

## **The Mercies of a Covenant God**

### **Mr. Warburton's Last Days**

It was some time in October, 1856, that my dear father was first taken seriously ill, his complaint being, as I understand, a disease of the heart. Shortly after, great fears were entertained by his family and friends whether he would ever recover. In November, while I was supplying at Hurst, I received a letter from my sister, saying, if I wished to see him alive, she thought no time was to be lost. I, of course, immediately set off, and arrived in Trowbridge the same night. Dear man! on seeing me he was almost overcome by his feelings; so finding him very weak, I said little to him that night. On the morrow I felt anxious to learn the state of his mind, and to know if anything oppressed him. Accordingly, when I saw him again, I put the question to him, and begged him to tell me if he had anything that lay heavy upon his mind, either concerning the family, the church, or himself. Never shall I forget the pleasant smile upon his countenance as he answered, " My dear child, if thou wast to put the world before me, and say all should be mine to tell thee anything upon my mind that in the least distresses me or gives the least pain, I could not. Bless God! I have a good conscience before Him. Those truths that, in my little way, I have attempted to preach, are now my support in the view and expectation of death. O what could I have done now had I been suffered to keep back the truth of God! But no thanks to me. I have been tempted to soften the truth, and been determined not to give such offence; but God has made it to burn in my heart like a fire, and out it has been obliged to come. O the traps that men have set for me! But, bless my God, He has delivered the poor worm from them all. Just before I was taken ill," he went on to say, "how the Lord did favour me, to be sure. Go where I would, there was the Lord with me. If I went into the garden, there He was; if into my summer-house, He went with me; if into the wood-house, sawing and chopping wood, He was with me too. He led me back through all the footsteps He had brought me, both in providence and grace. O how my soul was broken down with His loving-kindness. I tell thee what, John, I could hardly walk about, for the smiles of my God seemed too much for the body to bear. At last I said to Him, My dear Lord, what art Thou about to do with Thy poor worm? "O, I wanted Him to take me home." I said, "Father, your desire will soon be granted." "Well," he said, "if putting up my finger would raise me up or take me out of the body, I would not do it contrary to the will of God. Not my will, but Thine, O Lord, be done."

As I was sitting with him one morning, he said, "Not long since I thought upon my book. Some people have said that it has been blessed to them. It being many years since I read it, I thought I would read it again; but, O John," said he, lifting up both

his hands, "my soul was broken within me to see the poverty and distress, the fears and despair, the misery and sorrow He had brought me through. O how I sat at His feet and washed them with tears of gratitude." I remarked to him how wonderfully God had proved those words that nailed him to Trowbridge, "Abide in this city, for I have much people here." On hearing the words, he burst into tears and said, "Ah! it was the Lord that spoke them to my soul; and I, fool-like, wanted to go to Maidstone to escape trouble. I think the Lord has been obliged to exercise more patience with me than with any of His children beside. I do hope, John, when I am gone nobody will say anything about me. Let my name sink into dust, but let the Name of Jesus be exalted for ever. I have told the Lord many times if He condescended to bless such a nothing to the souls of His dear people, not to let them think or speak about the instrument. I have been afraid the whole glory would not be given to the Lord."

On one occasion I remarked to him, "Father, it is a mercy the devil is not permitted to tempt and distress you now. He would like, no doubt, to do so in your present weak state." He smiled and said, "Well, it was but yesterday I was thinking of it, wondering how it was; and at last I said, Well, Lord, Thou knowest he has made a big fool of me for sixty years; he has done enough." Soon after, when all was silent in the room, he burst into a loud laugh, and with a triumphant voice exclaimed, "Ah, devil, I can laugh at thee now. O thou cursed, lying wretch! Thou toldst me I should die in despair, and that I was the greatest hypocrite that ever lived. I am not a hypocrite. Come now, come with all thine infernal train. I fear thee not. In the Name of my God, I would destroy thee."

On another occasion he had a very bad fainting fit. Myself, my sister and Mr. F. were then with him. As he came to himself he burst out, "What are my sorrows compared with His! His temples were crowned with a crown of thorns. He was crucified between two thieves; and one of them was old Warburton's brother-saved by free grace without works. O He cried, It is finished. This is the foundation of my soul, and ground of acceptance with God."

A short comment that he made one morning on the words of David, [Ps 46:10](#), was truly sweet to my soul: "Be still, and know that I am God." "What a mystery," said he, "is here! How can the Lord's people be still? for if their poor souls are in trouble, can they be still then? No. The devil will take care of that. O how he will fire his darts of despondency into the mind, telling the dear soul he is the blackest hypocrite that ever walked. When darkness fills the mind and fear the breast; when unbelief declares that all is over, while God Himself seems to turn a deaf ear to all his prayers, and blasts him on every hand (and O the times my soul has been in

such spots as these); can the poor soul sit still here? O no. Poor Jacob, when he saw nothing but death before him, must wrestle all night. No sitting still. Well, let the Lord appear, and make darkness light before them, crooked things straight, and rough places plain, and tell them. I am the Lord thy God, and bring them out of all their wretched holes; can they be still then? O no. They then must praise Him, crown Him, and talk of His wonders all the day long, and think they never shall forget all His benefits. Well, then, how are they to be still? Why, the secret is here. They must be still from helping God. He wants none of our help, neither will He have it."

