

When he saw his mother, he sprang up to meet her, and exclaimed, "O see what Rose has done, and for me, cruel, hard-hearted revengeful as I have been! I thought that I understood that parable of the wise and foolish builders, but Rose has taught me to know it, indeed, by heart! I was but a hearer, she a doer of the Word."

### THE MOTIONS OF THE SPIRIT.

By the late Rev. James Smith, Cheltenham.

What extraordinary characters God has raised up for the accomplishment of his purposes, and in answer to the prayers of his people! Most plainly has he shewn us, that he can never be at a loss for an instrument to do his work, nor be dependent on any creature for the performance of his word. I have been thinking of Samson, than whom perhaps God never raised up a more extraordinary person. But I am not going to write about Samson in general, only to consider for a few moments one statement respecting him, "*The Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times.*" Judges xiii. 25. The words present three things to our notice:—

**A Young Man.**—Samson was, at this time young, and tenderly beloved of his parents, he was honourably distinguished from his fellows, intended for great usefulness, exposed to many temptations, and compassed with lamentable infirmities. In looking around me, I can see young men, in these respects, very much like Samson. They are tenderly beloved of their parents, who look upon them as their hope and joy. For them their prayers ascend, and around them their affections gather. Nothing is denied them that is considered likely to advance them or do them good. And in many things they are honourably distinguished, for they are sober, and thoughtful, and moral. They believed the Bible, respect the Sabbath and attend the means of grace. They appear likely to be very useful, for they have respectable gifts, a generous disposition, and if their hearts were right with God, they would be shining and useful characters. But they are exposed to many temptations, for Satan lies in wait to mislead them, the flesh is strong within them, and worldly companions would like to ensnare them. Nor are they free from infirmities. Some of them need more courage, some more simplicity, and all of them need decision—I mean decision for God and devotedness to him. But we are introduced to,

**A Holy Agent.**—"The Spirit of the Lord." The Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal with the Father and the Son, consequently the true and eternal God. But he has undertaken a distinct work in creation, providence, and grace. In

creation he moved on the face of the waters, or brooded over the abyss, and gave both vegetable and animal life. In providence he works for the saints in a secret, certain, and mysterious manner. But his principal work is in grace. He inspired the prophets and holy men of old; he began to move, or prompt, or influence Samson at times, and so he does our young people now. He is the gift of God, and generally communicated and received through the preaching of the gospel.—He is the author of all spiritual good in the hearts of the Lord's people. He generates every good desire, directs to the use of every good word, and prompts to every good action. His presence, power, and agency, are absolutely necessary for man; as without these there would be no regeneration, conversion, or sanctification. He is possessed by all believers, and works in them to will and to do of his own good pleasure. To be without the Spirit, is to be without life, without power, and without spiritual wisdom. The Son of God is not more necessary to be our Redeemer, than is the Spirit of God to be our guide, teacher and sanctifier. Therefore we have set before us,

**A Divine Operation.**—"The Spirit of God began to move him at times." The mind of man is naturally restless, it is always in motion, but of itself it never moves right toward God, or divine things. The motions of the Spirit are always in accordance with our nature, and suitable to our condition and circumstances. He never acts upon man as he would upon matter, or as he would upon the brute creation; which is only saying, that he acts wisely in his dealings with us. His work is in accordance with the end to be accomplished, hence in some he acted as a Spirit of prediction, in some as a Spirit of government, and in Samson principally as a Spirit of strength. In us he acts as a Spirit of grace, or a Spirit of truth, or a Spirit of life. In his work, he not only has regard to our nature, but to our age, circumstances, and destination. He moves the young often, when they little suspect that it is his divine agency which is at work with them. There is a thought, it may be of death, of eternity, of sin, of salvation, of God, or of Christ—or there is a fact, perhaps a very solemn fact, presented to, and fastened upon the mind—a solemn sense of danger and fear is produced—a desire for salvation, or to escape the wrath to come, is felt—a prayer, simple but fervent, is put up—a hope that mercy will be shewn, and deliverance be wrought, is excited—a sense of pleasure in reference to divine things is realised—and at length the soul's interest in Christ is cleared up. In all this, we trace the moving of the mind and heart, by the Spirit of God. For we ascribe every good motion, every good desire, all real prayer, and every good action to him.

Reader, the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit are solemn truths; and the work and operations of the Holy Spirit in the heart are absolutely necessary to salvation.