

Jerusalem. Jesus himself had wept over that city, saying, "If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." At the time when he was led forth to be crucified, "there followed a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children."—And these words had a very solemn meaning. That people were then filling up the measure of their iniquity. They were fast ripening for judgment, and if the calamities connected with the Babylonish captivity could draw forth the tears of Jeremiah, much more was there cause now to say with him, "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" It would have shown no want of acquaintance with the real circumstances of the case—no want of sympathy with the expressed mind of her Lord, if, in answer to the question, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Mary had said, I weep for the daughters of Jerusalem, and for their children. I weep for those who are involved in that fearful imprecation, the words of which are still ringing in my ears, "His blood be on us, and on our children."

"Look, again, to the honour of God, and of God's holy law. That is indeed a consideration which has no right with the ungodly; but it comes home to the heart of all those who have been transformed by the renewing of their mind, that they may prove what is that good, and acceptable and perfect will of God. It is the characteristic of God's children that they sigh and cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst of Jerusalem. They mourn, it is true, over the evils to which they are exposed who trample on God's law; but they are nevertheless jealous for God's honour: and never was there a more flagrant insult offered to God, never was his law treated more contemptuously, than amid those scenes which Mary had lately witnessed at Jerusalem, when, instead of reverencing God's Son, honouring that illustration which his life presented of God's holy law, and yielding to the melting influence of that grace which was then revealed, the frantic Jews cried out "Not this man, but Barabbas;" and proceeded with wicked hands to crucify the

Lord of glory. The earth trembled at the enormity: the sun hid itself from the sight; and well might Mary have wept for the dishonour done to Him who came in the name of the Lord to save, saying with David, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law."

Nor was it the thought of the dishonour merely done by others to God and to God's holy law that might at this time have affected the mind of Mary. Pontius Pilate and the Jews could have had no power at all against Jesus, had it not been given them from above; and, in ascertaining the proper grounds of his sufferings and death, we must look beyond the malignity of the scribes and pharisees, we must look beyond the instrumentality of the infuriated multitudes who cried out, Crucify him, crucify him; we must look beyond the time-serving policy of Pilate, who could deliver up to death one of whom nevertheless he declared, I find no fault in him, we must look beyond all this to the inflexible justice of God, and to its dealings with him who bore our sins in his own body on the tree. Christ suffered there as a substitute in the room of the guilty; and had Mary at this time understood the grounds on which, in resting upon the Saviour, she had obtained joy and peace in believing, as she thought over the transactions of Calvary, a more heartfelt mourning—a more intense sense of bitterness than she ever knew before might well have affected her, as she looked upon him whom even she had pierced, and recollected the words of the prophet, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." From the cross she might have received the most impressive lesson as to the heinousness of her own guilt that required such a sacrifice, as to the odious character of her own pollutions that required to be washed away in such blood: and her answer to the question here proposed to her might have been, I weep for the transgressions which I acknowledge—for the sins which are ever before me. Lord, pardon mine iniquity for it is very great.

Once more: the cross and its adjuncts presented, not the mere appearance, but the reality of suffering. It was not by the mere exercise of power, but by the endurance of a penalty, that Jesus Christ accomplished redemption for his people. The sorrows through which he passed on