One morning, while I was sitting with him, he kept talking to himself. At last he burst out, exclaiming with tears, "This poor old Warburton, that has stunk in the nostrils of hundreds, but never in the nostrils of his God, is going to his blessed home, to his dear God and Saviour for ever."

"It is astonishing," he remarked one day, "that I feel no more anxiety about the chapel. And see how anxious I have at all times been for the cause. O the prayers that have gone up from my heart, and tears that have rolled down my poor cheeks, for that place, that God would bless it with prosperity both in spirituals and in providentials! And may it yet prove the birth-place of many precious souls. But now it is entirely taken from me. I can leave them all in the hands of the Lord." I remarked to him the goodness of the Lord towards him in taking everything from his mind; in his weak state it would be too much for him to bear. He answered, "Bless His precious Name! O how good He is! Never did I see His goodness so much in all my life as now. Look where I will there is nothing but mercy, that has followed me all my life long to the present moment of time." I said, "And never will leave you, father; and you will soon have to crown Him for it Lord of all." "O," said he, "What a shout that will be! Sometimes," he continued, "the Lord just gives me a look, sweetly smiles, and powerfully says, Has there failed thee aught of any good thing which the Lord hath spoken? And did I ever prove a barren wilderness unto thee?" "I tell His blessed Majesty not to say anything more upon that ground; He has done all things well, and that I have all and abundance in His lovingkindness, faithfulness and truth." "Going once, many years ago," I think he said, "from Manchester to Stand, I was then up to the neck in poverty, over head and ears in debt. As I walked, I wondered what would become of me. I could not see it possible that ever I could get through with honour. O how I pitied my hard fate! But my dear Lord soon silenced all my complaints, and stopped the mouth of every murmuring devil in my carnal mind, by speaking the words of the poet in my heart":

When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;  
The flame shall not hurt thee; I only design  
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

E'en down to old age, all My people shall prove  
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.

(Julian's *Dictionary of Hymnology* attributes these verses to Keen, but true authorship seems uncertain)

The Lord then told me, "I will be with thee, and bring thee through all thy troubles honourably, and bring thee to a good old age; hoary hairs shall thy temples adorn; and like a lamb in My bosom thou shalt be borne. And see how all has come to pass! Bless His precious Name."

One morning he said, "John, one thing troubles me." I inquired what it was. "My unprofitableness," he said, "in the things of God. What a worthless thing have I been all my life long." I told him that God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; that he was one of those "foolish things" that God had chosen; and to this hundreds could bear their faithful testimony from the power that had attended his ministry.

"Ah," he said, "the work is His; He will work, and who shall let or hinder it?" "The other day," said he, "a thought crossed my mind whether what I had preached was God's truth. Then it crossed my mind again, there are none of the Lord's servants tempted like that. They know what they preached was the truth of God.

Well, this drove me to the old spot, a throne of grace, begging the Lord to show it me if there were any." And O how sweetly the Lord said, "Now when John had heard in the prison of the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, saying unto Him, Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another? Thus I saw poor John and I were something alike."

On November 22nd, Mr. Tiptaft called upon him, and has favoured us with the following particulars of his interview: I went to preach for Mr. Warburton on Lord's day, November 23rd. He was then very ill, and every day was expected to be his last. I called on Saturday evening. He was sitting by the fire in his bedroom, and appeared to be in a very happy frame of mind, and under the influence of the

blessed enjoyments he had had the previous night, which he attempted to describe as well as he was able in his very feeble state. He said that his enjoyments were as great during the night as his soul could contain, and that the words of David were applicable to his state of mind: "Thou anointest my head with oil: my cup runneth over.' He spoke of giving utterance to the feelings of his heart by quoting loudly various portions of Scripture and verses of hymns, and seemed as if he had strength to preach, which surprised his family whilst listening to him.

