

***"Horror hath taken hold upon me,¹
because of the wicked that forsake thy law.***

Psalm 119:53

The *remembrance of the Lord's judgments of old*, while it brings *comfort* to his people as regards themselves, stirs up a poignancy of compassionate feeling for the ungodly. And indeed to a feeling and reflecting mind, the condition of the world must excite commiseration and concern! A "whole world lying in wickedness" (1 John, v. 19)! lying therefore in ruins! the image of God effaced! the presence of God departed! *Horror hath taken hold of me!* to see *the law* of Him, who gave being to the world, so utterly *forsaken!* so much light and love shining from heaven in vain! The earthly heart cannot endure that any restraint should be imposed; much less that any constraint, even of love, should be employed to change its bias, and turn it back to its God. Are you then a believer? then you will be most tender of the honour of the law of God. Every stroke at his law you will feel as a stroke at your own heart. Are you a believer? then will you consider every man as your brother; and weep to see so many of them around you, crowding the broad road to destruction, and perishing as the miserable victims of their own deceivings. The prospect on every side is, as if God were cast down from his throne, and the creatures of his hand were murdering their own souls.

But how invariably does a languor respecting our own eternal interest affect the tenderness of our regard for the honour of our God; so that we can look at *the wicked that forsake God's law*, with comparative indifference! Awful indeed is the thought, that it ever can be with us a small matter, that multitudes are sinking! going down into perdition! with the name of Christ--under the seal of baptism--partakers of the means of gospel grace--yet perishing! Not, indeed, that we are to yield to such a feeling of *horror*, as would paralyse all exertion on their behalf. For do we owe them no duty--no prayer--no labour? (Acts, xvii. 16-18.) Shall we look upon souls hurrying on with such dreadful haste to unutterable, everlasting torments; and permit them to rush on blinded, unawakened, unalarmed! If there is a *horror* to see a brand apparently fitting for the fire, will there not be a wrestling endeavour to pluck that brand out of the fire? Have we quite forgotten in our own case the fearful terrors of an unconverted state--the Almighty power of wrath and justice armed against us--the thunder of that voice--"Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord?" (Heb. x. 30; with Deut. xxxii. 35.) Oh! if the love of the Saviour and the love of souls were reigning with more mighty influence in our hearts, how much more devoted should we be in our little spheres of labour! how much more enlarged in our supplications, until all the kingdom of Satan were subject to the obedience of the Son of God, and conquered by the force of his omnipotent love!

But if the spirit of David, renewed but in part, was thus filled with *horror* in the contemplation of the wicked, what must have been the affliction--what the intensity of his sufferings, "who was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26)--yea, "of purer eyes than to behold iniquity" (Hab. i. 13. Comp. Ps. v. 5)--during thirty-three years of continued contact with a world of sin! What shall we say of the condescension of

1 'A burning horror hath seized me.'--Ainsworth. 'Faintness and dejection of mind hath seized me.'--LXX.

his love, in wearing "the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3)--dwelling among sinners--yea, "receiving sinners, and eating with them!" (Luke, xv. 2.)

Blessed Spirit! impart to us more of "the mind that was in Christ Jesus," that the law of God may be increasingly precious in our eyes, and that we may be "exceedingly jealous for the Lord God of Hosts!" Help us by thy gracious influence to plead with sinners for God, and to plead for sinners with God!