time when Scotland groaned under the iron heel of her prelatical persecutors.