

throne. It is in consonance with the foreordained plan of the Almighty that a man should pass through certain trials and difficulties, and be tested in every possible way, in order to be prepared for an exaltation in the kingdom of God. It was so with Job. He was peculiarly situated. It seems that the devil appeared among the sons of God in heaven, as he does on earth very frequently. When the sons of God were assembled together, the devil was among them, and he went, as it appears, to instigate a feeling against Job. The Lord said to him, "Hast thou considered my servant Job?" "Yes," said he, "I have considered him." The Lord said that Job was a perfect and an upright man, etc. "Oh, yes," said he, "I know all about him. You think that Job is a very good man; but just let me have a rap at him, and I will show what Job will do." "Well," says the Lord, "you may try him." He went to work and concentrated the lightning in one focus and hurled a thunderbolt against his oldest son's house, where all his children were feasting, and destroyed them. No sooner had the messenger reported the result of this catastrophe to Job than the news came that a certain people—I was going to say "Christians"—had fallen upon his oxen and asses and killed his servants. They called them in those days Sabeans and Chaldeans and Hittites, I think; we call them nowadays Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc. They called things by different names in different ages, but they are the same class of people. They went after his camels, his asses, his goats and all his property that they could lay their hands on, leaving him helpless and destitute—and he was, it is said, the richest man of the East. Job, in looking at his changed situation,

summed the whole thing up in these few words: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked I shall return thither: the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Well, the devil did not succeed that time; but like the lawyers who are after the executors, however, I suppose he thought he would take another shoot—serve some fresh papers. He presented himself before the Lord the second time. And addressing him the Lord said, "Well, what do you think about Job now?" He said his efforts had not succeeded very well as yet; but "Skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life; let me lay my hand upon his body, and he will curse thee to thy face." "Well, I put him into your hands, but do not interfere with his life." The devil then let loose something like smallpox upon him—only it was called by a different name in those days—covering him with boils from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, and he scraped himself with a potsherd wallowing in ashes. And while he was in this condition some of his friends came along for the purpose of sympathizing with him; and after offering a great deal of advice, they came to the conclusion that Job must have been a very wicked man, or such a calamity never could have come upon him. And then, to cap the climax, his wife came along, and in her way says, Job, you are a fool for putting up with all this; you have suffered enough, and were I you I would not stand it any longer. I would curse God and die like a man. Job replied, "You talk like one of the foolish women of old. Have we not received good at the hands of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil? The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away; and