

## **Choice Men**

*"I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction"*  
(Isaiah 48:10).

This has long been the motto fixed before our eye upon the wall of our bedroom, and in many ways it has also been written on our heart. It is no mean thing to be chosen of God. God's choice makes chosen men choice men. Better to be the elect of God than the elect of a whole nation. So eminent is this privilege, that whatever drawback may be joined to it we very joyfully accept it, even as the Jew ate the bitter herbs for the sake of the Paschal Lamb. We choose the furnace, since God chooses us in it.

We are chosen as an afflicted people and not as a prosperous people, chosen not in the palace but in the furnace. In the furnace beauty is marred, fashion is destroyed, strength is melted, glory is consumed, and yet here eternal love reveals its secrets and declares its choice. So has it been in our case. In times of severest trial God has made to us our calling and election plain, and we have made it sure: then have we chosen the LORD to be our God, and He has shown that we are assuredly His chosen. Therefore, if today the furnace be heated seven times hotter, we will not dread it, for the glorious Son of God will walk with us amid the glowing coals.