"On the Tuesday evening following, after preaching, I called again and found him in a very different frame of soul. Instead of praising and blessing God, he was begging and praying for the enjoyment of Divine blessings. He did not take a high place, but honestly said, I am now in the poor publican's place, begging for mercy.' The little that he could say each time was commended to my conscience, as if he was honestly speaking his feelings, as a dying man hourly expecting to be removed from this vale of tears." {13}

In November, Mr. John Gadsby went to Trowbridge to see him, when the following conversation took place: Mr. Gadsby asked him if he had no care about the church. "Have I no care about the church?" said he, "I feel sometimes as if I never had had a church or a chapel at all. I have to think before I can find the way to the chapel in my mind; and sometimes I get to the corner of the street, and can't get any further." And then, turning the conversation, he said, "O to think of that Park Lane, near the Dove House." {14} "I remember going with the two children, and finding all my things marked to be sold for rent. And now look at me! Here I am, surrounded with feather pillows (he was resting upon the sofa, supported by feather pillows). I once walked round my garden here, and I saw a hamper that had had some fruit and things in that a friend had sent me, and another that had had some wine in. Then I went into the kitchen, and there was plenty of everything. And I said, "Is this old Warburton the pauper?' Eh! Bless the Lord! All the paupers in the town ought to follow me to my grave, for I'm sure I'm the biggest of the lot."

"Isn't it wonderful," he soon afterwards said to Mr. Gadsby, "that such an old irritable fool as I have been should be made to lie so quiet? I assure thee, lad, I hardly ever have a single anxious thought about any one thing. But sometimes I feel callous, as it were. I lie like a stone, and seem to care for nothing, without any feeling of resignation." "Then I cry to the Lord, "Do let me feel Thee once again! and then He comes, and it so upsets my nerves and causes such a palpitation of the heart, that I have to beg of Him to go away again. I can't stand it, for I can't breathe. This shortness of breath is quite new to me. When it first came I thought it was all nonsense, and I was determined I would break through it; so I went and

preached, and made as much noise as ever I did in my life, and felt so much better after it that I was sure it was all nonsense; but that was my last sermon. The doctor said he wondered I had not died in the pulpit. I remember once, when thy father was here, going with him to Mr. H's, and he walked along well enough till we came to a little bit of a rise, only about half a yard, and then he stopped to take breath; and I said to him, "Why, man, there's no hill here! It's only fancy!" And then we came to level ground again, and off he went again as well as ever. So I said to him, "It's only nervousness, I'm sure." "No," he said, "that's all; it is only nervousness." And now, John, as you know the disease, tell me the remedy! Poor dear man! I've found it out now! How he did suffer with his breath for years, while mine's only just now. How this tabernacle is being taken down," he continued; "so gradually. It could not stand much of either joy or sorrow." "Well," said Mr. Gadsby, "the Lord is just giving you as much as you can bear." "Aye," said he, "that's it; bless His dear Name."

Mr. Gadsby then said, "Many of our friends know that I have come over to see you. What shall I say to them?" "Tell them," he replied, with, much emphasis, "tell them I am firmly resting upon the electing love of the Father, the redeeming blood and justifying righteousness of the Son, and the comfortings, leadings, and teachings of the Holy Ghost; and tell them that though I have preached these things for fifty years, I never felt them before as I feel them now. Farewell!" "Farewell, my dear friend," responded Mr. Gadsby.

January 1st, 1857.-In the night he said, "What a sight to see Jesus." After a little while he said, "It is like fighting, sometimes up and sometimes down; just like my preaching. The poor thief at the eleventh hour; those that had borne the heat and burden of the day, and those that had worked but one hour, received the same; all had their penny. O the sovereignty of God! I have been fighting all through." His daughter said, "Yes, and you will gain the victory at the last."

"Victory, victory!" he said; "it is through the blood of the Lamb. Some people don't like such a religion as this-all done and finished; they want to do something; but I can do nothing. It is of Him, and to Him, and through Him be all the glory." A little while after he said, "Well, the poor old worm is travelling to his glorious home. My Jesus, how long? I am afraid of offending the Lord. He is so good. I want to feel more joys; but let me look where I will, there are the promises surrounding me."

On Wednesday he said, "How strange all the past things seem-just like a dream; but there is one thing needful, a sight of Jesus. There it is. Ah! look where the Lord

met with me and convinced me of sin; the place where, the manner how, He stopped me in a course of sin. O what a sinner I was! How righteous God would have been had He sent me to hell. I had merited it ten thousands of times over; but instead of this, He raised me from the depths of guilt and sorrow, to bless and praise Him for showing mercy to one so vile. And yet there is something tells me, How do you know whether all that was real or not? Yet my heart does not condemn me; and the Scripture says, If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God."

January 2nd.-He said, "I feel rather dark," which seemed to continue for some little time. In the course of the day he was heard to say, "O how astonishing for me to have a hope of seeing Jesus. How good it is. Bless the Lord, He has been with me."

January 3rd.-He said, "O what a scene to pass the River Jordan! But, bless the Lord, He has told me He will be with me in those deep waters, and not leave or forsake me. He has brought me through thus far; and every tongue that has risen up against me He has condemned. But I feel at times such a hard heart. That grieves me." After a little sleep he said, "Dear Lord, be with me; give me strength and patience to wait Thy blessed time."

