

the relations we sustain to our fellow-men. Many of them are peculiarly distressing. This is often the case with such bereavement. How sharp the pang and deep sense of desolation felt by us when deprived of one near and dear to us! We feel then as if a wheel in the mechanism of our being had been stopped: as if a prop of our existence had suddenly given way. All things seem to be shaded in gloom. Sad and lonely we recall the scenes through which we and our departed friend have passed. In imagination we often visit the place where their ashes repose, and in vain we endeavour to penetrate that unseen world into which their spirit has entered. We refuse to be comforted because they are not. It is little to be wondered at that our hearts are then bruised. Yet why should the child of God, even when deprived of his dearest earthly friend be greatly cast down. God has made ample consolation for him under the heaviest loss which it is possible for him to sustain. Whoever leaves us, Christ remains; and die who may, He lives. If those whose death we deplore have died in the Lord our loss is their gain.

"Absent from the body, they are present with the Lord." They have left a world of sin and suffering, and entered into a state of perfect purity and bliss. And there is the blessed hope of reunion with them, where death is unknown, and where separation can never take place.

4. *The Loss of former privileges.*—David was at this time driven both from his palace and his throne, yet nothing seems to have grieved him so much as his being deprived of the ordinances of the sanctuary. "When I remember these things," he says in the fourth verse, "I pour out from my soul in me; for I had gone with the multitude; I went with them to the house of God, with a voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept

holyday." What grieved the heart of the Royal Psalmist then, not unfrequently saddens the heart of some of God's children still. The time was when the return of the Sabbath gladdened their hearts; for then they went up to the house of the Lord, and took their part in its hallowed and soul elevating exercises. But the afflictive hand of God having been laid upon them, this blessed privilege is no longer within their reach, and the loss of what they once enjoyed and highly appreciated, sometimes weighs heavily upon their spirit. But why should the child of God when placed in these circumstances feel downcast in soul? "God is not confined to temples made with hands," but is everywhere present. When there is a praying heart, there is a prayer hearing God. "He who loves the gates of Zion, delights also in the dwellings of Jacob." Even although they should never be permitted to enter again the courts of the sanctuary below; the gates of the Temple above are open to admit them, when God shall see meet to call them hence. There the Sabbath never ends, nor the congregation of our God's people ever breaks up.

5. *The remembrance of past sins.*—This is often the bitter experience of those who have been converted late in life. The sins committed by them during the day of their unregeneracy, frequently come to their remembrance with such vividness as greatly disquiets their souls. "One of the sorest trials," says one, "of a renewed life, is, that it is built over dark dungeons, where dead things may be buried, but not forgotten, and where through the open grating rank vapours still ascend, they are compelled to bear this burden all the while, and some times they feel it too heavy." There is nothing wrong in the Christian reflecting upon his past sins. The exercise if properly conducted is fitted to deepen his sense of unworthiness,