

it was a struggle with tears, care and pressure (ver. 17). He was betrayed by the very woman of his choice. One can scarcely conceive that association with the world would produce the bad results which, as a matter of fact, it does. Samson would never have thought that his thirty companions, aided by his wife, would lay traps to plunder him, for the thirty changes of garments by right belonged to him. Satan may separate us from communion with the Lord, may make us unhappy; he may also hinder our being witnesses here below, but, thanks be to God, he cannot pluck us out of the hand of Christ.

The grace of God preserved Samson from the final consequences of his error, and delivered him from an alliance which God could not approve of. The Spirit of Jehovah having come upon him he performed mighty deeds. "And his anger was kindled" (ver. 19). Samson was a man of a very selfish character and was guided in his action by the sense of the wrong that had been done him. Nevertheless he was victorious over the enemies of Jehovah, and kept for himself none of their spoil, it went back to the world, from whence it had been taken. Then he quitted the scene of so much unhappiness and "went up to his father's house," which he never should have left to *settle* among the Philistines. May we profit by this lesson; and if, in our intercourse with the world, we have passed through painful experiences, let us hasten to return to the Father's house (which we never should have left, even in thought), where He dwells whose communion is the source of our peace and happiness all our pilgrimage way, till that moment comes when we shall enter forever into that house—our eternal dwelling-place!

*(To be continued, D.V.)*