January 7th.-He was for some time repeating, "My dear Lord, my dear Lord, if there is any condemnation, do show me; but bless His dear Name," he exclaimed, "He has blotted out my sins like a cloud. That was a trying spot for Job to be in when he said, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

January 9th.-He said, "How wonderful that God keeps me in the body so long!" Upon one of his daughters remarking, "You want to be gone?" he said, "When the Lord smiles I do; but when He withdraws, I want to stay here."

Friday afternoon he was some time before he could speak; he appeared quite overcome. At last he said, "What! give Him up that has been with me sixty years? No, devil, I won't. I should give Him up and cast Him from me if the devil had His will." He seemed quite exhausted, and asked for some refreshment, remarking, "If this body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, let me have something to nourish it." On taking a little arrowroot, he said, "The Lord could strengthen me with a cup of cold water, if it were His blessed will." "O," he said, "the devil will roar at me for this visit, if suffered. The prophet Isaiah said, and those that were with him, "We mourn sore like doves and roar like bears;" and O, there is the old man that hates Jesus; but, bless His Name, I have the new man that loves Him. Yes, "The Name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe.' I must not quit

this mortal life till He pleases." Some little time after he said, "O the blessed truths I have felt and enjoyed in times past! Job was something like me when he said, "O that it were with me as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me, when His candle shined upon my head, and when by His light I walked through darkness.' Dear Jesus, what didst Thou suffer when the floodgates of wrath were poured forth upon Thy holy soul? Thou never meritedst one stroke. My dear Jesus, give me a meek and quiet spirit. Thou canst not do wrong. Thou art too wise to err, too good to be unkind."

His medical man called to see him. When he was gone, he said, "It is Jesus, the great Physician, I want. He can heal with one look; but here I am as I was yesterday, strength just equal to the day; but when my poor soul gets to that place of rest that is laid up for the church of God-" One of his daughters said to him, "Ah, father, you will have a song then;" to which he answered, "I shall, my child, all of grace, free grace, from first to last. What a shout there will be to free grace. When the last vessel of mercy is landed in glory, then the last top-stone will be brought with shouting, "Grace, grace unto it." He requested to be raised up, and with assistance he lifted himself up a little. One of his daughters said, "I wish we could do something to rest your legs." "Let them alone," he said. "My dear, that is rebellion. O what a mercy I am not given up to a rebellious spirit." On a friend calling that had been to the prayer-meeting, who said, "You have not been forgotten tonight;" "Ah I" he answered, "I cannot talk about what I have done."

Two of the deacons came to see him. To them he spoke of the goodness of the Lord to his soul, and said, "I feel more love to you now than ever I did in all my life." "O," he said, "what a shout I shall give by and by. If the Lord would give me strength, I could preach now. I have no anxiety about the world, no more than if there was no world. Still I have not those excessive joys I have had. I look to see if there is any condemnation; but the Scriptures do not condemn me, nor yet conscience. I feel there is no judgment for me; but I want to feel more of the Lord's presence. My soul wants to be always resigned to His blessed will, and never feel a hard heart or a wandering thought; but if I had it as I want it, where would my tribulation be?"

January 17th.-For some time the Lord withdrew His presence from him. He was very restless until the Lord returned. His continual cry was, "My Jesus, my Jesus, when wilt Thou come again? Some do not want Thee or desire Thee; but I am hungering and thirsting after Thee. Well, such souls shall be blessed. Give me the blessing, my dear Jesus; bless me, bless me with one crumb; none can give peace but Thou. Ah, Thou workest like a God. Who can find Thee out?"



January 18th-He was very ill, and obliged to take a composing draught. The Lord had not granted him his petition. "It is Jesus I want," he cried; "come, blessed Jesus, come." To his daughter he said, "Ruth, what must I do if the Lord does not come?" "My dear father," his daughter replied, "the Lord will never leave you nor forsake you. See what you have been brought through; the great joys you have experienced. The Lord will not let you sink at last; but you want the presence of the Lord with you." "Ah, my dear child, I do." "Well," said his daughter, "whether you feel it or not, it is all right with you." "Ah," he said, "I want the Lord to settle the point; He makes no mistakes. Precious Lamb of God, precious Lamb of God! Come, Jesus; come, Jesus, give me another look of love."

More frequent let Thy visits be,  
Or let them longer last;  
I can do nothing without Thee;  
Make haste, O God, make haste.

Joseph Hart

It was not long after this that the dear Lord was pleased to grant his request. On being asked by one in the room if he would have anything to take, he said, "Don't speak, let Jesus and me alone; the time of love is come." "Ah," he said, "the devil told me He was gone, and would never come again. I have proved him a liar again. Bless the dear Lamb of God, I have found Him again. My dear Jesus, my dear Jesus, don't leave me; Thou art my Refuge, my Shield, my Rock, my Saviour, my All in all. O what a blaze there will be by and by. Dear Jesus, give me strength and patience to wait."

