

son, sacrifice, advocacy, and promises of Christ, are on the Rock, and the gates of hell—the powers of darkness, cannot prevail against them. In Christ, the people of God also find *safety*. “The name of the Lord is a strong tower, the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.” It is the safety of the christian, that he is “in the clefts of the rock.” There he is secure in every time of temptation and trial. What David said to Abiathar, the Redeemer says to each of his followers: “With me, thou shalt be in safeguard.” In Christ, the believer finds, moreover, a *refreshing shade*. What the shade of an overhanging cliff is to the traveller in the arid wastes of Eastern regions, with the rays of a vertical sun darting down upon him with intolerable fierceness, the Redeemer is to His people. He is “the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.” Happy they who build upon that *sure foundation*, who repair to that safe *hiding place* in times of danger, and sit “under His shadow with great delight.”

II.—THE SMITING OF THE ROCK.

“*Thou shalt smite the rock.*” We are thus reminded of the words of God by Zechariah: “Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, * * * smite the shepherd.” We are reminded of the words of Isaiah: “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: * * * with His stripes we are healed.”

1. The smiting of the rock was the act of *Moses*. To him, God said, “thou shalt smite the rock.” Moses was the representative of the *Law*. He received it from the Law-giver, and was, in an important sense, its divinely appointed guardian and representative. We are thus reminded that as it was *Moses* that smote the rock in Horeb, so it was the *Divine Law* that inflicted on the Redeemer, all His sufferings. He was “made under the law to redeem them that were under the law.” That law declares that “the soul that sinneth it shall die.” The Saviour, having become a sinner by the voluntary assumption of His people’s guilt, must therefore die. The unchanging law of the Eternal pronounces a curse upon “every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.” The Redeemer, though without sin personally, yet having voluntarily assumed the guilt of transgressors, must bear the curse. “He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us.” The unchangeableness of the Divine law, and the absolute impossibility of any abrogation or relaxation of any of its requirements, may be plainly seen in the sufferings of the “Man of sorrows.” Surely, if that law could have been relaxed in its requirements and penalties, it would have been in the case of “the Only Begotten and well beloved Son of God,” who was personally holy, and who only became a sinner by the imputation to Him of the guilt of others. But could the law mitigate any of its requirements even in His case? No. And if that holy, and unchanging law of the Eternal could not abate one particle of its severity, even in favor of the Son of God, when He took upon Him His people’s guilt; Oh, how can they escape who are personally transgressors, and who turn away from that Saviour by whose “stripes” alone any sinner can be “healed.”

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