

final testimony. If not before, God may own us on our death beds.

5.—“Ye are the salt of the earth.” Good men are hostages against evil. Elisha was truly the chariot of Israel, more to her than heavy battalions. “I will not destroy it for ten’s sake.” But it is not only by averting punishment good men save a land. From them proceed the wholesome, righteous influences which conserve society. Literally the living are the salt which keeps the dead from corruption.

6.—“Whosoever will not receive the kingdom of heaven as a little child.” We must learn God’s will as little children always. “Line upon line, precept upon precept.” Might not the king have said, in the spirit of Naaman, Behold, I thought He will surely do some great thing! Am I not skilled with my own good bow? Nothing requires greater docility of mind than being led by the spirit.

7.—“My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth.” The king’s thought was, “Alas, the defence of Israel is passing away.” But God teaches him that unto faith the needed defence shall be given, though the prophet dies. Let us rejoice when God uses greatly any one of his servants, but let us never think the work depends on anyone but God.

8.—“Follow the Lord fully.” How often

does the Christian fail where Joash did, and spare his ancient foes. How strange the failure of Joash would seem were it not so natural. With victory over sin assured us, how often do we spare some darling sin.

9.—“Ye are not straitened in me, but ye are straitened in yourselves.” The opportunity of his life had come to Joash and passes unimproved. And such opportunities come whenever the door of faith is opened. “Ask and ye shall receive.”

10.—“If thou hadst been here” “He hath been dead four days.” How prone we are to let our hope fail with its visible support. The bulwark of Israel is buried! Surely the way is open now to Moab’s hate and Syria’s pride!

11.—“Ye have a watch, make it as secure as ye can.” The purposes of God cannot be bound. Man’s extremity is always God’s opportunity. God’s plans rise like the fabled phoenix from their own ashes.

12.—“Because of his covenant.” This is the true source of all our blessings. When men sinned they forfeited all. Why was not death in its fullest meaning at once inflicted? Because of the covenant with Christ who undertook for us.

13.—“His promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus.” How accurately, how absolutely, was the prophecy fulfilled! So shall it be with every syllable of God’s word. Great is his faithfulness.

THE BLACKBOARD.

THE PROPHECY

Help Sought
Power Proved
Given in Symbol
Fulfilled in Fact.