January 20th-He had a restless night, but between five and six o'clock in the morning the Lord was pleased to favour him again with another visit of His lovingkindness. His son James and his daughter Rachel were sitting with him. All at once he exclaimed, "It is more than fifty years since I was at Mr. Roby's chapel, where the Lord pardoned my sins; and He has blessed me and brought me through to the present moment. O my dear Jesus, precious Lamb of God! O that I had strength; I want to go down to the chapel, and tell them once more what the Lord has done for me. I could preach now. My Jesus has done such wonders for me; I want to tell the dear children of God once more. Bless Him, bless Him. He told me He would never leave me nor forsake me. Not one thing has failed me. Thou lovely Lamb of God, take me home; take me home."

When his daughter Ruth went into the room, she asked him how he was. "Ah," he said, "I thought I was going about five o'clock." "What!" she said, "you were so much worse?" "No," he said, "I was so much better; I wanted to leave you all." "I suppose you did; you wanted to be with your dear Jesus." "I did," he said, "but I must wait His time."

In the evening two of the deacons called to see him. "Well," he said, "here I am as I always have been; sometimes up and sometimes down." "Last night," he continued, "I thought I was going home, but before I attempted to settle, I thought, here is another gloomy night again! After a while the Lord led me to look upon Him who, when He was upon this earth, what gloomy nights He passed through, left and forsaken by all! but His greatest grief was the hidings of His Father's face. O, what were His feelings when He cried out, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" He gave me a look of His countenance in that sweet gospel vision. I saw the thorns that pierced His lovely temples. O I felt so ashamed; I did not know where to hide my blushing face. Ah, what was my poor gloomy night compared to His! What I felt I most richly deserved; but the dear Son of God did no sin, yet what agonies He bore, and not a murmuring word dropped from His dear lips. O what love I felt to the Son of God. I mourned over Him with a godly mourning. I wanted to go down to the chapel, for I felt that I could preach; yes, I wanted to tell the dear souls once more what the dear Lord had done and was doing for me; but when I began to move I found my body was weak, not equal to my spirit." Finding himself overcome with talking, he said to the deacons, "Now you must go; my head is so weak. I shall feel this after you are gone." When they left, he said, "Now they will have another of old John's sermons to talk about."

"Well," continued he, "I have nothing else now to talk about. It is all the same Jesus from first to last." His daughter Ruth said to him, "No, you want nothing but Jesus." "I don't, nor do the children of God either; nothing else will do for them. It's old things made new they want; and it is always new when Jesus brings them."

January 21st-He had a better night. At times he would be saying, "Dear Jesus, give me strength and resignation to wait Thy time. Dear Lord, thanks be to Thy Name, Thou hast bounded the devil with, "Hitherto, but no further."" "He comes sometimes with such craft, and would, if he could, drag me from Thy dear self." In the evening, Mrs. H., one of his daughters, called to see him, and sat with him for some time. On his daughter Ruth going into the room, Mrs. H. said, "Father has been telling me he thought he could preach the other night, and no doubt he could in his feelings." "Ah," he said, "Jesus has done so much for me for so many years; and sometimes I have had such overpowering manifestations of His love, that for a

few moments I have hardly known whether I have been in the body or out of the body." "Well," said one of his daughters, "you have been highly favoured in your affliction." "Ah," he said, "I know it, when He shows me what He has done; but without Him we can do nothing, and nothing is nothing. I cannot think or speak without Him. O that text, what light and power have I felt from it for years "Thus saith the Lord, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth Me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth, for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." The Lord again withdrew from him for a short time, when his continual cry was, "My dear Jesus, where can I look? to whom can I go but Thyself? Thou art the fountain to wash and cleanse from all guilt."

January 23rd.-As he had had no sleep after three o'clock, he seemed quite weary. His daughter said to him, "Father, I wish you would not be so cast down." He answered, "I cannot help it, my child; I want Jesus. When He is gone, all is gone. I thought He was at the door; but before I could open the door to my Beloved He was gone. I think," he added, " I am the strangest being in the world; I am so often up and down; but bless the Lord, sometimes He gives me a sight of His glorious Person, and fills me with such joys that I am obliged to beg of Him to stay His hand; it is so glorious; too much for this sinful body to bear. Then I want Him to break the pitcher and take my soul home, where I shall praise Him as I would. There will be no flesh and blood then to shrink at the glorious sight. O what a blaze and a shout there will be when old John gets to heaven, one that has merited hell a thousand times over; the greatest debtor to mercy, and the vilest wretch that ever lived. Bless Him, bless Him! "He has ascended up on high, He has received gifts for man, yea, for the rebellious also.' O what a rebellious wretch I have been! Still His everlasting arms are underneath. O what would poor Peter have done but for these arms, when he cursed and swore he never knew the Man? Mary Magdalene, out of whom seven devils were cast! Hell must have been her portion but for these arms. Job said. "O that I might have my request, and that God would grant me the thing that I long for, even that it would please God to destroy me, that He would let loose His hand and cut me off.' O the desperation some of the Lord's family have been suffered to run to; and what love and pity in Jesus to pray for them! Dear Jesus, give me, a poor helpless, sinful worm, wisdom, strength and patience. Don't leave me one moment, for Thou knowest I can do nothing without Thee."

