

in love, to bring him to a better mind. *Moisture . . . drought of summer*. Fever scorched the body like the summer sun. In Palestine, "soon after the heats commence, the grass withers, the flower fades, every green thing is dried up by the roots, and the fields, so lately clothed with the richest verdure, and adorned with the loveliest flowers, are converted into a brown arid wilderness."

II. The Path to Forgiveness, 5-7.

V. 5. *I acknowledged my sin*; literally, "I began to make known." We seem to see the penitent coming to God and beginning to speak. *Iniquity . . . not hid*. At last the deceit passed from his spirit. *I said, I will confess*; as the prodigal in the far country said, "I will arise and go to my father" (see Luke 15 : 11-24). The completeness of the confession is expressed by the use of the three words, "acknowledge," "not hid," "confess." *Thou forgavest*. He had recognized that his suffering was punishment for his sin, and lo! the wonder of it,—his sickness was over, his sin was pardoned.

Vs. 6, 7. *For this*. "Where one man," says Spurgeon, "finds a golden nugget, others feel inclined to dig." *Shall every one that is godly pray*. The "godly" ones are those who belong in a special sense to Jehovah, and are therefore entitled to His kindness. They all need daily forgiveness, even though they may not have sinned as grievously as David. *In a time . . . be found*. Compare "in an acceptable time" (Ps. 69 : 13) and read also 2 Cor. 6 : 2. The time to find God is always Now. *Floods*, etc. These may be either temptations or troubles. The forgiven one is like a man set in safety from these, as on a high island of rock. *Preserve me from trouble*; either by averting it or causing good to come out of it. *Compass . . . songs of deliverance*; surrounded by gladness as well as saved from danger.

III. The Fruits of Forgiveness, 8-11.

Vs. 8, 9. *I will instruct thee and teach thee*. This is God's answer to the psalmist's expression of trust. It is God who will be the guide and teacher of His forgiven people. *Counsel thee with mine eye upon thee* (Rev. Ver.). The thought is that the eyes of the teacher are fixed upon the pupil so as to watch his every step in life. God's word is

in the ear and heart of the traveler on the heavenward way, and God's eye is on his path; therefore he is safe. *Be ye not as the horse, or . . . mule* (the more obstinate animal) . . . *no understanding*; not capable of receiving instruction and counsel, and therefore requiring to be guided by physical means, *else they will not come near* (Rev. Ver.). Animals obey their masters because they are forced to do so, but those whom God has pardoned should obey Him willingly from love.

Vs. 10, 11. *Many sorrows . . . to the wicked*. They need these, as the animals need the "bit and bridle," and even the sharp whip, to bring them back from their sin. *He that trusteth . . . mercy shall compass him about*. Like a strong wall, God's mercy stands between the believing man and every foe. *Be glad . . . rejoice . . . shout for joy*. There is no song so sweet as that of the forgiven sinner. God's lovingkindness is around him on all sides, as the circumference of a sphere is about the centre, so that in no direction can harm come to him. In Jesus Christ the mercy of God is fully manifested. It is the very nature of God to forgive. No one ever came to Him seeking pardon to be sent empty away. "Rejoice." V. 6 says "Pray," and those who pray are sure to have cause of rejoicing.

Light from the East

"THE GREAT WATERS OVERFLOW" (v. 6, Rev. Ver.)—The uplands of Palestine are bare, and the slopes to east and west are steep and cut open with deep gorges. A heavy rain means scores of floods pouring down the narrow torrent-beds to the Jordan or the sea. The waters carry everything before them, beasts and bushes and tents alike. That God should keep a man safe when "the mighty waters overflow" was often his prayer or the ground of his praise, Ps. 46 : 1-3; 69 : 1; 124 : 5; 144 : 7; Isa. 43 : 2. I quote part of a description of a flood among the hills of Sinai on Dec. 3, 1867, from F. W. Holland, in Ordnance Survey of the Peninsula of Sinai. "At 4.30 p.m. a few heavy drops of rain began to fall; and at 5 a tremendous thunderstorm began. The rain fell in torrents, and the roar of the thunder, echoing from peak to peak, and the howling of the wind, were quite