January 24th-He had a very bad night, and the Lord had not visited him throughout the whole. In the morning he said to one of his daughters who was sitting with him,

"I thought my dear Jesus would have come last night. O how I mourn for Him like a dove when He is gone. Zion said, My God hath forsaken me. Ah, what can we do without Jesus? That hymn, how it suits my case:"

But ah when these short visits end,  
Though not quite left alone,  
I miss, the presence of my Friend,  
Like one whose comfort's gone.

I to my own sad place return,  
My wretched state to feel;  
I tire, and faint, and mope, and mourn,  
And am but barren still.

Joseph Hart.

"Well," said his daughter to him, "you have no real cause to grieve; you will see Him by and by, and bless Him for ever." "Yes," he said, "He is round about His people like a wall of fire, and the glory in the midst. He watcheth over them every moment, lest any hurt them. He is a God that cannot err; He has a right to do with me as it pleaseth Him, either to give me His presence or shut me up. I cannot say unto Him. What doest Thou! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

January 25th-He had not been able to lie in bed for nearly a month, but was constantly sitting, propped up with pillows, on the sofa, which made his back very painful at times. In the night he said, "I thought I should not have lived yesterday over, but here I am." He could get no sleep after one o'clock. He kept talking, but no one could understand what he said. At length one of his daughters said, "Father, you are not comfortable." "My dear child," he said, "I want to be going; I want to be gone. O when shall I praise Him? when shall I praise Him? My dear Jesus, come! Come, my dear Jesus! I wish, I long to be with Thee! Give me strength and patience, Thou lovely Lamb of God! When, when shall I praise Thee!" Thus he continued in the sweet enjoyment of the Lord's presence and in raptures for some considerable time. At length the Lord withdrew again. In the night he said, "My ways are not God's ways. Let me look where I will, there are the promises; but how is it that the Lord keeps me at such a distance?" "Why, father," said one of his daughters, "your poor body could not bear much of the Lord's presence." He answered, "O my child, I should like to try it." "Well," replied his daughter, "it is not long since the Lord favoured you with such a visit; you wanted to go down to the chapel and tell the people what the Lord had done for you; then your poor body

was quite overcome." "O," he said, "all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field; the grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of our God, that shall stand."

January 26th.-No alteration was visible through the day. He expected another trying night; but the Lord favoured him with many visits throughout it. At one time he burst out, "Come, Jesus, open the door and take me in; Thou openest, and none can shut. Oh give me patience. Come, my Jesus!"

January 27th.-The family thought that he could not live the day out; and he was very ill all the following night. When he had strength to talk, it was about Jesus, wanting to praise Him. He said, "Thou art my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort."

He was so weak on the 28th, that those who were with him were obliged to put their ears close to his mouth to distinguish what he said. After a while he fell asleep. On awaking he said, "Dear Immanuel, Captain of our salvation, all is finished! all is done! blessed Lamb of God. Ah, Lord," he said, "suffer not the devil to plague me. He would rob me of Thy dear Self; do be with me; Thou knowest my heart; Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest I want to glorify Thee. How good it is to appeal to Him! He has said, "Come, and let us reason together. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.' Bless Him! He gives "beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning.' I have, and am nothing but ashes; and I mourn like a dove, if the Lord leaves me but one moment. O Thou lovely Lamb of God? What promises surround me!" In his sleep he sometimes would say. "Come, dear Jesus, come nearer; I want Thy dear Self; O I wish I was with Thee?"

January 29th.-Water began to ooze from one of his legs. At this time he was very ill and weak indeed; and at times his weakness almost overcame him. "O Lord," he said, "do keep me in my senses. I am hanging on Thee like a cup on a nail. What a God Thou art! Thou hast but to speak the word and it is done. To that rebel, Saul of Tarsus, Thou only saidst, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" This brought him down in a moment, saying. "Who art Thou, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest.' O this put an end to his doing the devil's work. Then he had to do Thy blessed work. And where was I when Thou stoppedst me? Why, on the road to Bolton, determined to have my fill of sin. O, I thought I should have dropped into hell every moment. Ah, what He does is like a God. To some of His disciples He said but two words, "Follow Me;' and they left all and followed Him. What omnipotent power!"

January 30th-He was exceedingly weak; there was a great discharge from the leg, and he had little sleep all night. He burst out, "O Jesus, when shall I be with Thee? Come, my Lord, come; I want to see Thee and crown Thee." On being asked to take a little wine and water, he said, "It's too much for such a wretch as I O, how I have abused my dear Lord! Yet see the mercies I am surrounded with, and what He has done for me for so many years."

January 31st-Early in the morning he spoke out in raptures, with saying, "Jesus, Jesus, it is now; but stop," said he, "my God loves uprightness. It is forty-seven years ago that He told me, 'I will never leave thee nor forsake thee, world without end.' Immanuel, Immanuel, Thou Lamb of God that didst die for me. Thou hast cancelled my sins. O what love? what love! O my children, I hope you will follow me. Beware of the world, and that hateful sin pride. If you want to see its hatefulness, look in the garden of Gethsemane, at the Son of God":

For should it dare to enter there,  
Twould soon be drowned in blood.

"I have that hateful sin in my heart; but it only crawls and creeps about; it cannot reign. O my dear children, if you get into trouble, soul trouble or natural trouble, go to God; don't trust to an arm of flesh, O that robe of righteousness covers me. Immanuel! Victory, victory! O I am not afraid of death! Death, death, thou hast no sting for me. No. My Jesus destroyed that when He cried out, "It is finished!" O bless Him! "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." "O," he said, "I think the doors of glory are opening. O the heavenly host, the heavenly host." At this instant my mother came into the room. On seeing her, he lifted up both hands, exclaiming, "Here are two rebels saved by grace! all of grace! We have had many trials together! we have lived with each other more than sixty years; but it will not be long before we shall meet again. Then what an eternity we shall spend together; but it is too much to think of the glory; Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, when shall I be with Thee?" These raptures quite overcame his weak frame. "O," he said, "how weak I am in the body!" After a little while he fell asleep. When he awoke he said, "Two months ago the Lord told me it would be through fire and water nearly to the end; then heaven would open, and my ransomed soul would enter in. Now I feel as though I was waiting for something." In the evening his daughter Ruth was sitting with him. "O," he said, "how I have abused the Lord! About forty years ago how anxious I was to be a great man-a great preacher. I was angry with the Lord, very angry sometimes, because He would not give me those gifts and abilities that I

wanted. O there is no mortal who has abused the Lord as I have done." After a while he looked about and said, "I little thought, at one time, I should have no more than my length and breadth for a sleeping-place." (He was then retiring to the sofa, not having been in bed for many weeks.) "When I was taken ill," he said, "those words were very precious to me, and have been, I may say, scores of times, when I have been in trouble, "Be still, and know that I am God.'" "Well," continued he, "the Scripture says, that "if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father which is in heaven;' and I believe there have been two or three this day begging that I might have a happy end. Bless the dear Lord, He cannot do wrong. What a mysterious way the Lord has brought me! I was thinking and wondering today if anybody else was brought as I am. It is said, "If a man's ways please the Lord, He will make his very enemies to be at peace with him.' My ways please the Lord, yet I have got all manner of evil working in my heart, and I feel, at times, everything that is dishonouring to God." It was said to him by someone in the room, "You are like Paul. The evil you would not, that you do." "I can say," he answered, "there are two parties in my heart; one serving the devil, and the other hating a wandering thought." He was very weak throughout the day, and had a sleepless night.

February 3rd.-"O," he said, "my Lord is gone! What shall I do? He promised to be with me." He was told that the promises would never fail. "I know it," he said, "but I want to feel the power of them again and again. O this cursed unbelief? Why should I dictate to the Lord? He is a Sovereign, and has a right to do as He pleases with me." After a while he said. "Poor John H. will be disappointed." He was asked what about. "Why, if he gets to heaven and I get there, which will have the loudest song?" The remark was made to him that the Lord's family were in one mind about that. "Well," he said, "that voice comes again, "Be still, and know that I am God.' Sometimes," he continued, "I think I am wrong, because I have no fear of death. I think I ought to fear that more; but I cannot."

February 8th-When his daughter Ruth went into his room and asked him how he was, he answered, "About the same." Some time after he said, "I had a dark night last night. I do hope the Lord will turn my captivity. I feel like David when he said, "O spare me that I may recover strength, before I go hence and be no more." "Why, father," said one of his children, "You say you are in the dark, and yet you say you are never without a hope." "No," my child, "I can say I am not sunk so low as that, and I have the promises surrounding me; but when my Jesus is gone I am shut up, and I have no rest till I have found Him. These words," he said, "came very sweet and precious to my mind, "Your time is always ready.' All that I seem to long for now is that He will give me strength to see a few friends and talk to them; then

give me a sight of His glory that my soul might be full of His love; then open heaven and take me home." He continued in a calm, quiet state for some length of time.

In February, Mr. Gorton, who was then supplying at Trowbridge, called to see him. Mr. G. describes the interview as follows "Seven weeks before his death, on February 9th, when I entered his room, I found him in a very weak state, and, as I then believed, near his end, yet not so near as some had said they thought he was. I asked him how he was. He took me by the hand and said, "Very weak, very weak.' "Well,' I said, "the Lord is all-sufficient.' He answered, "He is very good to me; but I cannot talk much.' "No,' thought I, "but you can think, and talk to the Lord;' and the words dropped upon my mind, "They that thought upon His Name;' "They shall be Mine when I make up My jewels;' and I was satisfied there was one of His jewels before me, who would shine in glory with his Lord for ever. He spoke again to me, and said, "I have been very much helped under my affliction, and at times have enjoyed much; but I want more of the Lord's presence; but there, I cannot talk.' And his head dropped. I then said, "The Lord, who hath been your help for so many years, will fulfil His promise in your soul's experience and never leave you.' He then lifted up his head, and looking at me very steadfastly (the look I shall never forget), said, "Gorton, do you think it possible for a soul to have the promises, and the sweetness of the promises, and not be interested in the covenant?' I said, "No, never, Mr. Warburton! If a soul have the promises, and the sweetness of the promises, that soul must be interested in the covenant ordered in all things and sure.' He then said, "Well, I have had the promises, and found them sweet, and a support to me; but at times Satan tries me; but God is faithful, who hath promised. I cannot talk, so I must say, Farewell, and the Lord bless you?' I answered, "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. Amen. Farewell!' And I left him, never to see him again in sinful flesh."

February 10th-Mr. John Gadsby, being again in Trowbridge, accompanied by Mrs. Gadsby, expressed a wish to see him once more; but my sister told him that orders had been given by the doctors that he should see no one. Upon learning, however, that Mr. Gadsby was in the house, he would have him upstairs. Mr. Gadsby found him much reduced in body and evidently fast sinking. He asked him how he felt in soul matters, for he had no wish to trouble him about temporal things, though he saw he was surrounded by heavy expenses. "I have no particular joy," he replied; "but I am just where I have been for many years, lad - resting upon God's free sovereign grace and mercy."



On the 13th, Mr. and Mrs. Gadsby called again at the house, to take leave of the family. Before taking their departure, however, the dear old man sent word by my sister that he should like to see them once more. They went upstairs. The interview was brief, and it was the last they ever had with him.

Nothing particular occurred from this time until the commencement of March, when he had another severe attack of illness. The medical gentleman said that he could not long survive. From that time at intervals he appeared hardly conscious, excepting in matters of religion; but in all soul matters he was perfectly conscious to the last. On the Sunday previous to his death, a letter was received from a friend. On the contents being made known to him, he burst into tears and said, "It has been my desire once more to go round and see my old friends, and tell them how good the Lord is, and how precious He is to me." All that day he appeared to those around him as if enjoying the sweetest communion with the Lord; and in the evening he remarked to his friends what a comfortable day he had spent both in body and soul, and how happy he was with the blessed testimony within that the Lord was his God. A sweet smile seemed on his countenance. In this happy state he continued until Wednesday, when a visible change in his body took place for the worse.

Thursday, April 2nd.-All his children who resided in the town were summoned to his bedside. One of his daughters said to him, "Father, you feel Christ precious, and want to praise Him in glory?" He lifted up both hands and, pointing with one finger, with fixed eyes, as if gazing on some delightful object, exclaimed with peculiar emphasis, and perfectly distinctly, "I haven't room, I haven't room." Between four and five o'clock in the afternoon it became difficult to understand what he said, but to all around he appeared full of raptures, his lips continually moving as if talking to himself, and lifting up both hands continually as if enjoying the sweetest communion with his God.

Not long before he died he appeared anxious to say something. On one of his daughters putting her ear close to his mouth, she heard him say, "Pen, ink." On which she replied, "Do you want to write, father?" He said, "Yes." Pen, ink and paper were brought to him. He took hold of the pen, and held it in such a way as to cause surprise to all his children present. He tried to make a mark, but could not. He looked very earnestly at his daughter, and said, "You can write." She inquired, "Father, what must I write?" He said something, but none could understand what he said. On which his daughter said, "Is it anything about the church you want us to know?" He shook his head and firmly said, "No." Another of his daughters said, "Is it anything respecting the family?" As before, he replied, "No." "Is it to tell us

how good the Lord is to you in your last moments?" He lifted up both hands and, waving them with peculiar delight, said, "Yes, yes." He still continued to appear as if those around him did not sufficiently understand him. With great exertion he lifted up both hands, pointing with his finger and labouring to articulate something. At last he said. "HalÑÑ, Hal-!" Then followed with a firm voice, without a waver, "Hallelujah?" and he immediately breathed out his soul at a quarter past seven p.m.

"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

JOHN WARBURTON.

Southill, Beds, April 23rd, 1857.